

TEEN ZOMBIE SHOW

PROPOSAL FOR A HALF-HOUR SINGLE CAMERA COMEDY

By

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## SERIES PITCH

TITLE: TEEN ZOMBIE SHOW

GENRE: Half-hour comedy

SERIES LOGLINE: A brainy high school girl in rural Texas falls in love with a wholesome teen zombie who lives in an abandoned car, but when marauding locals discover his location, she hides him at home from a zany witch-hunt led by the corrupt mayor.

SYNOPSIS: Teen Zombie Show will be, in the strictest sense, a show about family. It's centered around Sugar Willowick, an overachieving high school student in Silsbee, Texas. Sugar needs a date for prom. That's when she meets the dashing...

...Za, a hunky teen zombie. He's lost, abandoned, without any memory and unable to speak. His only identification is a tattered pizza delivery receipt with the remaining letters "Za" intact.

Sugar brings him home and posts pictures of him on the internet to search for any information about his true identity. And, she makes plans for prom with him until her mother prohibits any involvement between them.

Each episode highlights Sugar's quest to discover the identity of Za against the wishes of her uptight mother, hippie grandmother and her comically crazy uncle (a retired cop). Za is acknowledged by everyone as a zombie. But he's not a flesh eating monster. He's a shy neat freak that likes chocolate chip cookies and dancing. Za lacks the verbal skills to speak, but he communicates via body language.

Za helps Sugar fulfill all her dreams as her character arc transforms her into a teen business consultant for the state of Texas, a motivational speaker for a Fortune 500 company, and starting her physics internship at the Johnson Space Center.

Za's ongoing support for Sugar is the basis for their blossoming love as she juggles a widening divide within her family that wants to get rid of him - all while redefining what it means to be a zombie family. And, at the end of the first season, the reward for the viewer will be more than just laughs. It will reveal how marginalizing people - zombies or otherwise - is harmful to us all, and we can strengthen the current state of family in America by treating all people fairly.

And, what about that prom? Episode 2: "Zombie Prom."

I believe these dynamic characters and the universal theme of family will appeal to a wide audience familiar with Disney +, Nickelodeon or any platform with a diverse demographic. Gaining traction for any project is challenging but, this script provides us with a very broad path to production.

Are you up for some G-rated, mom-approved, zombie fun?

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### THE FORMAT

“Teen Zombie Show” is a highly comedic and sharp teleplay that will appeal to both teens and adults. It deals with a very popular topic - zombies - in a new and refreshing way. This zombie, Za, is not a blood thirsty, brain-sucking monster. He is a gentle neat freak that likes chocolate chip cookies, and enjoys dancing. This is what stands out as unique in this character-driven zom-com. The overall story is smart, entertaining, and the humor sets a perfect tone for comedic satire.

### THE PHILOSOPHY

The premise of the pilot episode is one that has been used countless times before. A girl searches for true love. However, the introduction of a zombie as Sugar’s love interest really spices things up. But, the real staying power for the series will be three generations of women: grandmother, mother, and daughter – all jostling, joking, arguing, and loving with a kindhearted zombie. This universal theme of “family” makes this show a true four-quadrant comedy.

### THE ON-GOING SETS

There are three primary locations in the pilot: high school, house, car wash. And, two minor locales: Downtown Silsbee, and a rural dirt road.

### CRAFT

This screenplay is fast, visual, and compelling to the tee. The dialogue is sharp and relevant. The descriptions are to the point while providing an accurate picture of both the setting and characters.

### MARKETABILITY

The script is highly marketable simply due to the hilarious characters, high school setting and the unique zombie character. These are three elements that rarely fail in mainstream media. Additionally, this is a story that has a wide target audience. It appeals to teens/young adults, but also has elements that adults would find amusing as well.

## CHARACTERS

SUGAR WILLOWICK – Sixteen, is cloaked in black biker clothes, and she is the driving force in this show. She is a very strong protagonist. Sugar deals with her issues with wit and insanely sharp dialogue. Yet, we can still see how vulnerable she is. She is a chatterbox because she is afraid of silence as it poses the option for rejection (her biggest fear). The relationship that she develops with Za is touching and sweet. Sugar's strong personality doesn't hide her vulnerabilities and as an audience we truly feel for her.

LORRAINE - Sugar's mom, late-thirties, is a commanding female presence in a bright red Badgley Mischka designer suit. She's divorced, and as they say in the south when someone is difficult to be around, Lorraine can be a long day. She had Sugar when she was a teenager. Back then, Lorraine was a singer-songwriter-hippie-chick, but had to get a real job to support her daughter.

GRANDMA – Sixties, lives in her rainbow tie dyed T-shirt and olive drab hemp pants. She is the hippie matriarch of the family: wise, kind, but she does not suffer fools easily. Grandma was born and raised in Texas, married early, and then when her husband died in a farm accident a few years ago, she moved back in with Lorraine and Sugar. Grandma is frequently the referee in arguments between Sugar and Lorraine.

BELINDA – Seventeen, longs to be a princess, and wears a stunning opalescent blue prom dress. Sugar and Belinda became best friends at group therapy. Both have father's that abandoned them at an early age. Sugar decided to hate the world, but Belinda decided every human on the internet must love her. That's why she hosts her own video show on YouTube. And, this is how Belinda gets the attention she's not getting at home.

ZA - Teenager, dressed in a Civil War soldier's uniform. He has a magnetic appearance in that 'Twilight' handsome dead guy kind of way. Za is interesting because he is a zombie, but not the kind that we are familiar with. Za is a neat freak and a dancing whiz who is charming and sweet without even having to open his mouth and talk. He is a fresh perspective on the zombie culture. His relationship with Sugar is really sweet.

RELATIONSHIP MAP FOR THE THREE MAIN CHARACTERS

	Lorraine	Sugar knows she's smarter than her mom. But, Lorraine has a higher emotional IQ. So, they share a loving mother-daughter relationship that is very unique, deeply contentious, and wonderfully rewarding. Final relationship status: It's complicated.
Sugar		
	Za	Sugar is bored with the norm: people, places, things. Za is the exact opposite of normal and therefore deeply intriguing. And, he's a handsome, hunky, mystery? This guy is irresistible. Final relationship status: awesome sauce!
	Sugar	Lorraine is the most well-adjusted single mom in America, but even she has her limits. And, that limit has a name. Sugar. Final relationship status: Sugar ain't always sweet.
Lorraine		
	Za	Poor Lorraine doesn't know what to think of Za. Sure, he's gorgeous, but he's dead, right? At least he looks that way. And, he can't talk. But, the guy seems really nice. Final relationship status: he's on strict probation.
	Sugar	Za is crazy about Sugar. Final relationship status: maximum zombie-love connection!
Za		
	Lorraine	Lorraine tried to pepper spray him because she thought he was an intruder. But, he knows he has to get along with her if he's going to see Sugar. Final relationship status: dazed and confused.

PILOT EPISODE PLOT

A PLOT:

Sugar needs a date for prom.

B PLOT:

Sugar struggles with Lorraine to let Za stay at the house.

C PLOT:

Sugar helps Belinda make a video for her YouTube channel.

D PLOT:

Sugar and Lorraine team up to discover Za's true identity.

## TEEN ZOMBIE SHOW PILOT OUTLINE

### COLD OPEN

The entire episode is set up on the very first page when Sugar says...

“Prom is in twenty-four hours and I still need a date.”

Then, we quickly proceed through a whirlwind tour of the funny characters that make up Sugar’s world. It all culminates inside Bumper to Bumper Car Wash in Silsbee, Texas, where Sugar discovers Za locked in the trunk of a car. She is captivated by the mystery of who this guy is, and smitten with his magnetic appearance. Is this her date for prom?

### ACT ONE

Inside the Willowick house, Sugar brings Za in. He has nowhere to go and all the shelters are full. Sugar tries to convince her mom to let him stay while she searches for information about his true identity by posting pictures of him on the internet.

But, Lorraine has little patience. She wants answers right now about who Za is. And, if she doesn’t like what she hears, she’ll have Za taken away by the police.

### ACT TWO

Sugar moves forward with her plans to keep Za at home, and take him to prom (even though she hasn’t asked him, yet). And, Za’s online presence is growing in popularity because of his “handsome dead guy” look.

Sugar shows Za around town, her school, and her favorite places to hangout. He meets the rest of her family and friends.

Now, tension is building as the countdown to prom grows near. But, Za is missing. Sugar must find him to complete her mission.

### ACT THREE

Sugar tracks Za down, and in a heartwarming coming-of-age climax, she finally asks him to the prom. He agrees to go.

Za is contacted by an agent online who books him a modeling gig based on his exotic look.

And, Sugar wins her argument with Lorraine, and Za can stay with them at the house - for now.

Sugar also apologizes to her mom for being so stubborn. She's learned a valuable life-lesson about acceptance and realizes that when you accept somebody just the way they are that's what makes a good relationship work. And, that kind of acceptance is the secret to keeping this family together.

Then, Sugar and Lorraine team up and join forces to solve the mystery of who Za really is. "Team Za" is born with a mission to discover this truth.

### TAG

Sugar and Za are dressed in similar zombie attire to attend their very own version of prom - "zombie prom" - and joined by the entire cast. A spontaneous pre-prom photo shoot breaks out, then, Sugar and Za leave for the big dance.

### END OF PILOT

## SHOW ARCS

### ARC WITHIN THE PILOT:

Sugar goes from an insecure girl needing a date for prom to a mature young lady with the perfect guy.

### ARC WITHIN THE FIRST SEASON:

Sugar will have all her beliefs and all her love for Za tested when she discovers who he is, and how he got this way.

### ARC WITHIN THE WHOLE SERIES:

After many years of struggling, Sugar finally reunites all her lost and absent family members, and together they each contribute their unique skillset to solve the puzzle of who Za really is. Then, they welcome him into their family with open arms when Sugar and Za get married.

### CAN THIS SHOW GENERATE A HUNDRED EPISODES?

There are at least 100 different ways a clue regarding Za's true identity can lead to an exciting journey of discovery. This means there are at least 100 different episodes to write to discover this truth with heartwarming humor, fascinating contrast and conflict, and fearless optimism.

## SERIES BIBLE

PILOT EPISODE: Sugar discovers Za at the car wash and struggles with her mounting insecurities to ask him to the dance. Then, she embarks on a quest to discover his true identity with her mom by her side.

Theme: “Acceptance.” Sugar learns to accept her mom, just like her mom accepts her.

EPISODE 2: ZOMBIE PROM – Sugar hits a series of snags leading up to prom. When they finally do arrive at the dance, they’re denied entry because they’re both (Sugar and Za) dressed like zombies. So, Sugar holds an impromptu “zombie prom” at the car wash.

Sugar’s school work in her physics class is earning her high praise and recognition outside of high school. So, colleges are courting her to attend ASAP.

Theme: “Equality.” Sugar promotes equality for all beings after being discriminated against because people thought she was a zombie.

EPISODE 3: WHAT IS A ZOMBIE? - Za continues his rise to modeling fame as Sugar uncovers startling new information about his true identity.

And, Sugar’s physics experiment wins her a scholarship and early entry into a prestigious engineering school. She stays in high school. But, also goes to college part-time, so she can stay at home and be with Za.

Theme: “Balance.” Juggling work, school, social obligations, etc.

EPISODE 4: DO THE ZOMBIE - Za becomes an internet sensation when Belinda edits his dance movements to music and posts it on YouTube spawning a zombie dance craze.

Sugar ends up neglecting both college and high school because she’s spending too much time with Za. She’s on the verge of losing her scholarship, and her good standing at the high school, and her other relationships.

Theme: “Concentration.” She thought she had balance by juggling all these things, but proper balance still requires concentration for the task at hand.

EPISODE 5: THE TRUTH - Sugar's academic life is back on track. And, she has an offer to be a special engineering intern at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. She will commute between Houston and Silsbee.

Za and his online popularity increases to the point where it becomes a launching pad for a successful marketing machine for online retailers. Then, Sugar and Za have moral decisions to make about how they want to conduct business on the internet.

Theme: "Ethics."

EPISODE 6: ZOMBIE INC. – Za's online presence is gaining popularity. They officially become a company and "Team Za, INC." is born.

Sugar loses her internship at the space center. Her team was assigned an experiment that would have killed a bunch of rats during testing. She rescued them and let them go. This destroyed months of work and millions of dollars in research money. So, her feelings are mixed, but one thing becomes clear for her...

Theme: "Do not kill."

EPISODE 7: CAN WE TALK? - Team Za leads a motivational speaking group for corporations that teaches zombie thinking to improve productivity.

And, Sugar is a student-teacher back at her high school because of her massive experience. This is her first step in reinventing her life.

Theme: "Perseverance."

EPISODE 8: "ZCT 9000" (Zombie Certified Training) is offered to various business clients by Sugar and Za. Sugar spearheads the efforts to expand their brand. Sugar leads Team Za on a retreat for a burned-out executive who gets totally transformed for the better by the ZCT 9000 course. Sugar teaches this guy that his impatience is hurting his progress.

Theme: "Patience."

EPISODE 9: A GOVERNMENT JOB - ZCT 9000 is adopted by the state of Texas as their official training program for employees. Za is invited to appear on a major talk show (his star is skyrocketing). Sugar puts her mom in charge of running their business, because it's more important for her mom to have a steady job than Sugar.

Theme: "Generosity."

EPISODE 10: HEAD BOW - Sugar has a spiritual awakening that fuses quantum physics and Buddhism and Christianity. And, Za is super famous, and cast on a TV show. But, he still can't read, so people think he's dumb. But, he treats all the skeptics with kindness, and things work out great because of it.

Theme: "The highest form of wisdom is kindness."

EPISODE 11: THAT'S MINE – A student at school steals Sugar's research to advance her own career. Everybody wants Sugar to stand up for herself and attack this girl on social media. But, Sugar decides to test karma. Sugar holds her ground (and silence) because she believes it will become obvious that this other girl stole her research when she can't do the work herself.

Theme: "Do not steal."

EPISODE 12: THE SHORTCUT – Za is a hit on the TV show he's on. All kinds of rumors swirl about his past and identity. And, Sugar can bypass an entire year of college, and leapfrog to the next level based on her unique work history if she exploits a secret bylaw in the school charter. But, she actually wants to take the classes and learn what they have to teach.

Theme: "Don't cheat." Because you only cheat yourself.

EPISODE 13: FINALE - Za is at the apex of his fame when he holds a press conference and shocks the world when he announces who he is and how he got that way. And, Sugar announces they're going to get married. This makes everyone involved upset. But, if Sugar and Za are going to make this work they can't give in to the haters.

Theme: "Do not give in to anger."

## TEEN ZOMBIE SHOW

The pilot script won 1<sup>st</sup> place in four film festivals, and 1<sup>st</sup> place in...



It received a “Double Recommend” in coverage from ScriptXpert at the Writers Store!



The video trailer has received over 110K views on YouTube. And, there are 2 “Teen Zombie Show” books on Amazon. So, I’m developing an audience that may be interested in this show.

Thank you for your generous gift of time reviewing my proposal.

Cheers!

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