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Writer: Gary Dauberman  
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Script Reader: J R Cannon

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Form: Feature Screenplay  
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### **LOGLINE:**

After a reported suicide at a reclusive abbey in Romania, the Vatican sends a priest and an initiate, each with their own troubled pasts, to investigate and determine if the abbey's grounds are still holy.

### **SYNOPSIS:**

SISTER VICTORIA, 20s, locked in a cell within a monastery in Romania, appears nervous, afraid, but then, her furrowed brow smooths out and her face shows resolve. Sister Victoria sets out her bible, holy water, a cross, her rosary and...rope? She steps to the window. As she's tying one end of the rope to the buttress, the cell door bursts open, but no one's there.

From the cell looking down the long, sparsely lit corridor, the torches begin to go out. One. By. One. This does not stop her. It spurs her on. She pushes the windowpane out, climbs onto the ledge...and jumps. The rope snaps. Her neck breaks. When the windowpane swings back in, the reflection of an EVIL NUN, decrepit and dark, is seen. The last torch goes out, plunging the scene in darkness.

FRENCHIE, a French Canadian in his 20s, travels along in his horse-drawn cart down the path leading to the monastery, or Abbey, as it's called now, where he will drop off supplies for the sisters. As he nears the weathered, stone Abbey, he spots a body (Sister Victoria), hanging from the window, lifeless. While he looks on in shock, the rope breaks, dropping the body to the ground.

Elsewhere...in one side of a confessional booth sits a young boy. On the other side, listening, sits FATHER MICHAEL BURKE, 40s, working on a crossword puzzle and...smoking? Well, it's the '50s. When the young boy finishes, Father Burke exits the booth and receives information that he has been ordered to go to Rome, at once.

In Vatican City, Father Burke meets with CARDINAL CONROY, 60s, and OTHER CLERGY. Father Burke is presented with travel documents and contact information for a man named "Frenchie." Father Burke knows they aren't telling him everything. But he's ordered to go to Romania and take along a young nun initiate, who works at a children's hospital.

SISTER IRENE PALMER, 20s, plays a game with the children, where she's blindfolded. As she reaches for who she thinks is a child, she realizes the chest is much too high. Ripping off the blindfold, she's embarrassed to see a priest standing there, as the children giggle. Father Burke introduces himself and explains why he's there. Sister Irene listens and, when he's finished, exclaims, "I've never been to Romania."

Frenchie awakes from a nightmare and realizes someone's knocking at his door. He opens it and finds Father Burke and Sister Irene standing at his door. Father Burke explains who they are and that they want to visit the Abbey. Frenchie takes them to his horse-drawn cart. They load the suitcases and set off.

As they leave the cart to walk the rest of the way to the Abbey, Frenchie grabs his shotgun, just in case. Father Burke tells Frenchie they are there to investigate the suicide and see if the grounds are still holy. The Abbey of St. Carta, a former, grand castle, is covered with hundreds of crosses, of all materials. As Frenchie relates how he found the girl hanging, Father Burke spots blood on the stones where her body fell. The blood is still wet! Sister Irene asks, "How is that possible? It's been weeks...." Frenchie states, "I told you. This place. What's the opposite of a miracle, Father?"

Father Burke leads the trio through a huge, iron door, and then, a dark, narrow passage, ending in the Grand Parlor. Lit by candles, the Grand Parlor sports shelves of old, dusty books, a grand confessional booth, a large, high-back chair and dozens of male and female faces rendered in plaster, hanging all over the walls. Father Burke confirms Frenchie's question about tombs. Since the masks represent those buried in the Abbey, Father Burke surmises the tombs must be in the walls, behind the masks.

Unseen by the trio, the ABBESS now "appears" sitting in the high-back chair, or "throne." She watches, silent, as they gaze at the masks. Sister Irene turns and sees the figure on the throne. Father Burke and Frenchie turn too. After Father Burke introduces himself, and the others, and their reason for being there, the Abbess feigns no knowledge of any death at the Abbey. When Frenchie remarks he was the one who found the body, the Abbess replies, in French, "Is that so?" His nerves unravel. Father Burke asks Frenchie to wait outside. As he leaves, the Abbess' words cut deep, telling Father Burke he should leave with Frenchie.

As the Abbess and Father Burke commence a dual of words, it's concluded Father Burke will speak with no one until tomorrow. He and Sister Irene exit. Frenchie stands guard outside the castle walls. He whirls around at the groan of the heavy, castle door opening. His shotgun at the ready. He blanches when he sees it's Father Burke and Sister Irene. Frenchie quickly lowers his gun, slightly embarrassed. Father Burke asks Frenchie what he did with Sister Victoria's body. He takes them around to the icehouse, where he leaves his deliveries, explaining he hoped it would help preserve her body.

When they enter, they see Sister Victoria's body sitting upright in a corner. As Father Burke takes a step forward, Frenchie places a hand on his arm, halting him. Frenchie informs the Father and Sister Irene, "That isn't how I left her.... She was laying down...." Father Burke, trying to calm all their nerves, mentions sometimes the body will move on its own after death. Frenchie reminds him they have no idea how long she'd been dead before he found her. Father Burke, who had taken steps toward the body, stops, turns back to Frenchie and says, "You're not helping."

As Father Burke inspects the body, he discovers a key on Sister Victoria's rosary, clasped in her cold, dead hands. In trying to retrieve the key, the rosary breaks, scattering beads everywhere. Looking around the icehouse, Father Burke spots a door leading into the Abbey. It's cracked open an inch.

They bury Sister Victoria in the grave beside the chapel, giving her a proper burial. Walking amongst the graves, Sister Irene spots a bell attached to twine that disappears into the ground. Frenchie tells her of the custom of burying people with a string attached to a bell. In the unfortunate case people were buried alive, ringing the bell would alert people above ground to come rescue those buried by mistake.

Father Burke informs Frenchie of the Abbess' instructions that he and Sister Irene may stay in the chapel. As they inspect the derelict-looking building, and see the nave walls covered in crosses, Frenchie asks why they can't speak with the sisters now. Sister Irene tells him of the vows the sisters must follow, so, reluctantly, Frenchie leaves them for the night.

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Sister Irene finds bedding in an old closet in which to make the beds for the evening. As night falls, she and Father Burke eat bean paste and smoked meat, by the light of an oil lantern. Father Burke works on his crossword puzzle. Sister Irene asks him about his time “miracle hunting.” Not looking up from his puzzle, he recounts his time in the war, and a boy having visions he was asked to investigate. Sister Irene mentions a specific bishop’s name, which gets Father Burke to lift his head from his puzzle and look at her.

She tells him of the visions she had as a child, and how the bishop convinced her father she wasn’t mentally unstable or a liar. The bishop recommended she dedicate herself to the Lord. Not wanting to discuss it more, Father Burke takes his plate to the sink and exits the kitchen.

In his bedroom for the night, Father Burke rests. Then, the sounds of giggling and footsteps pull him from his bed. He follows the sounds into the main part of the chapel and out to the cemetery. Startled by what he thinks is a young boy, Father Burke moves closer. The boy, the vision, lifts its eyes and stares at the Father, whose face reveals recognition. The boy begins convulsing and vomits up a large snake from his mouth. Father Burke retreats but makes the mistake of looking back over his shoulder. As he does, he falls into an unseen pit with an open coffin. The lid slams down, sealing him inside. As he panics, he hears dirt hitting the top of the coffin. Father Burke screams.

Sister Irene awakes with a start. Looking around the room, she sees nothing amiss, until a shadow passes by her door. Lighting a lantern, Sister Irene rises and heads into the hall. Seeing Father Burke’s door open, she calls out and peeks inside. Finding the room empty, she grows concerned. Then, she hears whispering or chanting coming from the nave. Entering, she finds nuns sitting in the pews, but they don’t respond to her. Spotting the shadow of the Evil Nun, she follows it with her eyes, where it stops in a large mirror. The Evil Nun points at Sister Irene. The nuns in the pews screech. When Sister Irene spins around, the nuns aren’t there. Then, a huge, wooden cross crashes to the ground.

Running from the nave, a terrified Sister Irene searches for Father Burke. Her panic intensifying, she finds herself outside the chapel. She stops and tries to regain control of herself in the cool, night air. Then, she hears the soft “ting” of a bell. It’s coming from the cemetery. Moving among the gravestones, she listens, trying to find the source of the sound. She finds the tingling bell and, leaning in close to the ground, she hears the muffled screams of Father Burke.

Frantic, Sister Irene digs with her hands. Then, she spots the shovel Frenchie used when they buried Sister Victoria. Grabbing it, she digs. After a few shovelfuls of dirt, she hears a thump. She tosses the shovel aside and returns to digging with her hands. When she unearths the coffin, she sees the lid has numerous, small crosses etched into it. Heaving the lid open, Sister Irene frees Father Burke. Sitting up, he grabs Sister Irene and thanks her between gasps for air. But as he looks up at her, Sister Irene stares past him, looking into the coffin. As Father Burke turns his head, he sees it too—books!

The next morning, Sister Irene finds Father Burke at the kitchen table, studying the ancient writings found in the books they pulled from the coffin. He also tells Sister Irene what drew him out to the cemetery in the first place. Hearing what she saw in the nave last night, and her questioning him about the vision of the boy, Father Burke now understands why Cardinal Conroy chose Sister Irene for this trip.

Nearing the Abbey, Father Burke and Sister Irene come upon the spot where Sister Victoria’s body landed. There’s even more wet blood than before. She asks him if the grounds are still holy. Father Burke ponders. He states that is their puzzle to decipher; have the castle walls, designed to keep enemies out, been breached, at last?

After an apparent hard night—or harder morning?—Frenchie nurses a beer at The Black Bear pub in town. As a young WOMAN takes a fancy to him, GREGORO, the owner, calls Frenchie over. Gregoro asks about the couple he saw with Frenchie, who explains they were a priest and nun whom he took to the Abbey. Gregoro asks about the dead nun who was found. After Frenchie confirms he was the one who found her, Gregoro orders a drink for Frenchie, telling him he'll need it because he might find two more bodies when he returns.

Standing in the chamber where they met the Abbess yesterday, Father Burke and Sister Irene stand alone. Father Burke moves next to the portcullis and calls out, announcing their presence. He's met by silence. Then, the portcullis begins creaking upward. He steps back from the heavy gate and its sharp, pointed ends.

Since it's a convent, Father Burke doesn't enter. He hands Sister Irene the key they found on Sister Victoria, asking her to find out whatever she can. Her fingers graze over the R1:18 engraved into the key. Father Burke mentions he found out what it is: Revelations 1:18. "...I am alive for evermore...and have the keys of Hell and of death."

Sister Irene passes under the portcullis and through to the open courtyard. She spots someone out the corner of her eye. A nun. Sister Irene hurries and follows the nun into the kitchen. But no one's there. Moving through the warmth and fragrant smells of the kitchen and dining hall, she finds the chapel, where a nun kneels, whispering prayers. Approaching the nun, Sister Irene calls to her but receives no answer.

As she's about to touch the nun, a hand grabs Sister Irene from behind, halting her. She spins. SISTER MIRANDA, 20s, stands before her. Possibly wanting to make sure it's not a vision, Sister Irene whips her head around to make sure the nun saying her prayers is still there. She is. Sister Miranda leads Sister Irene out of the chapel, so they can talk.

As Father Burke waits in the entry, where the Death Masks and tombs are, he reads from one of the old, dusty books. He hears a *thump*. It repeats again, more insistent. Moving along the Death Masks, he pauses at one of the tombs. Curious, he spots an old fire poker and begins prying open the tomb. When it's open, Father Burke recoils from the sight. Inside lies a shriveled corpse and coils of writhing snakes. He rushes forward and seals the tomb once more.

Unnerved beyond words, Father Burke thinks to himself, *'What is this place?'* Suddenly, he remembers something. He reaches in his satchel and grabs one of the ancient texts from the coffin. Leafing through it, he stops on an illustration. It's of the parlor Father Burke stands in right now. But in the illustration, there's a symbol on the floor.

Looking closely at the floor, he sees more than just dust. Ash. He dips a finger in and tastes it. Sulphur. He pulls a vial filled with powder out of his satchel and pours some on the floor. Striking a match, he lights the powder. The spark zips along the sulphur, revealing a giant pentagram. Father Burke has found his answer regarding the grounds.

Sister Miranda offers a cup of tea to Sister Irene as they sit in a private room, warming themselves by a hearth. Sister Miranda acknowledges Sister Victoria's death, but just as Sister Irene mentions the presence of "an unholy nun," they are interrupted by the sudden appearance of SISTER ABIGAIL, 40s. She reminds Sister Miranda it's time for her prayers and tells Sister Irene she should not be in the convent since she has not taken her vows yet.

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Before Sister Irene leaves, she remembers the key Father Burke gave her. She pulls it out and asks Sister Miranda about it. Sister Miranda says she doesn't know what it is. But she gives Sister Irene a message for Father Burke, "Remember Matthew 6:13," which she recites to Sister Irene.

Re-entering the parlor, Sister Irene takes in the giant pentagram burned into the floor. She makes the sign of the cross. Not seeing Father Burke, she hurries to the exit. Once outside, she finds him with Frenchie, who hurries over to make sure she's all right. Sister Irene informs them of what she found and relays Sister Miranda's message. But Father Burke remarks what Sister Miranda quoted is not Matthew 6:13. Sister Irene believes Sister Miranda did it to avoid being overheard and believes it's a cry for help. Matthew 6:13 states, "Lead us not into temptation, and deliver us from evil." Upon hearing this, Frenchie begs them to come back to town. If he can't change their minds, he knows someone who can.

The Black Bear pub. Frenchie leads Father Burke and Sister Irene to a table, where Gregoro joins them. Before he will talk, Gregoro pours a drink for Father Burke. At first, Father Burke declines, but Gregoro insists. "Priest or no priest, I don't trust any man who won't drink with me," Gregoro says. And so, Father Burke knocks one back, and then, another. Now, Gregoro will talk.

Gregoro tells them of the MARQUIS OF SNAKES. A man so evil, he tortured villagers to the brink of death, asking them what they saw. The Marquis became a devout follower of Hell, praying its demons to be unleashed and walk among men. One day, the church stormed the castle with many priests, knights and men, killing all the Marquis' followers. When two priests cornered the Marquis, he set himself a blaze and ran straight at the priests, desiring to take them with him into Hell.

When the battle was over, the church blessed the grounds and set up a convent as a means of defending the evil and protecting the world. But the bombing raids of the war have shaken the grounds, possibly releasing what was once trapped. Gregoro waves his hand indicating the lands and the people in the bar. "This is what it's become." He explains the livestock got sick and died, and religion is leaving the village.

Walking the near-empty streets, Father Burke asks Frenchie for the use of his wagon. Frenchie can't believe the Father is really going to go back to the Abbey. He begs Sister Irene to stay with him, but she steps closer to Father Burke. Her decision made as well.

Arriving back at the Abbey, Father Burke and Sister Irene stop at the blood stain. Now, it's even larger. As they continue toward the entrance, we see the cemetery. Sister Victoria's grave looks as though someone has clawed their way out of it.

Father Burke and Sister Irene reach the portcullis, and Sister Irene holds a hand up for the Father to stop. She asks him not to go in since it's now a convent. He respects her idea...but he's going in. Right then, they hear a click of the wheel that works the portcullis. As they look up, the portcullis drops. Sister Irene shoves Father Burke out of the way, separating them on opposite sides of the portcullis. Sister Irene, on the inside, tells Father Burke she'll find Sister Miranda. Father Burke doesn't let her leave, without thanking her for saving his life, again.

Sister Irene enters the courtyard but finds no one. She approaches a door and pushes it open. Peering inside, she sees it's the chapel. Only, it looks nothing like it did earlier when she found the nun praying. Now, the interior is decrepit, caked in dust and rotting wood. Standing near the altar, Sister Irene jumps when a single chord blasts out from the organ, scattering the pigeons in the chapel.

She calls out for Sister Miranda, but there is no answer. She hears the creak of the door, as it begins to close. Running to it, Sister Irene catches it right before it closes. She calls out once more. At the far end of the corridor, she spots a nun's habit flapping in the wind. When it disappears around the corner, Sister Irene follows.

She spots the nun ducking through a door. As Sister Irene opens the door, she sees it's the dining hall. But the same as with the chapel, the dining hall now looks like it hasn't been used in years. The smell is putrid; rotted meat left on dirty plates; chairs overturned. Scattered on the floor, she finds holy cards, defaced with black ink. Then, on the wall, Sister Irene sees the shadow of the demonic nun she spotted the night she found Father Burke buried in the cemetery.

The shadow moves, rattling the pots and knocking over shelves. It stops behind a dining table. Sister Irene watches the shadow extend its arms, then fling the table straight at her. Sister Irene runs from the dining hall; the table missing her by inches. Back in a corridor off the courtyard, catching her breath, Sister Irene spots a nun's habit flapping once more. When the nun disappears again around the corner, Sister Irene follows, more cautious this time.

Following the nun down another corridor, Sister Irene calls out once more begging the nun to stop. This time, the nun stops but doesn't turn around. Now, Sister Irene's not sure what to do. She approaches slowly, but just as she is within reach, the nun spins and races through an archway. Sister Irene peers through the archway. It's a dark, *dark* corridor. She picks up a candle and lights the wick. As she inches forward, she notices the walls covered in crosses of all kinds.

While Sister Irene debates whether to continue down the hall, Father Burke has not been idle. He's discovered a massive book detailing the interior of the castle, and its hidden passageways. A map shows the parlor he's in, and that there is a secret passage behind the confessional booth leading into the castle. Just then, he catches a reflection off a vase of the Abbess standing right behind him. But when he turns, the Abbess sits in the throne-like chair, watching him.

Father Burke pulls the key out of his pocket and asks the Abbess if she knows what it might open. She does not. A sudden and harsh blast of air blows through, extinguishing the candle he holds. He pockets the key and strikes a match, re-lighting the candle. The Abbess is slumped forward, as if dead. Father Burke approaches slowly, calling out to her, but he gets no response. When he stands before her, he reaches out to lift her veil. Her hand clutches his arm, stopping him. He steps back, jerking his arm away. Her fingers don't let go, but her arm does. It separates from her body.

Startled beyond belief, Father Burke drops the candle, which somehow remains lit, and tries with all his might to pry the gnarled hand and attached arm off him. Once it's off, he stares back up at the Abbess, still seated. In a flash, the Abbess leaps from her seat. Falling away, Father Burke hits the floor. The Abbess lands on top of him. As they struggle, we learn the name of the demon, as the Abbess shrieks at him. Father Burke manages to throw the Abbess off him, but she lands in the darkness of the parlor.

Still inching her way forward, Sister Irene continues down the dark corridor after the nun she saw. A cross clatters to the floor, landing right at her feet. She picks it up and, holding it tight, continues forward. Rounding a corner, she spots the nun standing in front of an ordinary-looking door, whispering prayers. The door creaks open and then, a gust of wind blasts out, whipping the habit from the nun's head. But no one's there! The habit falls to the ground. Then, it gets sucked into the open door and the blackness within. Sister

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Irene turns away, terrified. She drops the cross. And every, single cross hanging in the corridor crashes to the floor and follows the path of the habit, into the darkness.

Coming out of the darkness appears the Nun. Sister Irene races back the way she came. When she dares look over her shoulder, the Nun stands right behind her. Sister Irene screams. Scared out of her wits, she runs. When she stops to catch her breath, she realizes she's in a different part of the convent. She hears a creaking sound up ahead. Walking toward it, she spots blood droplets on the stone floor. She follows the sound and the blood, which lead her to a cell. Cautious, she opens the door inch-by-inch and finds Sister Miranda sitting in a rocking chair (the creaks), her eyes bleeding (the blood) and vacant. On her lap lies a crucifix. Sister Irene tries to rouse Sister Miranda, but she doesn't respond. Hearing her own name, Sister Irene spins around to find SISTER RUTH, 20s, and other nuns standing behind her. She didn't hear them enter.

Investigating the confessional booth, searching for the secret passage, Father Burke hears the little boy's voice from the other side. Not being able to see through the latticework, he races out the booth and around to the other side, but no one's there. However, he does spot a sliver of an opening in the back of the booth. Before he can check it out, something drops onto his shoulder. A snake! Falling backward, Father Burke flings it from his shoulder. Looking up, more snakes rain down. He sees the boy from his past, the one he tried to save, perched on the rafters. He has demonic eyes, a forked tongue and...wings.

Father Burke freezes at the sight of the demon...Valak, who took the form of a winged child, as described in the Book of Solomon. The boy vomits up snake after snake. Then, he jumps from the rafters. Father Burke clamors to his feet, racing toward the exit. The boy flies fast on Father Burke's heels. Father Burke reaches the door, dives through and slams it closed behind him. Loud bangs erupt from the other side, and then, silence. That way is now closed to him. Surprisingly, he spots his crossword puzzle on the ground. Picking it up and studying it, his face shows he's come up with an idea. He takes off running.

Father Burke draws open the cellar doors leading down into the icehouse. Descending the stairs, heading toward the opening, Father Burke hears a noise behind him. He turns. Sister Victoria, with dirt-stained fingers, cracking bones and bleeding brains, comes down the stairs after him. Father Burke runs to the opening; the access door the sisters use to bring their deliveries inside. It doesn't open. Sister Victoria strides closer. He tries harder to open the access door. He turns around once more, and Sister Victoria stands right behind him. Then, she drops; hit on the head with a shovel by Frenchie. His lone remark, "I thought you could use some help."

Back in the cell, Sister Ruth reveals how the convent has been overcome with evil. Sister Irene learns these few sisters made a pact to remain and try to contain the demonic forces. When a knock sounds on the cell door, they instruct Sister Irene to see who it is. She's relieved to find Father Burke and Frenchie. She lets them in and asks Sister Ruth to explain things to the Father, but the men see no one. It's revealed that Sister Irene has had visions yet again. She steps over to the body of Sister Miranda in the rocking chair and discovers it's a corpse. Father Burke covers it with a sheet. As the trio move to leave the cell, the covered, dead corpse springs to life, stabbing Father Burke in his side with the cross that was in its lap.

Frenchie and Father Burke hold the screaming corpse down on the cot. Father Burke spots a small cup of water on the side table. While struggling to hold down Sister Miranda, Father Burke recites the Prayer of the Blessing to convert the water in the glass to holy water. Once done, he tells Sister Irene to bring it to him. As Sister Irene moves to do so, Sister Miranda flails, shoving Frenchie into Sister Irene...who spills the holy water...which mixes with Father Burke's blood. So much for that plan.

It's getting harder to hold Sister Miranda down. Father Burke instructs Sister Irene to get in the hallway and be ready to close the door. The Father counts, and on three, he and Frenchie dart for the door. Sister Irene pulls it closed in the nick of time. They listen. From the other side of the door...silence. Father Burke slides down the wall. His hand covers his bleeding side.

In the kitchen, Frenchie sews up Father Burke's wound. Father Burke says he believes he knows where the portal is located. Sister Irene believes she knows too but reminds Father Burke they can't go down there unguarded. The key is the answer. Sister Irene now believes her visions a gift from God. Before they confront this evil, Sister Irene commits to Him by taking her vows.

With Father Burke now wearing his cassock, and Sister Irene dressed in a black habit, they, along with Frenchie, enter the corridor of crosses. A small candle lights their way. But the flame gets smaller and smaller, until it goes out completely. Then, an orange glow brightens the darkness. It's the key. The key itself glows; with "God's light," proclaims Father Burke. Before they can continue, though, a long shadow appears on the wall. They turn. At sight of the Evil Nun, Father Burke yells, "Demon!" Bad move. The Nun focuses its full attention on him.

As Father Burke speaks the words to exorcise the demon, it charges him. He commands Sister Irene and Frenchie to go on. Fleeing down the stairs, they enter the massive cellar of the castle. They race past many horrifying things, glimpsed only in shadow. Then, they reach the torture devices. A dead nun trapped in each. It gives Frenchie pause, and he inadvertently steps out of the protective glow of the key. When he turns, seeking Sister Irene, he's jumped on by the winged boy. As Frenchie opens his mouth to scream, the winged boy vomits up a snake, which slithers right into Frenchie's mouth. As the winged boy rises off Frenchie, it transforms into the Nun.

Sister Irene spins around, searching the darkness for Frenchie. She follows his voice and finds him hunched over on the ground. As she approaches, she hears his bones crack. When he looks up at her, she sees red, demonic eyes and upside-down crosses pushing out on his skin. He rushes her, pinning her to the ground, trying to get the key. When its light is almost out, Father Burke slams into Frenchie, knocking him off Sister Irene.

Father Burke yells at her to close the portal. Yet, before she can recover, she's yanked across the floor. At the door to the portal, Sister Irene hangs on for her life. The suction from the portal fierce. It rips her habit from her head. Father Burke screams her name, but he has his own troubles with the demonic nuns, who arose from the torture devices.

Then, the demon Nun strikes from within the portal, reaching out and grabbing hold of Sister Irene. She looks behind her and sees the Nun's face change into the true face of Valak. Father Burke hears Sister Irene's scream. He looks up and into the eyes of the demon. Once more, he tries to banish the evil.

As Father Burke speaks, Valak screams; his hold on Sister Irene loosens. It's enough. She pulls herself free. She grabs the door and slams it shut. Shoving the key into the slot, she turns it, sealing the portal. Holy light floods the cellar. Covered in dust, dirt and blood, but upright and walking, Father Burke asks if she's all right. She shakes her head from side to side, eyes wide, *No!* Then, she glances where Frenchie had fallen. He's not there.

Back in the chapel where they stayed the first night, Father Burke and Sister Irene sit on a church pew. She has decided to stay at the Abbey, to rebuild it. Father Burke tells her he'll inform the Vatican to send the help



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she'll need. They both realize some of the evil may have escaped with Frenchie. Father Burke tells her not to worry. If that's the case, someone good will be there to deal with it and drive it back.

And some years later, that's exactly what happens. In a bedroom, a woman screams. A shot gun blast tears her arm off. A second blast scatters her brains. Holding the shot gun is Frenchie. With no reaction, he walks out of the bedroom and down the stairs to his recliner. Someone pounds on the front door. He ignores it.

Frenchie lifts his shirt, and we see upside-down crosses pushing out of his flesh. His eyes begin to bleed. The pounding on the front door continues. He places the shot gun under his chin and pulls the trigger. But it does not go off. The front door opens with a bang. ED and LORRAINE WARREN, along with a PRIEST, charge into the house.

Ed—calling Frenchie by his real name of Maurice—asks what he's done. Drawn to look at the mirror opposite Frenchie, Lorraine sees the face of Valak instead of Frenchie's reflection. Valak knows she sees his true face. He snarls at her, and the mirror shatters.

#### **COMMENTS:**

“THE NUN” delves into what happens when a holy place of worship turns into a center for demonic evil. The story is well written and captures the suspense and thrill of “what’s going on here?” throughout the film.

Arriving in Romania to investigate the reported suicide of a nun, Father Burke and Sister Irene discover unsettling signs that things at the Abbey are not as they should be. From the Abbess denying any knowledge of a suicide to the sisters being so secretive and evasive with Sister Irene, it's hard for Father Burke to get the answers he seeks. As the story progresses, the evil touches Father Burke, forcing him to relive memories of the death of a boy he tried to save through exorcism. Sister Irene must face frightening visions of a demonic nun. The visions remind her of her troubled childhood and her father questioning her sanity. The pair must face these reminders of their past in order to confront the evil awaiting them.

Each scene moves the plot line forward, ratcheting up the tension, leading the audience to hold their breath when the final climax comes, with Sister Irene gripping the doorway to hell, holding on by her fingertips, trying not to be sucked into the vortex. The one questionable scene, as to whether it's needed, is the one in The Black Bear Pub, with an inebriated Frenchie, and Gregoro asking about the couple he saw Frenchie with. The reference about maybe finding two more bodies at the Abbey is a nice point in the discussion, but maybe the scene's dialogue could be punched up some with more significance and/or relevance to the goings on at the Abbey.

The biting, direct tone of the Abbess when the trio of heroes first meet her hits hard; her attitude or indifference comes through in her sharp words to Father Burke. When she tells Father Burke he should leave with Frenchie, she's letting her distaste for their presence be known.

Another good scene is in the icehouse when Frenchie takes Father Burke and Sister Irene to see the body of Sister Victoria. When Frenchie halts Father Burke and says, “...that isn't how I left her...,” one can only question, “Then, who moved her?” Or, “did she move herself?” Father Burke, trying to calm their nerves by explaining a dead body can move sometimes because of the nerves remaining active for a while, has his logic

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trounced when Frenchie says, “Who knows how long she was dead when I found her?” All Father Burke can say is, “You’re not helping.” A much-needed light-hearted exchange in a suspense-filled horror film.

Several scenes capture the convent’s turn from good to malevolent. When Father Burke opens the tomb revealing writhing snakes inside, it tells us something unusual is happening. Then, Sister Victoria’s grave showing the dirt being disturbed, as if something clawed its way out, unnerves us. The Abbess’ hand and arm separating from her body when Father Burke jerks his arm away. Body parts aren’t supposed to come loose! The winged angel boy vomiting up snakes turns the stomach. And the true face of Valak appearing within the vortex ready to suck Sister Irene in. Yes, these grounds are no longer holy, for sure.

Having the film end with a scene showing where Frenchie ended up and what he’s now become gives the audience closure for this event. Otherwise, it would have been hanging, wondering what happened to Frenchie.

Each of the main—and supporting, relevant—characters are distinct, with their own personality, voice and mannerisms. Each is well developed and stands on his/her own merit. Father Burke is resigned to his exorcism assignments and goes where and when the Vatican tells him to. Now, facing true evil, he knows the light of the Lord must endure. Sister Irene steps into her destiny and takes charge, no longer questioning whether this is her path or not.

“The Nun” takes us through investigating a suicide, determining if a convent remains holy, discovering the castle’s dark and twisted past, realizing that even in death the sisters tried to contain the malevolent force, and staring true demonic evil face-to-face. This script delivers.

**RATING GRID:**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Idea	x			
Story Line	x			
Characterization		x		
Production Value		x		

<b>MECHANICS</b>	Excellent	Solid	Needs Work	Re-Think	N/A
Action lines clearly and concisely manifest visual action and literal context.		x			
Scenes avoid the problem of continuing beyond optimal length.		x			
Spelling, grammar, and proofreading.		x			
Page count.		x			
The script's physical presentation.		x			
Dialogue.		x			
The script effectively manifests a compelling theme and adheres to it throughout the story.		x			

<b>CHARACTER</b>	Excellent	Solid	Needs Work	Re-Think	N/A
The protagonist clearly manifests both internal and external goals.	x				
The protagonist has consistent opposition to his/her goals.	x				
The protagonist is sympathetic and/or engages our emotional investment.	x				
The protagonist clearly changes / has an arc.		x			
The supporting characters are unique and add value to the story.		x			
All of the characters are authentic to their backgrounds.		x			
The script has an effective antagonistic force, direct or indirect.		x			

<b>STRUCTURE:</b>	Excellent	Solid	Needs Work	Re-Think	N/A
The script has a strong structural foundation that serves the story, classic three-act structure or otherwise.		x			
Plots and subplots work together.		x			
The set-up is concise, and effective.		x			
The story has well-designed reversals.					x

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Transitions are effective and appropriate to the story.		x			
Every scene has relevance.			x		
The story includes an effective dramatic climax / payoff.		x			
The setup is resolved effectively.		x			
A catalytic situation drives the plot.		x			
Dramatic conflict and tension build across scenes, throughout the plot.		x			

<b>MARKET VALUE</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Solid</b>	<b>Needs Work</b>	<b>Re-Think</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Originality / freshness.		x			
The story has a clearly defined target audience.		x			
The story clearly has mass audience (universal) appeal.		x			
The story includes a conceptual “hook” that could potentially be used to effectively market the film.		x			

<b>PRODUCTION VALUE</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Solid</b>	<b>Needs Work</b>	<b>Re-Think</b>	<b>N/A</b>
The lead character is castable / has star appeal.		x			
The visual arena of the script is stimulating.		x			
The project has International appeal.		x			

**RECOMMENDATION:**            **Consider**

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