



# BOOK PIPELINE

– *[Title]* by Author

## **CONCEPT / MARKETABILITY:**

In *[Title]*, Nina Carter, a forensic nurse practitioner with a heightened attention to detail, uncovers a missing child from a familiar family of her past. The story promises the nostalgia of a classic detective novel but is told from the non-traditional perspective of a forensic nurse-practitioner. This gives the story somewhat of a fresh take.

This type of fiction tends to be well-received, especially with the fascination of true crime becoming more and more popular over the past few years. Having the protagonist be something other than a detective adds a level of relatability for the reader. My hope is that the mysterious familial relationship of the Salinger family (promised in the synopsis) is fully explored and strategically revealed to the reader. It is through the tactical disclosure of information that will create tension and keep the reader on the edge of their seat. A mysterious family dynamic is also a wildly popular story element that lends itself well to this type of story. And while the synopsis remains somewhat vague to what later unfolds in the story, I think it would benefit from an unexpected revelation regarding Nina's relationship to the Salinger family; something that could add depth to her pursuit and bring enhanced sensationalism to the story.

## **PLOT / STRUCTURE / CHARACTERS:**

Right away, we know that Nina (34) is the protagonist of the story, which is a positive. The story is written in third-person limited, causing the reader to seamlessly follow Nina's journey. This is especially well-done in chapter two when we are given a glimpse into her past, instantly promising a layered story that will explore past, present, and how the two interconnect. It is made clear in the opening pages that Nina cares about her patients and is very good at her job – dedicated to the point of prioritizing her work over her own well-being. One concern I have regarding the opening pages is how information about Nina and the Salinger family is delivered. While all the information is valuable for the reader to know, I can “see the writer’s hand.” This means that, while the information is important to the story,

it feels forced into the dialogue, etc. The conversation did not feel natural and also lingered longer than it should, disrupting the pace of the scene. Perhaps if you add more action beneath the dialogue, it won't feel as stagnant and forced. A reader is more likely to accept extended dialogue if it is happening alongside relevant action.

I would be interested to see how Nina's organization (as emphasized by her to-do-lists, color-coding, etc) comes into play later in the story. It is an interesting contrast from the synopsis, which claims that she is later forced to take a leave of absence due to "critical errors" she made in a different case possibly involving a serial killer. This leads me to my next point, which largely focuses on the synopsis. When an agent or potential publisher reads the synopsis, they want to be able to have a clear vision of what the story will look like and how it unfolds. A lot of what you present in the synopsis is missing a connective tissue that strings the story elements together in a cohesive way, building logical tension. Something that can help with this is asking yourself, "What is the story about?" Not necessarily meaning what happens in the story, but what is an overriding theme? What is the transformative lesson(s) Nina learns that is reflected in the story? Once you have a clear answer, then everything included in the synopsis should reflect this. You never want to include irrelevant or misleading details. For example, while your synopsis includes a lot of information, I am not sure how it all intersects. Some questions I am left with include:

Will there be police corruption involved in the story? Does the case mentioned involving a serial killer become important to the story? Does Nina become obsessive? What is she addicted to? How does this integrate into the story? How does the loss of her own baby contribute to the story? Who attacks her after her night out? Is it a warning for her to stop digging? What are the dark secrets of the Salinger family? How does this connect to Nina?

While you do not have to answer all of these questions outright in your synopsis, it is important that you provide the reader clarity on what unfolds and how it relates to what the story is about.

#### **VOICE:**

While Nina has somewhat of a distinct voice in the opening pages, I think there are some things you can do to amplify her voice even more. Infusing more emotion into her reactions in the initial chapters will be very helpful. For example, in the first chapter, does she face that kind of reaction from patients/family members quite frequently? Does it frustrate her? Can she empathize with their vexations? Does she have any jaded opinions about young mothers? Or is she perfectly understanding and it doesn't faze her at all? If you think of her on a realistic, flawed, human level, how might she react? The same can be said for her interaction with Carol? Does Nina like Carol? Does she get annoyed by her? Is Carol just a character she puts up with? While there may be some hints that allude to this in your writing, it still

remains unclear. The more we can understand Nina's emotions, the clearer her voice will become.

Also, where does this story take place? There seems to be a vast difference in how Nina speaks versus Allee and Garrett. Is there a classist separation? Cultural division? Does this take place in the South? East Coast? West Coast? Is this a fishing community? This is not identified in either the synopsis or the opening pages. The only identifier is that it takes place near the water. If you can better identify the setting and characters, then the voice will become clearer and will also help ground the reader. This voice should carry over and be amplified within the synopsis as well.

### **MECHANICS:**

The pages may benefit from further proofreading, as I notice a few grammatical errors. I would also recommend greater variation in sentence structure. This could help smooth out some longer sentences that are cumbersome to read. Additionally, try to not repeat the same phrases or use the same words over and over. Though it can be distracting, it certainly didn't take away from the story. Overall, the descriptions are beautiful, and on a number of occasions, caused a visceral reaction from me – exactly what you want to evoke from a reader.

### **EMOTIONAL RESONANCE:**

The opening image of Nina examining a wounded child instantly puts the reader on her side. Her playful nature with him after what could be an uncomfortable examination immediately portrays her as likeable and very caring. A small concern I have is that, in the opening pages, she doesn't exhibit any flaws. I suppose you could surmise that she is a workaholic and possibly overly-invested in her patients, but I am more interested in the flaws alluded to in the synopsis, i.e., her having lost a child, being estranged from her husband, and struggling with addiction. Somehow including this information earlier will make her character more dynamic and will help the reader become more invested in her journey.

### **OTHER THOUGHTS:**

Overall, I am very intrigued by this story. From both the synopsis and the opening pages, I want to know how a child can go missing and there be no record of it. How could so much time pass without any questions being asked? It is a good hook that will intrigue readers. There is a disconnect between the initial pages and what the synopsis promises, but if the opening pages can better reflect Nina and her "demons," I think it will be all the more compelling.