

THE WORKSHOP

– XXXXX –

CONCEPT / MARKETABILITY:

The concept of a young boy entering a realm with beast and demons is a familiar one that is popular among readers. Especially as a coming-of-age story, the plot lends itself for an exciting read. However, for this to be considered marketable and to distinguish itself apart from other portal-type stories, the synopsis needs to offer more detail of how the plot unfolds.

PLOT/ STRUCTURE / CHARACTERS:

As mentioned above, the synopsis needs to paint a more detailed picture of how the story unfolds. While you do a good job setting up the protagonist and his desire to find his way home and find answers to questions that have been plaguing him, you do not mention what those questions are. What questions does he need answers to? You mention that they revolve around his sister's untimely death, but what actually are those questions? Does he wonder why she died? Is he struggling with his faith? Including the questions that plague him will not only tell the reader more about the protagonist but will also give a better idea of what the story is about, i.e., what themes are explored. Without including this detail, the story comes across as too vague. The synopsis is the place where you want to give answers, not create more questions.

The same thing can be said for the resolution of the story. The king demands that [NAME] make a decision. What is this decision? What must he choose between? And who shows up to tell him the truth? While this might be okay for a query letter or blurb, where you want to keep the reader guessing, it is not appropriate for a synopsis. You then state that when he is back in his own world, he is finally able to see the answers to his questions. What are the answers? What has [NAME] learned? How has he transformed? These answers will dictate what the story is about. Explain what happens. Give the reader a thorough idea of how the story unfolds.

Something else I noticed from the synopsis, is that [NAME] seems quite passive. The protagonist should have a desire that drives the story forward. From the synopsis, his quest to get home and to get his answers along the way are great driving desires. However, based on the synopsis, it doesn't seem like [NAME] is the active one. There always seems to be another character who shows him the way or rescues him. While he may very well be active within the pages of your story, it isn't coming across that way from the synopsis. This may be a matter of rephrasing. Show that he wants to fight. He wants to learn, etc. Give him some urgency.

VOICE:

My only concern here is the beginning of the synopsis when you mention yourself and the story, i.e., "I have woven Christian themes...", "this story will stand on its own...", "I have attempted, and achieved...", "I introduce the protagonist...", etc. For the synopsis, you don't want to put yourself in the story or reference the story as something you have written. In the synopsis, you

want to submerge the reader in the story and how it unfolds. By mentioning how you wrote it or what you included in the story disconnects the reader from fully engaging in the world in characters.

Therefore, I would simply jump into the story. You could still include the Ephesians paragraph, but simply written like this:

“Ephesians 6:12: For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against the mighty powers of darkness who rule this world and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms.

At nearly fifteen years old, [NAME] is just coming of age...”

MECHANICS:

Overall, the synopsis is well written. Be careful of extra spaces between sentences. There should only be one space.

EMOTIONAL RESONANCE:

It will be easier for the reader to sympathize/empathize with [NAME] when they know what answers he seeks. It is difficult for a reader to fully engage with a protagonist when they don't understand their internal struggle. If we understand [NAME]'s emotional turmoil, then we will be more willing to follow his journey and root for him along the way.

OTHER THOUGHTS:

N/A

