

## COVERAGE INK ANALYSIS

**TITLE:** **Sizzlin' Summer Surprise**  
**LOCALE:** Detroit & Rural Michigan, Ohio, & Dallas, Texas  
**WRITER(S):** Alton Myers  
**PERIOD:** 1967  
**FORM:** novel  
**GENRE:** historical fiction  
**BUDGET:** medium  
**PAGES:** 116  
**DRAFT DATE:** copyright 2005  
**COVERAGE DATE:** 8.10.17  
**PREPARED BY:** DW

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### **LOGLINE:**

A teacher finds faith and a calling to share his story after surviving the devastating Detroit riots in the summer of 1967.

### **SYNOPSIS:**

The Foreword to the historical fiction novel engrains the reader in the world of this story and the main character: a teacher in 1967 Detroit during the infamous riots.

Chapter 1 opens on "David" DAVE, the teacher telling his friend and fellow educator, "Robert" BOB, about a summer study program with the National Science Foundation. Dave is excited about the grant to go learn "atomic and nuclear physics for a six-week stint at the University of Detroit." Bob tells Dave a little about the area of Detroit he is moving to. Dave's thoughts and enthusiasm for the events that will transpire at the end of the school year are revealed to the audience in italics. With summer finally upon them, Dave says goodbye to his mom/landlord, packs up his car, and takes off for the long drive from his home in Ohio to the University in Detroit. There he marvels at the "Jesuit-founded school" that will serve as his home for "the next six weeks."

Then the narrative takes "a brief look into the future...for Dave and a lady he is about to meet" with a discussion on the role of faith in Dave's life prior to coming to Detroit as both a college student and teacher before Dave meets "Amanda" MANDY, the lady in question, at a dance that evening after unpacking his stuff. Mandy introduces herself after catching Dave watching her dance with JUDE, a "Dominican brother" whom Dave believes is her boyfriend. Dave explains that he was watching her because he is "lonely" after moving to Detroit. She explains that Jude is her "good friend" and a fellow student in "the Order of Saint Agnes" in Detroit for their final year of study before going back home to Texas to "receive new assignments." Dave says Mandy reminds him of a character in a movie as they say goodbye.

Dave contemplates romance with Mandy as he heads back to his basement dorm room. There he meets FRED "from Brooklyn," his new roommate. Dave and Fred discuss his rigorous schedule before Dave heads to bed as the chapter ends.

Chapter 2 opens on Dave and Fred's first day of summer classes at Detroit University. There they meet PROFESSOR BLUENAN who explains that the program may be "extremely challenging" because they

can only "admit thirty students" and thus want to "spread the grant" through a wide range of educators. Dave worries to himself that he is "at the bottom of the totem pole" a fear that is confirmed in the first few weeks of class.

While the work might be hard, Dave finds time to make friends with JERRY from Jersey, another teacher in the program. Jerry and Dave spend their free time on weekends when Dave doesn't head home driving around the city "on sightseeing trips" including a memorable outing to the zoo. Dave is no longer lonely with Jerry and Fred, Dave's roommate, though he does contemplate if he will run into Mandy. Luckily, his friends and the program keep him busy doing unique and interesting things like setting up "the equipment to perform a Michelson-speed-of-light experiment" with the help of the professor.

Dave witnesses a fire caused by the infamous Detroit riots on the way back to the University from one of his sightseeing trips with Jerry. Dave listens to fellow teacher HARRY lament his troubles as a Jewish teacher in Virginia while Jerry learns that the fire was caused by a riot. When Jerry informs Dave of this information they, along with other "lounge people," decide to head out on the street to investigate. There they watch firefighters attempting to put out the blazes, while rioters get closer to the campus they call home. Dave grows fearful when he can make out individual armed rioters and tells his fellow teachers they should head back to the safety of the dorms to, hopefully, avoid them as the chapter ends.

Chapter 3 opens on the "wave" of rioters attacking Detroit University while Dave and his fellow teachers hide in the dorms. Jerry uses a metal pipe to scare off a young rioter with a Molotov cocktail. This "historic event" was "a turning point spiritually in the course of events that followed." But, for now the teachers disperse to survive the violence. Dave meets up with Harry as they watch a group of rioters loot a sporting goods store. Dave and a few other teachers stay with Harry, who has a dorm on the third floor, that first night of the riot. After hearing some gunshots in the distance the group of teachers watch an address from president LBJ about the riots in Detroit. Later, they learn the school's staff has locked their dorm when a brave teacher, who returns with food from the cafeteria, tells them of his discovery. Dave and his fellow teachers contemplate what Monday, the second day of the riot, will bring as the chapter ends.

Chapter 4 opens on the aftermath of this reveal as Dave and his fellow teachers watch some of the soldiers the president said he authorized to help with the riots arrive after midnight that evening. Dave and the teachers share any information they see on TV or hear on the radio, as no one is able to sleep that evening.

The next morning Dave calls his family to let him know he is okay after an investigation of the dorm to make sure it's okay. Luckily, the dorm appears to be fine with no bullet holes, and there aren't any rioters around in the daylight. Fred, Dave's roommate, finds Dave and explains his own harrowing trip back to the campus from his weekend at home in New York. After heading to the deserted cafeteria to get some food, the friends discover a bullet hole in an administration building and a note on the science building saying there won't be any more classes "until further notice."

Dave and fellow teachers decide to walk around to survey the aftermath of the riots now that it's daylight and classes have been cancelled. They watch home and shop owners attempt to protect their property before Dave returns to the dorms to see a sniper guarding the campus. Mandy, who has returned to "gather some things" she left behind last night, walks Dave to his car parked at the edge of campus to calm his fears that it had been destroyed by the rioters.

Fred invites Dave to come stay at a church "community" outside Detroit. Dave says yes, and Fred promises to come pick him up later after he helps a friend move property outside of the danger zone of the riot. Dave tries to stay safe while Fred is away, but a tank on the streets and sounds of the riot concern him as the chapter ends.

Chapter 5 opens on Fred returning to the dorm to relax and recharge before venturing out again. Dave is just happy his friend is back and safe. Later, they head out of the city after gathering some provisions and jump-starting Fred's car. It's tense traveling through the riot zone, but Dave is thankful, if not a little worried, about Fred's fast driving.

Fred's driving isn't so maddening once they get out of the city. Dave is able to relax in the country where Fred's church community is. The area reminds Dave of his own home, though the communes that Fred's friend TOM and his family stay in, but don't own, are a little unnerving. He is unsure what Fred has "gotten him into" until he bonds with Tom over supper and conversation that follows in the "living room." There, Dave meets "about 25 other people" who are members of the church. Dave witnesses a unique church service as he rationalizes the events of the last few days.

After the service Dave is introduced to other members of the congregation. Dave is impressed by the commune's devotion to their mission to help communities like Detroit during the riots. At Tom's he watches news about the riots there as Dave relives the events he experienced and worries about his friends.

Chapter 6 opens on the next morning at Tom's. Dave and Fred join Tom and his family for breakfast after a good night's sleep in the country. Fred and Dave decide to head back to campus in case classes resume tomorrow. As they are departing, Dave tries to offer Tom money for putting him up. Tom declines the money, saying it was all part of "God's plan."

The drive home allows Dave to reflect. He is even more impressed by Tom's commune after the events of last night, the conversation at breakfast and Tom's refusal to accept money. But, his reflection is cut short by the stark reality of the damages the riot has caused.

Back at their dorm, other teachers tell them about the harrowing evening filled with noises of gunfire, sirens and violence. There they learn that classes should start tomorrow and that a note will be posted to let them know if that's the case.

Dave reunites with Jude, Mandy's friend, near the parking lot when he goes to confirm his own car is still okay. Jude tells Dave how he and some Catholic "brothers" were part of a rescue mission to help protect 120 high school students during the riot. Jude makes a plan to speak to Dave in a few days about a matter of great importance and takes off.

Dave returns to the dorms and has dinner with his fellow teachers. Fred, Jerry and other teachers share stories about the riot, their concerns for it, and the program they are in. Dave & Jerry offer to help Fred when TIM, Fred's friend from church, calls in need of assistance protecting his business.

Chapter 7 opens on the three friends walking to Tim's. They have decided against driving for fear a car might accidentally catch on fire. Along the way they confront rioters who are fearful of the teachers.

At Tim's they learn Tim has been shot and thus needs help stopping a spreading fire from engulfing his building. Fred and Dave patch Tim up while he tells them the story of how the rioting caused his building to catch on fire. Meanwhile, Jerry works on the fire outside. Jerry returns and says they should get the National Guard to help ferry a wounded Tim to safety and protect his property. Fred makes the call and two guardsmen arrive. They take Tim to the hospital and agree to take the three friends home to campus now that other guardsmen have arrived to protect Tim's business.

Back at campus, the three friends get a heroes' welcome when fellow teachers witness them being dropped off by the National Guard. Over dinner at the cafeteria the three friends discuss their concern for the rioting, which they can hear, that evening. Dave has time to process everything that happened that day from his conversation with Jude and the riots in bed that evening.

Chapter 8 opens with class resuming for Dave and his friends. Though they have returned to their studies, Dave is still confronted with the realities of the riots. He sees and hears rescue workers busy at work from his classroom window.

Dave buys newspapers to stockpile accounts of the violence. He adds them to a stack in his dorm in hopes of one day chronicling the events.

After class Dave meets up with Jude in private. Jude explains he wants to talk to Dave about Mandy, his friend, because she has "feelings" for Dave whom she considers a "friend". Dave confides in Jude that he has feelings for Mandy too. Jude is happy to hear this and asks if Dave would feel comfortable having a similar conversation with Mandy herself. Dave agrees and decides to skip going home that weekend so he can meet Mandy and Jude at mass instead.

Dave returns to his dorm to study for a big test before the weekend with Fred. Life appears to return to somewhat normal. Fred heads back to NY after the test while fellow teachers venture out into the city to witness the destruction. Dave decides to take his car out to visit a local golf course before church with Mandy on Sunday. The outing is just what Dave needed to relax though he is concerned for Tim, Fred's wounded friend, so he and Jerry go visit him in the hospital.

Dave decides to visit Tim's congregation after researching in his newspapers to discover where they have services. He puts on his best clothes and drives through the city to their church, witnessing the destruction first hand in the process.

Chapter 9 opens on Dave attending the service. Mandy finds Dave after the service and leads him to a private room in the church so they can talk alone. Once alone, Dave shares his feelings with Mandy. She says she has feelings for him too, but as a "friend" because she has taken "vows" with her church. Mandy wants to introduce Dave to her friend CAROL from Texas who "is looking for a relationship with a good man." Dave understands and is happy to gain such a strong willed friend in Mandy and a potential relationship with Carol.

Chapter 10 finds Dave preparing for his first weekend trip home now that the riots are over after a relatively normal week in school with his friends. Dave is concerned about what shape the roads will be in, as he hasn't travelled that far outside Detroit yet. He has a little run in with a mob in Toledo, but otherwise it's an uneventful trip. Dave is thankful for Mandy's prayers for a safe journey home.

Dave regales family and friends in the community and church with his stories about the riots. At church he is given a "sample sermon" that he adds to in an endeavor to create his own. Dave heads back to school on Monday. It's a whirlwind week in class yet he still finds time to write an introductory letter to Carol, Mandy's friend.

On Sunday Dave goes to services at Tim's church again, has a final Sunday dinner with Jerry at an establishment that was hard hit by the riot, and attends mass at Mandy's church to say goodbye. After mass, Dave and Mandy share a cup of coffee. He tells her about the letter he sent Carol, and she once again states how happy she is to have met him. They part as friends and Dave has a good night's sleep, "believing his accomplishments for the day had been quite worthwhile."

Chapter 11 opens on the final week of class. Dave agrees to give Harry a ride to the airport after their final on Friday. After the test, Dave packs up his stuff, including the newspapers covering the riot. He contemplates how the city will recover from it before meeting Harry for dinner in the cafeteria. They talk about teaching before heading to the airport as similar goodbyes happen all around them.

At the airport Dave runs into Mandy and Jude. He learns they are headed back home to Texas and hits the road for his own home.

Dave delivers his first sermon at church back home on Sunday. Though he is nervous, it's a hit with the congregation. Dave has a knack for writing, though he is disappointed he didn't reach everyone. Dave spends the next few weeks before the school year starts to relax at home.

Dave reunites with Bob, his fellow teacher and friend, on the first day of classes. They briefly chat about the riots, but Dave doesn't reveal much, which is fine by Bob.

Dave receives his first letter from Carol, Mandy's friend and begins a correspondence with her. But, it's his desire to share his experience in Detroit with a wider audience that has caught his attention. Dave sends another letter to a "company who provided guidance to" writers and meets with a discouraging representative. Dave refuses to give up hope and keeps the newspapers.

Chapter 12 is more of an afterword with the author discussing the themes and history important to the novel. It reveals how the author, a friend of the protagonist, came to write the book and a final coda for Dave in 1967 after the harrowing events of the riots.

Dave gets another letter from Carol and agrees to take a train to Texas over winter break to meet her. They meet in San Antonio and have dinner with Mandy. During the dinner Dave and Mandy recount stories from the riots, including Dave's confrontation with the rioter carrying the Molotov cocktail. The two women take Dave back to his train and give him a hug. Dave contemplates everything he learned over the summer on his way home as the book ends.

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## COMMENTS

### OVERALL

**Sizzlin' Summer Surprise is a very impactful account of the Detroit riots.** With many of the same issues of social unrest and conflicts between the government and its urban citizens as we are experiencing today, this story is more timely than ever. The author and protagonist's faith is a smart addition that helps to strengthen, add context and a clear understanding of how it could help a person survive an ordeal like this.

But so little of what makes this account so unique is on display here. This is a real story of a trying time that happened for both the protagonist and the writer that documents true events they witnessed. More of their lives should be on display here. Memoirs and true stories are a huge part of publishing and the entertainment industry now. Since the subject matter is so interesting, and the addition of faith helps to contextualize the riots in a unique way, more should be done to highlight David & Alton's real struggles here. *The People Vs. OJ* and Trayvon Martin's Rest In Power from his parents take great strides at historical accuracy in the trying clashes between law enforcement and urban communities. Both are also big best-sellers that approach faith in interesting ways, whether it's OJ's belief in his supposed innocence or Martin's parents interaction with the church that helps them through their ordeals. Part of what makes these two works so successful is their connection to real life events.

Faith is such a pivotal part of both the author and subject's life. While it is a part of the narrative, faith should really be the driving force behind protagonist Dave's ability to survive this ordeal. His sermon at the end is a fantastic culmination of the events. More of what he said should be included in the narrative, and faith should be woven into the story itself. *FINDING NEMO* had Dory's cautionary tale to "just keep swimming" as a motivator for the protagonist to continue to search for his son. That mantra was strong enough to anchor not only that story but, also a sequel. Dave's faith could and should do the same here. It should be woven into the story from the beginning to end and not just be present in his friends and possible love interest.

Educators, like teachers, serve an important function in society as they shape the minds of young people. This is a profession that, like faith, helps bridge gaps and work through problems. Yet so much of protagonist Dave's chosen profession as a teacher isn't featured here. With the riots involving so many displaced and disaffected young people, it's such a missed opportunity not to showcase how a teacher attempted to use his trade to help and rationalize what happened. The inclusion of Dave's discovery of different parts of the Christian religion and how those denominations influenced his understanding of the religion is truly amazing. But we never see how teacher Dave reacted to or attempted to help the situation. *RAY*, a biopic about the legendary singer, illustrated how Ray Charles used his talented voice to speak about his community.

This narrative is perfectly timed to be adapted and reconfigured for today's marketplace. Just as Dave saved his memoirs and newspaper clippings from the time period so that

his friend and writer Alton Myers could adapt it, now seems like the time for this story to make its next transformation so that it can reach even more youths that both men wanted to influence. True life stories are huge business in the digital world. Sites like Longform or Medium feature publications from bloggers, journalists and amateur writers showcasing their memoirs. Given the historical importance of the riots and the faith-based message of this story there is a whole community that could be receptive to this story.

Of course, the big problem is the movie DETROIT. Since DETROIT failed to connect with audiences on the big screen, TV would seem to make the most sense for this story. Publishing a version of this story on one of these sites is a fantastic way to find ideal partners to tackle Dave's story in the TV universe, as many stories like Syfy's Creepy Pasta show *Channel Zero* had their start online.

Let's discuss each of these in-depth.

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### COMING OF AGE OF RAGE (story)

The coming of age narrative is one of the strongest, most durable and longest-lasting genres because it unifies everyone's shared experience of the shift from childhood to being an adult. While Dave is already an adult, the experience of the riot has a lasting impact on his world view, so this genre can and should be explored here especially since real life YA (young adult) fiction is so big in publishing right now. *FAULT IN OUR STARS* created a new reality-based subgenre of the YA field.

Dave finds love, faith, and a calling to write as an educator through the events he survived during the riots, the best part being that it all really happened. That has all the hallmarks for the YA and an extra added bonus of real authenticity. Therefore, this should be front and center in the narrative. The foreword does an amazing job setting the stage for the world, but should include the passage in the final chapter about the author's connection to Dave. Readers should know upfront how author and subject are linked. *PRINCESS BRIDE* wouldn't be half as effective without the subplot of the grandfather reading the tale to his sick grandson. Perhaps a paragraph showing how the writer met Dave could replace the one from chapter 12 that illustrates how they met? That would be a nice pay off and link the two together.

Whatever the case, since this is a real story that both the writer and protagonist survived more should be done to remind readers of this unique fact. This is only fiction and not a memoir because the real Dave trusted his friend Alton to tell his story.

### DETROIT SOUL (theme)

Faith is a powerful force that helps everyone from athletes to survivors overcome unbelievable obstacles. It was part of the reason Dave and his friends were able to

survive the riots in Detroit. Yet this aspect of Dave's personality is only called upon when the plot of the narrative demands it.

Like the real life aspects of this story, the theme of faith should be up front and center. Readers should know immediately that Dave is a passionate member of the church as well as an educator and that part of what attracts him to the University of Detroit is its strong link to religion. This could and should be apart of Dave's conversation about the summer study program at the beginning. Giving Dave some sort of physical symbol like a cross or a Bible from his home church that he takes with him to Detroit would be another way to subtly weave faith in.

For all its weaknesses, DETROIT does do a great job of humanizing the riot by partially focusing on a singer in a Mo-Town era band who rediscovers his faith after the horrific events he survives. The character is constantly singing to try to further his career, attract ladies, keep his calm around the police and ultimately, through his turning to the church, is able to make sense of the violence. Dave's sermon, could and should do something similar here. It's a great way for Dave to process what happened to him and try to create a positive message to share with others. We should see him trying to make sense of what is happening as he processes the events each night. How does he rationalize these horrific events? Do they test his faith or strengthen it? This sermon is the vehicle for him to deliver his thoughts and feelings as a man of faith while his nightly reflections are places where he could work through what this narrative ultimately becomes. It would be akin to how MR. HOLLAND'S OPUS featured a symphony written by the protagonist and performed by his students who are thankful for his putting aside his career aspirations to enrich their lives.

Since faith is so important for all these characters, especially Dave, more should be done to highlight how Dave uses it to keep his wits during the riots and process the horrors after them.

DAVE, TEACHER MAN (protagonist)

Dave as a teacher is an important part of his identity as a writer and man of faith. It's also true to the story of the real person. Yet his career as an educator is never really utilized or tested in any real capacity.

The foreword is a great primer on the story, but a little bit of connection (if it existed) should be drawn between the teacher and the riots. How old was Dave, the teacher? Was he closer in age with the younger rioters or the older members of government? Educators attempt to bridge gaps and help their students. What was this teacher's role in this world? Since the meat of the novel is going to explore this, it doesn't need to be any longer than another paragraph, but something that transitions between the teacher in Detroit in the 60s (at the bottom of page 7) and talk of the riots (on page 8) connecting what he thought he was in the city to do and what he ended up doing during the riots would be really useful here.



This could and should be reinforced by the events of Dave's story. Could he come into conflict with any of the rioters or business owners like Tim as they attempt to survive the riot? That Tim scene in particular is an ideal way for Dave, the teacher, to try and rationalize what has happened as he tries to find peace between the rioters and property owners.

Dave's burgeoning discovery of the importance faith has in his life is also something that could be linked to this. Preachers are nothing if not teachers. How does Dave's discovery of Tim and Tom's churches change his view on teaching? He should be making those connections. War has shaped writers' world-views for centuries. Whitman, Kerouac, and most recently Anthony Swofford were all shaped by the conflicts they survived. It changed them as people. How do the riots and Dave's subsequent discovery of new branches of the church change his? The sermon is the perfect vehicle for Dave to articulate this, but his conversation should begin well before this.

Here are more page notes to consider that address the notes above to consider when going through the novel:

Page 10 - This conversation between Dave and Bob is a great way into this story. But it would be even stronger with more specific details like which rural school and city the two live in or their last names?

Page 13 & 14 - What about naming Mandy as "the lady whom Dave is about to meet" here just so readers are prepared for her arrival in the narrative that evening?

Page 19 - Could we get some idea of the other 27 teachers beyond Dave, Fred & Jerry in the program? At least what they look like as Dave sees them.

Page 20 - This paragraph about the "professors son" isn't really necessary if this person never becomes part of the narrative you don't need it. A simple ransition from the reveal that the program is tough to Dave finding solace in his friendship with Jerry, a fellow educator who is there with him would be ideal.

Page 22 - Who is the narrator? Was he also a member of this program? It is alluded that that's the case with "I thought..." Why not make that sentence Dave thought the professor let HIM do it just so he wouldn't feel so out of things? This is out of left field without the context from Chapter 12 moved to the foreword.

Page 25 - More description on the rioters would be really helpful especially if readers aren't familiar with the racial tensions that caused them.

Page 31 - How does Harry know about Dave's "basement apartment" if the two just met on page 23?

Page 36 & 37 - Is this the same presidential address referenced at the end of chapter 3 on page 34 or a new one? If so perhaps Dave could remark that the interruption to

Harry's program by the president and have this address be the event that links the two chapters.

Page 52 - If Tom is going to be introduced with his family then his wife and kids should be named as well. Perhaps the wife could be the family member who announces dinner (on page 53)?

Page 68 - Why can't Jude tell Dave what he wants to speak about now? There needs to be a timely reason why he can't and has to rejoin his group. Could he look at his watch and realize he is late?

Page 69 - Perhaps think about changing Tim's name as it's really close to Tom, who is another member of the church Dave and the audience have already met.

Page 83 - The events in the opening of this chapter are a little confusing. When did Dave's conversation with Fred happen here? Why not write it out chronically with the day's events?

Page 88/89 - Why not link Dave's visit to Tim with his desire to go to church? Perhaps Tim could tell Dave about the Saturday service and ask him to alert the congregation to how Tim is doing? Then Dave could look up the address in his newspapers.

Page 92/93 - Why wouldn't Jude alert Dave to Mandy's conflicting feelings for Dave which were at odds with her "vows" when they spoke back on pages 84/85?

Page 94-96 - Where is Bob, Dave's school friend from the opening? Wouldn't Dave want to see him on his trip home after the riots? Or could Bob be out of town for the summer like Dave?

Page 101-103 - What happened to Jerry? Did Dave not want to say goodbye to him before taking off back home?

#### TIMING IS EVERYTHING (marketing)

This narrative is very timely and important. The author's expressed goals for the story to be used as a tool to help young people at a difficult time in their lives is also very aspirational. Thus alternative forms of publishing should be considered to reach as many people as possible now. The internet has created a whole new realm for authors to connect to audiences directly. Just like the publishing market expanded from the late 60s when Dave tried to publish his own story, so too has the Internet made it even easier to get books into the hands of readers in the past 12 years since Alton published this book. There is a whole community of faith based story telling online. Since this novel lives in so many different subgenres like the ones discussed above (true life story, coming of age and crime) it has the potential to reach a whole new generation of fans of these different kinds of stories.

TV has been a beacon for true crime stories and has a strong history of adapting both books and content from the web. Likewise, this narrative, which takes place over several days, is perfectly suited for the longer form story telling that TV allows for. DETROIT's failure at the box office might make it difficult for a film version of this story, whereas many of the same elements that would make this thrive online will be additions on the TV side. The most important aspect is that the writer is a man of faith himself – that's so unique and powerful because it isn't common and adds a level of honesty and purity to the material.

## CONCLUSION

Sizzlin' Summer Surprise is a very inspiring true story of the Detroit riots. Its protagonist's strong belief in faith as a teacher allows him to survive the worst parts of this tragedy and come out of it a stronger person. All that needs to be done is further linking these unique aspects of the protagonist's character to the real life story. Since the material is so timely, new forms of publishing could and should be explored for this narrative. They would allow for the changes to be presented to a whole new audience of fans who have proven they are interested in events like the Detroit riots. This is a real story so there is a wealth of material to draw on to weave the themes, profession and message even more tightly together in Sizzlin Summer Surprise.



<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>YOU BET!</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>KINDA-SORTA</b>	<b>NOT SO MUCH</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Strong PREMISE?		X			
Is the material ORIGINAL?		X			
Is the script COMMERCIAL? (mainstream or indie)		X			
Is the PROTAGONIST dimensional, well-developed?				X	
Does the story have a clear ANTAGONIST or ANTAGONISTIC FORCE?		X			
Are the SECONDARY CHARACTERS well-developed and believable?		X	X		
Is the STORYLINE believable and effective?		X			
Does the FOCUS remain clearly on the protagonist and not get lost in secondary characters' subplots?		X			
Are the STAKES high? If the protagonist fails in his/her quest, are the consequences of failure dire?		X			
Does the story have a strong STRUCTURE, 3-Act or other?					X
Do the first ten pages set the TONE for the rest of the story?		X			
Is the TONE consistent throughout?		X			
Is the story mythology/world-building well-developed and effective?		X			
Does the script have solid PACING?		X			
Does each scene move the story forward?			X		
Does the CONFLICT rise effectively?		X			
Does character DIALOGUE sound natural?		X			
Does the DIALOGUE contain sufficient subtext?		X			
Is the plot conveyed clearly, with enough direct exposition?		X			

Does the writer's STYLE reflect professional quality and ability?		X			
Is the writing tight and punchy, with a minimum of bloat?		X			
Length appropriate for genre?		X			
Format/Mechanics/Spelling/Grammar?		X			
Does the writer have a strong VOICE?			X		
Is there a secondary storyline? Is that "B"-line effective?					X
Is the cast size manageable and appropriate?		X			
Is the TITLE a grabber? Does it reflect the material's genre or tone?		X			
Does the script have a clear THEME or THEMES?				X	
Does the story have a clear target audience, and does the tone of the script reflect that audience from start to finish?		X			

**BOOK:**

**WRITER:**

**ADAPTATION:**

**PASS**

**PASS**

**CONSIDER**