PROFESSIONAL EVALUATION

The Eleventh Crossing

SUBMISSION	SA-26-V6PSVY
WRITER	Scott Zimmerman
CATEGORY	Film
FORMAT	Feature screenplay
PAGES	95 screenplay pages / 96 PDF pages, including title page
STANDARD	SA-EVAL-1.5

Evaluation Scores

Premise	8/10
Plot	8/10
Character	8/10
Dialogue	8/10
Structure	9/10
OVERALL	**8 / 10**

LOGLINE

When a recently paroled man secretly crosses from Georgia into South Carolina to see the Army intelligence sergeant he loves, a predatory disc golfer uses evidence of those violations and a fraudulent job to coerce him into gathering military information, forcing the couple to choose between concealment, career and freedom as her security interview approaches.

CATEGORY RATIONALES

PREMISE - 8/10

The screenplay fuses an intimate relationship problem with an espionage mechanism unusually well: Keon’s forbidden crossings give Brandon leverage over both his freedom and Neecy’s clearance, while the approaching reinvestigation turns honesty itself into a threat. The Georgia-South Carolina geography, parole conditions and lovers’ need for one private place make the proposition specific and productive for the full feature. It stops short of outstanding because the coercive-recruitment framework is familiar and Brandon’s risk calculus is not always developed with the same precision as the central relationship.

PLOT - 8/10

Cause and effect are consistently strong. Keon's concealed violations lead to Brandon's sham employment, Neecy's questions expose the surveillance, her report prompts Keon's warning text, and that text causes Corbin to suspect her and arrange the curfew that makes the final crossing necessary. Escalation is sustained through the photographs, recording phone, ankle monitor, roster demand and staged bench exchange. Brandon explicitly wants compromising images rather than merely possession of the roster. The remaining limitation is narrower: the film could sharpen how he expects that leverage to protect him from the surveillance he already recognises. The deadline and threat to his daughter motivate the risk, but his immediate fallback remains less precise than the couple's choices.

CHARACTER - 8/10

Keon and Neecy are active, differentiated and emotionally complex. His secrecy grows from shame, love and institutional fear rather than simple passivity; her decisions combine professional discipline, anger, guilt and determination to prevent him from being reduced to Brandon's version of events. Their reciprocal letters and final acts of disclosure complete coherent arcs. Brandon, Pruitt and Corbin also make consequential choices. Neecy's retraction is motivated by the ankle photograph, her report naming Keon as Brandon's employee and her refusal to expose him without understanding the facts. The category remains at 8 because Brandon's recognition of the trap and decision to proceed could reveal more of his immediate survival calculation, giving his personal pressure the same behavioural precision as the central couple's conflict.

DIALOGUE - 8/10

The dialogue carries distinct voices, subtext and tonal control. Keon's guarded literalness, Neecy's quick humour, Pruitt's dry precision and Brandon's weaponised affability remain recognisable across the script. Recurring phrases such as "put me down," "name spelled right" and "It's a nice state" gain altered meaning through context rather than functioning only as callbacks. Exposition is usually embedded in pressure or relationship conflict. Some late exchanges restate already established facts for cameras, agents or confessions; they have evidentiary purpose, but selective compression would preserve urgency.

STRUCTURE - 9/10

The five-day countdown, flash-forward opening and crosscut climax show outstanding structural control. Early details-including the hidden bicycle, tan coat, monitor, missing car, letters, backward-facing camera and Pruitt's location tracking-return as functional payoffs rather than decoration. Each park or towpath encounter changes knowledge, leverage or allegiance, so recurrence does not become simple repetition. The resolution also completes both the thriller and relationship arcs without pretending the consequences disappear. Only modest tightening around the bench confrontation and post-arrest explanations keeps the execution from being virtually seamless.

WHAT WORKS

The strongest choice is making geography inseparable from character. Riverview is not merely a convenient location: it is the one place where Neecy can stop being Sergeant Wallace, but it is also the one place Keon cannot legally follow her. His ten crossings therefore communicate love, deception and self-endangerment simultaneously. The eleventh crossing converts that emotional pattern into physical action. Because the screenplay has already established the river, shoals, monitor, missing vehicle, bicycle and winter cold, the climax feels prepared without losing danger.

The central relationship is built through behaviour rather than declarations alone. Neecy gives Keon the coat, helps him rehearse what her investigators will ask and reveals forty-four unsent letters. Keon preserves the four letters she sent during his trial, conceals the cost of Riverview and ultimately refuses to sign Brandon’s false statement. Both also make damaging choices: he lies repeatedly and records part of her work conversation; she recants a valid security report and undertakes an unauthorised confrontation. Their love does not erase accountability. The Thursday phone call works because each accepts a concrete consequence while finally placing the other openly in the record.

The visual and verbal motifs are exceptionally integrated. Cameras begin as Neecy’s means of controlling how she is seen, become Brandon’s surveillance weapon, then become her means of establishing intent and Keon’s means of confessing. The coat moves from affection to concealment, survival and promised return. Written names progress from Brandon’s phone number on a disc, through Keon’s name on a pay stub and false statement, to the lovers finally writing each other’s names on letters and official forms. “Put me down” consequently develops from bureaucratic anxiety into the resolution of the relationship.

The suspense construction is similarly disciplined. Neecy’s discovery of Brandon in old footage, the gray sedan’s ambiguous role, Keon’s failed attempt to record Brandon, the live-transmitting phone and Corbin’s interpretation of the warning text all alter the power balance. Dialogue-heavy scenes still produce action: the conversation through Keon’s closed door changes what Neecy understands, the towpath disclosure breaks the relationship, and the meeting with Pruitt recruits an institutional witness. The script repeatedly turns speech into evidence, leverage or irreversible choice.

WHAT NEEDS WORK

Brandon’s purpose at the bench is established, rather than missing. On page 83, he explains that the roster is a souvenir and that he wants the picture: footage of an apparent exchange can create leverage whether or not it survives formal scrutiny. His false statement for Keon and camera trained on Neecy support that strategy. He also knows he is being watched, admits that surveillance has followed him since Fayetteville and recognises that the watchers want him to hurry. The Buyer’s deadline, impending end of payment and threat to Maddie place him under genuine pressure. The narrower development opportunity is to sharpen his immediate calculation about surviving the encounter. On page 79, the missing sedan makes him hesitate before Maddie’s photograph draws him forward. One precise indication of what he believes he can still control, or what he knowingly sacrifices, could make that choice more exact without explaining a motive already on the page.

Neecy's attempted retraction has a clear immediate trigger on pages 51-52. She receives the ankle-monitor photograph, studies her report identifying Keon as employed by Brandon, tries to call him and says she will not put him down blind. She then attempts to withdraw both meeting and report. Okafor tells her during that call that counterintelligence already has the report; Neecy has not received that information beforehand. Nor does she yet know about Keon's warning text or the recording of her work conversation. Her fuller understanding develops later, through the towpath disclosure and her recorded statement of intent. Preserve that progression. The useful refinement is to make the cost of choosing delay register as strongly as her reason for it, particularly once Okafor says the report cannot be recalled. Her motivation does not require an added explanation that anticipates later knowledge.

The final confrontation occasionally explains information the audience already understands. Neecy's camera statement, Keon's confession, Corbin's account of the warning text and Brandon's comments about the likely parole consequence each perform a real function: they establish intent, clear Neecy, change Corbin's view and define the cost. The issue is therefore not inactivity or wholly redundant dialogue. It is cumulative emphasis. Trimming repeated formulations of who hired Keon, why he warned Brandon and how many crossings occurred would let the physical danger, Brandon's lunge and Corbin's changing response carry more of the climax.

The external operation is deliberately kept secondary to the couple, which preserves focus, but this places substantial weight on Brandon's own exposition about Cyprus, foreign-agent liability and the Buyer. Corbin's late reveal validates the larger threat, yet the exact relationship among the Buyer, Brandon and the surveillance remains lightly sketched. The screenplay does not need a broader conspiracy subplot. It does need every existing clue to align cleanly so the audience can distinguish what Brandon knows, what he merely fears and what Corbin has actually inferred at each stage.

THE REWRITE

1. Sharpen the risk Brandon chooses, preserving his established objective. Keep the false statement, his forward-facing camera and the page-83 explanation that the compromising picture is the prize. The roster need not become his sole objective. Review the sequence from his admission about surveillance on page 66 to his hesitation beside the truck on page 79. Let a small behavioural choice or a precise line reveal what he thinks remains possible: retaining leverage, bargaining or completing the job despite the trap. These are development options, not missing facts. Preserve Maddie's photograph as the existing emotional pressure that helps propel him forward.

2. Protect Neecy's knowledge sequence and sharpen the cost of delay. Retain the monitor photograph, the report naming Keon as Brandon's employee and her voicemail on pages 51-52. They already explain why she refuses to expose him without hearing the truth. She learns that counterintelligence has the report during the call to Okafor, and learns of the recording later on the towpath. Do not move the warning text or recorded conversation into her earlier reasoning. If refining the scene, concentrate on her response to Okafor's warning and the deliberate choice to persist with the retraction. That would strengthen the conflict between immediate loyalty and professional responsibility without adding another motivation scene.

3. Compress the climax's repeated factual declarations. Track what Neecy's camera, Brandon's camera and Corbin each need to capture. Keep lines that change legal or emotional interpretation-especially Keon claiming the warning text and naming Brandon's recruitment-but remove any adjacent restatement that does not add evidence, leverage or choice. The objective is a faster confrontation, not less clarity.

4. Run a focused procedural-consistency pass. Verify the parole-monitoring, clearance-interview, counterintelligence and federal-investigation details with appropriate specialists. No specific technical error is established by the screenplay alone, but these procedures drive major turns and should withstand scrutiny. Any corrections should preserve the current restraint and avoid replacing dramatic action with explanatory dialogue.

MARKET PERSPECTIVE

The screenplay occupies a viable adult-thriller space while differentiating itself through an intimate romance, regional geography and a nontraditional espionage entry point. Its principal audience is likely to be viewers drawn to grounded surveillance thrillers, relationship dramas and stories about institutional pressure rather than large-scale action spectacle.

The production footprint is moderate: recurring parks, apartments, vehicles and offices keep much of the film contained, while the river crossing, winter water work, cycling sequences and coordinated arrest create concentrated logistical and safety demands. Military, parole and federal-investigation elements also require convincing locations, props and procedural detail. The cast is manageable, with four substantial principal roles and a limited supporting ensemble. The title, countdown and crossing imagery provide clear positioning, though marketing would need to communicate that the film is both an espionage thriller and a consequential love story rather than a conventional action vehicle.

BOTTOM LINE

This is an excellent, professionally executed screenplay with a strong dramatic proposition, two fully engaged protagonists and unusually disciplined setup and payoff. Its best material comes from making love, secrecy and bureaucracy operate through the same objects, locations and choices. The final crossing is not an imposed action climax; it is the physical completion of Keon's emotional pattern and Neecy's decision to place him openly in her life.

The remaining work is targeted rather than foundational. Brandon's knowingly exposed final gamble could reveal a more precise survival calculation, Neecy's motivated retraction could place slightly greater emphasis on the cost of delay, and the climax can lose some repeated explanation. Addressing those points while preserving the visual motifs, moral consequences and restrained ending would materially improve an already accomplished feature.