**HAVEN SENT***(Feedback)*

**PREMISE:**

A tough, unorthodox Benedictine Sister who runs a youth shelter, risks her life to save and protect the runaways and throwaways on the gritty streets of Los Angeles.

**LOGLINE:**

Sister Jet, a Benedictine Sister, tries save a teen that’s been raped by her well-connected foster father while battling a straight-laced co-worker that wants to remove her from the job.

**CHARACTERS**

SISTER GOERGETTE GALEONO, the protagonist, is introduced effectively by having her shoot baskets and bantering with her spiritual advisor, ABBOT AZRIA, about her being reassigned away from Haven House. In both conversation and action we immediately know this woman is committed to her truth and defies the religious institution she’s a part of if it interferes with her version of “the Greater Good.” As the story progresses we see her dedication play out as well as getting a glimpse into her psychological and moral dilemma of reconciling her militaristic past with her selfless present. She’s very much an updated version of the priest from “A Cross And A Switchblade.”

TOM WARREN, a drunken lawyer, assigned by the courts to be the legal counsel for Haven House is the requisite, reluctant ally to Sister Jet. Making him arrogant and difficult gives him room to grow and change. While this is standard, it’s necessary and handled well. Other allies include BIG WILLIE, a hulking, menacing black man who also has a military background, and Hiro, the harried Asian cop with a moral center. This team of heroes works well for the story world. Abbot Azria is a mentor character.

The Antagonists are two-fold. Representing the stringent system that, more often than not, is so concerned with rules that they are often ineffective is BRENDA KOTTO. Rather than making her an evil nurse RATCHED, the author actually shows her trying to do the right thing by re-uniting a runaway with his family. Also she does apologize when it’s proven Sister Jet was right in protecting Allondra but you still get the feeling the beef between these women is far from over. The second level of Antagonist is the streets themselves represented by EL REY (who is introduced too late), Uncle Ray, and the Goth Girl and her friend.

**STORY/PLOT/STRUCTURE**

The **A** story concerns a young girl, Allondra Hall, who is on the run from her foster father. She returns to sleep in the garage when he catches her and rapes her. Unbeknownst to him, she records the incident on her cell and manages to stab him with a tool and escape. Along the way a white pimp who steals her backpack menaces her. Big Willie, a seemingly menacing large black man, confronts the pimp, gets Allondra’s backpack, returns it to her and delivers the traumatized girl to Sister Jet. The **B** story concerns two street girls that Sister Jet tries to convince to come to the shelter. Eventually one of the girls lures Sister Jet into the “Hole” a dangerous shooting gallery/headquarters for a gang that claimed the life of Sister Jet’s predecessor.

 There’s also a smaller sub-story about Tom revealing to a rich friend that his missing son is under the care of Sister Jet. He inadvertedly violates protection laws for the minor and the scared teen flees.

 A story issue that needs thought is that the **B** is actually more compelling than the **A** story. It’s understood the writer wants to wrap up the A story while the B story is a longer arc spanning many episodes. A solution to this may be to connect the stories by having Allondra sleeping in a hidden space in the HOLE. She awakens from her slumber, still in hiding, and witnesses EL REY and his minions cooking drugs, raping girls or some other brutal activity. She tries to leave and makes noise on the way out and the bad guys give chase. She eventually eludes them and winds up on the bus stop bench where we meet her in the script. With the above-mentioned scenario, EL REY is introduced earlier and when we meet him again and subsequent actions happen that occur, i.e., Sister Jet’s fight after being lured into the building resonates stronger because the story is more unified. (This is one of UNITY PRINCIPLES Aristotle talks about in the POETICS)

**PACING/TONE**

The pacing is excellent. The story moves along and is a good read that holds the interest. Tonally, it’s gritty but also realistically kind of hopeful without glossing over the inherent problems faced while working with an imperfect system.

There is one story thread that feels like overkill and that’s the story of the teen that is transitioning. Think about putting this thread into a future episode instead of shoehorning it into the pilot. There is already enough meat to chew on here.

**OTHER THOUGHTS**

*Page 1:*

Shorter opening description of Haven’s House—“What was once a neighborhood clinic…runaway youth” then “It’s a two story structure with dormitories, studio apartments, a cafeteria and a clinic. Graffiti art covers the walls and the HAVEN HOUSE plaque.”

*Page 17*

How long have Brenda & Sister Jet known each other? If they just met, maybe the “Deep Google” exposition would work in a more terse form. A more effective way would be to put maybe just the “rich girl” insult into the argument that might give us the feeling this is an ongoing clash. Later on (pgs. 29 – 30) we get Sister Jet’s military exposition by having Allondra see the pictures on the wall. Cut Jet’s line, “I keep them up. I think it’s important…” This is preachy and unnecessary. The visuals say everything that needs to be communicated in this moment.

*Page 22*

“…we both have a hole in our hearts…” Poetic line, but too “on the nose.” Cut it. Just continue with “I’m here to win your case. Are you?” Less is more. It plays better.

*Page* 28

“high school” instead of “high”

All in all, this is a strong professional piece of writing.