

## Ep #33: Believe in Yourself

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In this episode, we're talking all about believing in yourself, man, it's a difficult thing to do, and we have ups and downs, but got some tips and tricks for you. So listen in.

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This is the script reader pro podcast, hands on advice, insider hacks and deeper discussions for the screenwriters who are serious about breaking into the industry.

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Hey everybody, this is Desiree, and this is the script reader pro podcast, and I am here with Scott, my husband.

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Yes, I am a husband, but I'm also a writer and one of the team here at script reader pro so we are here to have some fun today and have one of our real talk episodes. Real talk. This is going to be real intense. Yeah, it's going to be intense. It's going to be filled with tension and intensity.

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Okay, all right,

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but we're talking about believing in yourself and how how it is important as a writer, because sometimes you're the only one who has your back. So some real important stuff to take in, as far as like a life, like a lifestyle thing. As a

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writer, thank you for spitting on the microphone there. When you said the word life,

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don't make faces at me,

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guys, I have to work with this thing. But no, when it comes to believing in yourself. I mean, this is a good one, I think, just in general, yeah, in general, for life. And I can be the first one to say, and be honest and say, I suck at this.

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You have your days. Yeah, it's tough. Desiree doesn't always understand how awesome she is. So give her five stars on our podcast, and that will remind her how awesome

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she is. Okay. Well, whatever. Anyway, I think everybody struggles with this,

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yeah. So anyways, and as creatives, that's just who we are. As people, right? Any kind of artist is going to be doubting themselves and having ups and downs and are prone to really dark moments and highs and lows. So we're going to talk about some ways to battle those and to keep your self focused on the right things. So battle the blues, battle the blues. But what do we do before we get into our subject Desiree, we

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are going to talk about me for a minute. Okay, hi. I have nothing new to report. Nothing new to report, but we are getting ready for a

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trip. Yes, yep, we are gonna hit the road, do a road trip, do some fun things with the family, which we always do every, every you know, after school every year, with our our kids. So we're gonna have some fun and hit the road, but hit the road jack at the road jack or Jackie. Okay. So before, though, before we start into our subject of the podcast today, we talk about what we've watched. Yeah, so we watched this movie the other day. It's called X territorial. I do not recall. You don't remember it. It was like five days ago. It's about a woman who goes into an embassy

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and her Oh, and her son goes missing. Yes,

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yeah. It was a film from Denmark.

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And right, this one, though,

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was one that I was just like, Huh? There were some parts that I was like, they didn't come back to and also, like, stuff just didn't make sense. There was something she's stuck in this building, and she's able to run around everywhere, but there's cameras everywhere, but she can come and go. It was just, it was a little too, like, easy for her to get places and do things and but once the reveal came of why she was allowed to do all these things, it made sense. But up until that point, it's like, this is so nonsensical. Yeah, there's no way she's not

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caught by now. Yeah. And you know how you always say to me that I can't suspend my disbelief, suspend your belief, my beliefs. What does suspend my disbelief mean?

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Okay, so when you spend your when you suspend your belief, it means you allow yourself to believe other things. If I suspend my disbelief, then I don't know. Maybe it's the same thing. He'll have to look it up later. Maybe I'm not sure what the proper term is. Maybe it's suspending your disbelief or suspending your belief, which is correct and suspend means to pause.

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Right? Yeah, your disbelief. I would say disbelief. Maybe. So I've been right this whole time, because you always

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say, there, hey. So, yeah. I mean, it was worth it. Was it was enjoyable? Yeah? You know, there's some great action and some fun character stuff and good, really cool, like, hand to hand, close combat moments just that, yeah, some like, hard to believe, hard to buy into. Yeah?

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Is the buy in factor, yeah, which I found as well, but I thought it was

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nice twist and turns enjoyable, kept us, kept our attention. So he's

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speaking of other things too, yells. I just finished watching that series that I got finished really, really quickly, yeah, dying for sex, right? Yeah, oh my gosh. That's pretty out there, pretty out there, pretty raunchy, pretty raunchy. But I did say to you that I was surprised that Disney plus allowed that to be on Disney plus,

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yeah, I mean Disney only. A lot of different companies, right? So they put all their products on there.

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You did say though too, you're like, yeah, it's kind of weird, because it's like, the first thing when you go on

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there, yeah, I'm sure you can have parental settings that will block titles and things that are rated a certain way. So that all comes down to responsibility of whoever's using the system. It was really messed you were so sad after you were done. It kind of messed your whole day up. Yeah, it

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was sad, like a whole process of this woman who hasn't ever, you know, had that intimacy with someone, and in searching for that, and then, I mean, it's all about her dying, obviously, didn't just reveal something, but it was good. Yeah, it emotionally affected you, right? Yeah, I just

chose to watch it when Asha wasn't around. Yeah, not a good show to watch with your kids in the next room. Probably not, is what I'm thinking. So, yeah, okay, well, let's talk about believing in yourself as a writer. Sure. And how important is it?

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It's everything, right? You're the only one who will always believe in yourself, even though you don't always believe in yourself, but you have you're the only one who holds that power to keep telling yourself that this is worth it, that you are on the right path, that this is worth your time and energy, because this is what you're supposed to Do, or this is what you want to do. You know, the you're the only person who you'll be able that you'll be able to control, and if you don't believe in yourself, why would anyone, I mean, even just look at everything we watch, right? Movies, TV shows, books we read. If, if the character doesn't believe in themselves, for like, the whole story, then we won't either, right? It's hard to it's hard to root for someone who just doesn't put the effort in, or doesn't believe in themselves, or doesn't tell themselves that things will move in a positive way, right? You just kind of lose faith in them, right? And so that's a great way to lose faith in yourself, is to not believe in yourself enough. And there's a difference between being cocky and being confident, right? You telling yourself I am a great writer and I have a voice and I have stories that people want to hear that's not being cocky, no, right? It's being confident, right? If you tell yourself you're their best, and you tell everyone else at your best and your writing doesn't measure up to the best, then that's cocky, right? You have, I mean, the best way to know if you are great at something is if people tell you that you are great at something, right? If you just tell yourself that you're great at it. Like a lot of people, we know that think they know it all, or you know they're the best at everything. They don't need help or need instruction, or they already know what they're doing. It's hard to believe that they are all they're always you don't believe that they're they're re that they really are the best at something, and I there's always room to grow too, right? Always, I learn from every script I read, whether it's a produce script or an unproduced script, every script I read, good or bad, I'm constantly learning and growing and seeing how I can be better. You know? It's part of the process. You have to otherwise there's nowhere to go.

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Well, things change too, like writing patterns and styles and stuff, they change with the times, right? Like, you have to know what is new. And

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yeah, yeah, exactly. And you can't be great at something if you aren't constantly learning and paying attention to how things shift,

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right? So, yeah, it's important. We've talked about that before, too, where it's like a writer just getting a pen and paper and just writing, you know, looking on the flip side, it's like a surgeon taking a scalpel and then just doing surgery. It takes time, right? Yeah, for sure, it's not something that's instant. You have to learn. You have to learn all the ins and

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outs of everything, right? And that's part of it. If you're going to believe in yourself, you have to give yourself the tools to keep believing, right? If you think you're going to be a great screenwriter, or you think you are a great screenwriter, then you should constantly be learning how to be a better screenwriter. You should always be getting better with every page. You shouldn't just sit at a level and stay there, right? Because then what's the point? Right? You always want to be better. Like every time I sit and I'm going to write a new script, I sit down and tell myself two things. The first is that this is going to be the best screenplay I've written yet, and even higher of a bar I say whatever it is, if it's a thriller or a horror or whatever it might be, this is going to be the best contained horror movie script ever written. That's the bar I set for myself, because that helps me believe that I can actually do it, right? So you have to play with things, and, you know, use little mechanisms and tools to remind yourself that you are believing in yourself well,

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because really, at the end of the day, you're the only one who's always going to believe in yourself exactly. There isn't anybody else like

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yourself we supported people, yeah, and that's a thing, yeah. Like, I lucked out with my wife. She's, she's supported me from get go, from the first date that we had. And I told her I was, I want to be screenwriter, because this was, like a decade and a half ago, decade and a half, long time, decade and a half, two decades and a half is what I meant. Yeah. I know how long we've been together, but I was still, you know, like I was, I was finding some, some, you know, small successes and stuff. But I said, I'm, I'm, I'm going to be a screenwriter. That's my goal, is to make my living as a writer. And Desiree was on board right then. She never even knew what a screenplay was, and she's like, Okay, I'll read whatever. Right? Summer Nights passing, yeah, yeah, mid summer's passing, yeah, mid summers. Why I always say mid summer night? Yeah, mid summer. Shakespeare, mid summer passing, mid summers passing, yeah, that was another one. Your first screenplay. That was your first what was the other one? Remember, key to the puzzle. Key of the puzzle was good, yeah. And finding pharaohs. Finding Pharaoh is still amazing. I got a lot of success with that off the gate, but he did the puzzle. I mean, you could work that around and just come back to it, yeah? I mean, some stories you can go back to, some you can't. But just

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because you've written something years ago doesn't mean it's not viable. Now I

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come back to life, yeah? But that, yeah, but, but luckily, I found someone who supported my dreams and is able to get through the bad days, because we all have bad days. This is a hard road. Pieces of my family just thought it was a joke that I wanted to be a screenwriter. I remember someone said that's just for special people. And I was like, Okay, I guess I'm not a special person, but I'm going to show you because I am a special Yeah, I do have a talent. I

Right? I am a storyteller, but I don't think if I hadn't met you, if I hadn't found you, I don't, I don't know how well I would have gone if I didn't have the right person, kind of always being my cheerleaders. It's

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the same with me, though, like it goes both ways, right? It's not just one sided there, but nothing is as hard as when you don't have any support system, right? So if you don't have a support system, you need to find people who will support you, whether that be other writers. You know other people that you can reach out to, maybe good good friends.

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Yeah, good friends, good people. Being friends with a writer is huge, because they know the struggle, right? You can lean on each other and you can they know that you guys will both find that you suck and heal. You tell yourself your second with anything, though, actually anything, you find someone that's like minded, that has similar interests, right? Yeah, exactly. But this, I mean, this is a really hard road screen, right? Hard because there's a lot of rejection you will, yeah, you I don't think there's another. I mean art, the whole art field of any kind, is just, you're going to deal with more rejection than any any success. It's just part of it, right? You have to put yourself out there. And every Rejection hurts. It doesn't matter how long you've been doing. I've been doing, I've been writing screenplays for 30 years now. No, 30 holy, I'm old. 34 years, 16. Wow. 34 years almost. I'm almost 50. Yikes. But like, but still, every single rejection hits me in the gut for days. It you never get used to it, right? But it's part of it. So you have to, you have to just know what's coming. You have to welcome it. Yeah, exactly. Welcome it. Welcome the rejection. That's a great thing that you taught me a long time ago is, is that the hits are going to come, the days are going to be bad. You have to welcome it. You have to just take it as part of the as part of the process. Because if you're not struggling, you're not growing, right? See, see how smart and supportive my wife is. I really, really lucked out. I really

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think you locked out as well. Yeah, I know

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you tell everyone that all the time. I really

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think when Scott, when we first met. We met on a telephone, chat line, telephone, not even internet. Was around guys we mentioned, I don't even know if we mentioned that in the podcast. I don't know, but one of the first when we were just kind of getting to know each other and just talking back and forth and stuff, he would mail me poems. That's what you used to write, poems all the time. To me, that's

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weird. I was just thinking about that this morning. So strange. Yeah, the book The Desiree poems, and I hadn't thought of it forever, and I thought of it, and now you're talking about

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it, crazy. Yeah, so he started by writing poems. And that was like, I knew you were a good writer. Then was the poetry, right? And I'm not really into poetry, but I was just like, how did he come up with that? How did he come up with a word that rhymes with confused. Oh, Muse, yeah, confusing news, yeah, but yeah, that's, that's how it kind of started. And then, yeah,

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but I mean that. And that's, I mean, that's a great example. It's a great way to to keep your belief in yourself up, is to create, right? Create pages, write stories, create, yeah. It

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doesn't even mean that. I don't think, if you're a writer, I don't think you necessarily need to always be writing scripts either. Like, why? Why not just going to the poetry thing, just to take a break and refresh your you know is that something to that you would recommend

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for sure? Like, always, like, always be creating, right, even if you are journaling, right? Writing in a journal, how you feel, how you or just like watching being a people watcher, and watching people and understanding how they you know how they operate, and you know what things are what yet, it's a great way to grow as a writer and to, you know, to find your voice, which makes you you. Another great way to believe in yourself is to surround yourself with a community of other writers, right? Like minded people, people who struggle with the same things. It's a great way. I mean, I have a writing group that I rely on, not just for reading each other's work, but just being like, Hey guys, I'm having a I'm having a bad day. I don't even know why I'm doing this. I suck. You know, like you need those people encouragement, yeah, but you also need to be the person that you wish you had if you didn't have it when you started writing right? Like I this way. I love mentoring people, because I never had I couldn't find anyone. I never had anyone because of where I was, and there was no internet and all these things when I started, I didn't have anybody. I wasn't lucky enough to have someone pull me under their wing and say, Hey, I got you. Let's do this together. I'll help you out. I'll teach you be that person for someone else, if you've been writing for a while and you have some things you can pass on, find someone who is newer at this and connect with them. Well,

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that encourages you too as a writer. It gives you some like motivation for your own writing.

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Seriously, like every time I do a mentorship session with anybody, the second I'm done, I just want to hit that computer hard and just write like I get so inspired. So it's a great way to believe, because you're passing on information, you're sharing thoughts, and you're like, hey, you know what? I'm actually I'm actually quite creative. I'm actually good at this. I'm gonna go right now, well,

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some of the time too. I know when you get off of calls or you're doing, you know, different things with people you're or even the podcast will end and it'll be like, I can't believe that I just said all of that stuff. Like, even me, I'm like, where did that even come from? Like, I don't even know where you think of the stuff that you

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do. Oh, it's experience and years and I mean, I'm a storyteller. I'm a movie lover. And just things just come out of your subconscious, right? You can control it. I'm old, but one of the big words to kind of plug into yourself is acceptance. Believing yourself comes down to accepting what's coming right? Accept help from people if they offer to help you with your writing, accept notes in a positive way. There's no such thing as a bad set of notes, even if it's a bad set of notes, right? If all you get from a set of notes is I didn't like this and this and this and this, or they didn't get it, you can say, okay, good. I can deal with that. It's called rejection. There's nothing helpful here, but it helps me thicken my skin even more. Not necessarily. There's nothing helpful there. Maybe there is sometimes. There is sometimes there isn't right. It's just how it is, but, but even if you don't get anything from them, someone read your work and let you know how it made them feel. And then, even if it's a rejection, it still gives you that another rejection to help it make, you know, make it easier and then accept suggestions from people. You have to remember that in writing, oh man, it's a collaborative business. If you're right, if you're writing a novel, you write your novel, you can self publish it. You don't even need a single piece of feedback from anyone to actually put it out there in the world, right? If you want to get it published, you're gonna have to take notes. You're gonna have to make changes. But in in screenwriting, it's not one person in a room delivers a script and then it's shot exactly as it is. It's not how it happens. No people pull it apart, people involved. Yeah. So you have to be ready to accept that what you've written may get better if someone else gives their viewpoint, or may get worse if someone has a bad idea that gets put into it, whatever it is. You have to accept those suggestions, even if you don't believe in them. You need to try, well,

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try looking at it, it's a whole thing, or looking at it at a different angle. And why would they have seen it that way? There has to be a reason. Not everybody's the same,

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right? And what it also does, if you stop and put yourself there, is, oh my gosh, these people, they want to make what I've created. They're giving suggestions because they're ready to make it. They want to be involved, passionate about it. That should hype up the belief that you are good at this, right? What about

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when it comes to, like, getting notes from like asking someone, like script reader Pro, to do notes on a script?

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Yeah. Well, when, like, when you get notes, welcome them, right? Get excited about what people don't like. That's That's what I was saying.

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That's the piece. Is that people submit notes thinking, I think a lot of the time what is perfect about this script. It's ready to mark it now, and I'm waiting for them to tell me it's 100%

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ready to go. Yeah, don't submit anywhere for notes just to get a pat on the back, because what's the point? Right? Submit notes to make sure it's perfect, to make sure there are no issues, to find out where the issues are, because as a writer, we can't see everything for what it is, because it came from our brain, and we know everything in the background. Someone going in cold and reading your script will tell you exactly what worked and didn't and what made sense and didn't. Okay. Well, right? That's what I mean. You have to welcome it like, get excited about someone telling you it didn't work. It's all the way you look at it, right? It's exactly what you do when you are telling me about something you've seen or maybe you've gone to a show that I haven't been interested in. It drives me nuts. You know what I'm gonna say, Yes, is that you go and you explain it, and then it's like, that made absolutely no sense, how you just explained it, but you have all of the underneath information, yeah, stored in your brain, yeah. So had I given you these, this one detail, or the second detail? It made more sense, but I didn't know, because I've it's in my head, right? Yeah, yeah. But, but you have to welcome, I mean, you have to, you have to welcome it. You have to be excited about it. Yeah, it sucks. Every time I get notes and someone says, I didn't like this, or this is incomplete, or whatever it hits, it hurts like it does because you've created that. But then you have to step back and stop and say, okay, you know what? No, no, because maybe this will make it better, right? So, you know it believing in yourself comes down to just, you know, making sure that you're looking at something through the right lens. A lot of times, when I get notes, I pretend that this, this set of notes, is coming from the director that's going to direct my movie script. I tell that's who's sending it to me. So then it gives it a layer of importance and makes me look at it as Okay, so this is their vision of it. So is it matching the vision I'm trying to put out there? And if not, do any of these suggestions actually feel like they make it better? Mm, it better, right? So again, it's all believing in that viewpoint that you give, that you are good enough, that someone is trying to help you because they believe in you, or they wouldn't try to

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help you. The thing is, too, I think, with notes, right? For example, script reader Pro, there are very specific criteria that you need in order to become someone who gives notes, right? It's not like any random person can just say, I'm going to work for a script reader Pro and give notes. These people have worked in the industry themselves. They have all of the past experience and the knowledge to be able to give those notes. So if you're asking for those notes, expect that they know what they're talking about. Yeah, not to say that. You're not going to necessarily disagree. I mean, there could be times right, where you but there are, there is a high level of standard there. Well,

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yeah, I mean scripted or pro for sure, right? I mean, that's we said before, that's what makes us different. We're all working writers who've done this and pulled it off and had people say, hey, let's do this. So, you know, that's where, that's the viewpoint that we bring. But a lot of times you get like, sometimes I'll get, I'll have someone to read a screenplay who's never read a screenplay, because I just want to know what an audience would feel right. And I just say, Hey, this is how you read it. This is what you're supposed to see. And then tell me if it works, right? And that's also great, right? So you can get something good out of every experience. It's, you know, like I said, even if it's a bad set of notes, it makes no sense. At least you can put that rejection hitch, you know, in your belt, so you have more to cushion the blow,

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right? Then, I think too. Speaking about cushioning and the blow, I think it's okay to have those bad days, too. It's okay to just wallow in misery, if you need to, for a day or two, just lean into the feelings and just be I'm sure

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everyone listening to this knows this and has experienced this, right? But sometimes you have a low day when nothing big has even happened. You wake up and you look at what you wrote and you're like, Oh my gosh. Like, I'm garbage. This sucks. What? I'm never going to make it. This is too hard, blah, blah, blah, right? But then there's the big ones. Like, I had my one scripts. We were talking about it, finding pharaohs. It was changed to be called unraveled. And it had, I mean, my agent went out with it, had a director attached, a production company going investment, had \$15 million for the budget, and that was, like, 20 some years ago. It was a big deal, a lot of money, and they had a great talent attached and and it was, like, gonna, gonna be the big one to really get me going. And then, like, literally, two weeks before it was about to be shot, George Bush came on the TV and said, We are in recession. The whole housing thing happened. And literally, the next day, like overnight, the investment person, whoever pulled \$12 million their \$12 million investment out the other 3 million then just fell apart, and it died, and I fell into a hole for, I don't even know how long, like, it really broke me. I didn't believe I was good enough. It was good enough. It wouldn't have fallen apart. Why do I keep writing? What am I going to do? I worked so hard to get there. Now it's gone. The big days come to and they will last longer. That low will last longer. But you just have to let it happen. You have to, because then you can't get out of it if you just forget it's there. You don't learn from it.

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Putting it under, pushing another under the rug does nothing. No, allow yourself. We're all

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creatives. It's gonna happen every writer. You even your you know, your idol as a writer has those days, right? They've doubted themselves. They probably still do. People getting paid \$4 million for these scripts, still probably sit there and tell themselves how much they suck, and people are gonna suddenly realize that they're actually not as good as they seem to be. You know, seeing them as it happens, right? It's imposter syndrome. Is real and right? Imposter it

means that I think I'm good. This person thinks I'm good, but they're gonna realize soon that I'm not good. I'm i I'm an imposter. This is all just, you know, it's all a fairy tale. I'm actually, you know, people, people are seeing what they want to see. But I'm all like it. You're an imposter. You don't belong here. You're not doing real work, real good work. It's all a dream. That

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kind of sounds to me a little bit like how people use the term gaslighting. You kind of gaslight yourself, I guess. Yeah, it is. It's gaslighting. Yeah, you're not good enough and but, yeah, try to convince yourself something that you. Isn't true. Yeah, that's gaslighting. Yeah, exactly, yeah. Because it's hard all the time, constantly. You never are good at anything. Yeah, you know, it's

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the exact opposite of believing in yourself, right? And, and that's the thing, is, because, I mean, get ready for it. I mean, this business is so hard to get, to get traction in. And if you know you're constantly creating these stories, and you're you're using all your time and energy to write these scripts, and no one's picking them up, and it's seven years now, and no one's even got anything going with this script and all these scripts, and right? If nothing is happening, how is it not me? How does it not mean that you suck? Right? It's hard not to think that way, but you have to have to have them right on the opposite side of it. Don't buy into your own hype, right? Yeah, you can tell yourself you're good, but don't like I've known writers where they just think they are the greatest, and it's a crime against the world that they have not been discovered yet. And man, if I could just get this in this person's eyes, this is gonna win an Oscar, and then it's like, do not be that person, because if you're focusing on that, you're not focusing on the work, right? You believe that every word you write is perfect, and if anyone says anything against it, you just get pissed. Yeah, you're right. Flip. You flip. No one and then no one wants to work with you, right? So don't buy into your own hype. Do the work? Have other people tell you how great you are, even if it's a guarantee you will have one say, five years go by and no one tells you you're great. And one person is like, this might be one of the best scripts I've ever read. All of that behind you is erased. You are on the top of the world, right? You are your gold, right? This person told me I'm great, right? So, but if you don't believe in yourself that whole time that will never come because you'll give up, yeah, right? It's

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like celebrating the little wins, right? When someone goes and tells you something, then you're like, that gives you enough gas almost to continue going,

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Yeah, exactly. And you have to celebrate it. I mean, desire has been so great at that I'll have one small success, like, oh, you know, I got a nine out of 10 rating on this one thing. Or I, you know, I won a contest. Or, you know, someone, you know, option my script, or even just a little contest win. Or this big producer, they're going to read my script. Maybe they'll never even read it, but they asked to, she's like, Kate, we're going out. We're going to celebrate, right? You have to celebrate, you know, even if someone reads your script and they get what you've tried to do, even if it's just another writing colleague, celebrate that, right? You have to, because the the

wins, the big wins, are very, very the winds, even the little wins, don't come as often as the failures and the rejections. They do, yeah, yeah, they or they don't. So yeah, they don't come. So you have to celebrate them. You do, like, walk on cloud nine for one little thing, that's what'll get you through all this. For sure, it will, you know, but you are going to doubt yourself, right? That's just part of it. So just remember that every successful writer was also a new writer who decided they had a story to tell, and that's it. It eventually went somewhere where someone believed in their story and made it happen and made their career happen. Every single writer, right? Everyone starts from nothing, so there's nothing to say that you won't become that writer. I still on my bucket list of writing. I have a list screenwriter as my goal, and I haven't achieved it yet. I'm not getting paid, you know, millions of dollars for a script, but it's still out there for me. I know it, I believe it, and so that keeps me going, that keeps me trying to find the story that's going to make that happen, right? You have to keep looking forward at all,

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I think too, like having something tactile and something to look at, like a vision board, right? Lots of people have done vision boards, or you go on a dry esport and you'll write your goals, or your your achievements that you want to reach, or you know that,

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yeah, I have we record this in my movie theater, in our movie theater, and there's a no, there's a now showing sign that Desiree bought me, like, 15 years ago. And on it, it says, playing at 730 is mine. By Scott Parisian. No one's made it yet, but I know they will. But it's there. It's there. And I see it every time I walk in here, and I'm like, Yes, that's why I'm doing this, right? It's just like Jim Carrey, who put a who wrote himself a check for \$20 million for care. He did, yeah, when he was young and homeless, living in his parents like him and his parents were homeless, living in a car, and he wrote himself a check for \$20 million and put it in his wallet. And then for cable guy, I think it was, he finally got his biggest payday. It was \$20 million just like that check said, and he pulled it out, and he's like, this is this is what this what I told myself would happen that would have been cool to see that track. It would be, I think there's a video of him with it, or pictures. He must have it framed like I would probably not frame it in a freaking gold I know, but I mean it just, I mean, that's not gonna happen to everybody, right? But if you don't think that way, if you don't have that belief that it will happen for you, it's never gonna happen exactly. I have this one mentorship client I'm working with. She wrote this. It's a clever, original take on an IP property. I won't say it because it's, it's her work, but she. She was having trouble getting traction as a pilot, so what she did is she then turned it into an audio book story, and like audio script, where she hired actors and recorded it and, and, and it became successful for her, so much so that now when she goes to sell the pilot, she can say, we did this podcast or this audio thing, we had this many downloads and right? So that was a different avenue for her, right? So sometimes you just have to, you know, think outside the box. We've talked about, yeah, yeah. Think outside the box all through your mindset, right? Realize there's other ways. I mean, the best tool, the best tool in your writing box, is your mind, right? Don't let it beat you down. We the reason, the only reason you'll think you suck is because your mind tells you you suck, right? What was that thing that you listened to not too long ago? It's funny. I was just about to say that that you it, your brain cannot understand the negative, right? That's what it was. So his exam,

and I was like, That makes no sense. And he's talking and talking like, I still don't get it. And he said, here's an example. I'm going to say to you, don't think of an elephant. What are you going to do? You're going to think of an elephant because your brain's imagery, the imagery it sees an elephant, it understands what an elephant is, so it's impossible for you to not so don't play that way, right? Don't tell your brain. You know, I will not become a successful screenwriter, because your brain can't understand that. Anyways, it's going to see so don't put the negatives in, right? All you're doing is telling yourself that. But it doesn't mean that that has to be what your brain does. So let your you know, let your mind, let your brain do the work for you to keep you up to believe in yourself. I suck at this. You do suck at this. Sorry, honey. Your mind breaks you down. You do? You overthink everything. You try and find areas that play it, and then I try to create problems that aren't even there. I know, because, right? And you know this, I know I do. I'm the first to admit it, and even my best friend, like we have this ongoing joke back and forth, that she's the toilet paper because she's cleans everything up, and she's so positive, and I'm the poop emoji, yeah, because I see the negative in everything, and it's

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a constant thing.

32:10

Oh, but no one sees that, because you don't let the world, they don't see that, but the world sees you as a super positive, outgoing, exciting, uplifting person, yeah?

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But, and that's what it is, I do uplift people do. And when I put myself out there and I do things for people, I do it wholeheartedly with my whole being. So then when I am having a bad moment or bad couple of days, people are like, what's wrong with you? Yeah, why are you acting like this? It's like, This is who I actually really am, yeah, a lot of times it's really hard to put the facade on it is. And when no one's watching, you drop, you know, I just drop it, and then you, you work against yourself. I do, yeah, so I'm awful for this. Like my mind is always seeing the black and gray. It never sees

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them and the and the worst case scenarios always, yeah, that's how it is, always. So, I mean, as and you struggle with it, and you work at it, right? And you identify it, and that's all great, you know, but if you're having trouble believing in yourself as a writer, I mean, go to therapy, right? Go talk to someone about it, go and get your issues out there. There's a reason, right? Like my reason why I constantly tell myself, I can tell you what's my reason I constantly tell myself I'm not good at this validation, exactly, my entire life, and I just learned this few years ago, that because of how it was raised, because of the people in my life, because of the negative reinforcements, or never anything positive, I had an addiction to to validation. I wanted everyone to tell me how great I was. I would do things in the second. I would get attention for it. That's it. I was, I was all about it. I was all in on that, all in on that person who is like, okay, they're going to be there for me. They're going to be my cheerleader, right? I understand it now, and now I now I know how not to let that happen. And so now I am my own cheerleader, and my wife is my

cheerleader, and that's all I need, right? And so, yeah, you need to identify ways to clear the blockage that is stopping you from becoming great, right? And so, like I said, your mind is a powerful tool. You just have to understand it. So what it comes down to is, all you can control in screenwriting is what you put on the page, and what you put on the page will only be good if you believe in yourself and believe in yourself organically and wholeheartedly, right? Not just being that person who tells themselves they're great and doesn't try to be great, right? Try to be great. Learn, grow, accept help. Accept guidance, take advice. Let people tell you how crappy you are and start from scratch again. It's the only way that you'll get better, the only way you'll grow, you know, just and don't believe everything you hear that. I mean, this is, I mean, this the problem in the world today. It's a problem social media with everything. It's

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a problem in the screenwriting area of things, too, where people, you know, rave themselves how great they are, and, oh, I'm doing this. This. What is like? Is that all necessarily true?

35:03

Yeah, or yeah exactly. Or people try to beat you down, you know, don't, you know? Because, like, okay, so, for example, foxter and Max, this movie I was hired to write that was produced the vertical. The production company took it, took it to Cannes, right, the film festival, but the Cannes Film Market, right where you're trying to sell stuff, and it was on the front page. And it's one of my, my, my prized possessions. It's the it's on the poster is on the front page of the of the can, the booklet, magazine, yeah. And I posted it online because I was like, This is so exciting to see this. This is wild. I can't believe that something I wrote is in this position. And then some guy comes on and says, Uh, well, that's just the can film market magazine. You're telling people you're at can that's not big of a that's not that big of a deal. And I was like, I didn't even know that. Oh, yeah. And I was like, I didn't respond to be like, Oh, well, do you have something on the like, right? But I was just like, Why? Why? Why did you have to do that? Why step on your joy Exactly. Don't be jealous of people, right? Like, don't, if someone has a success, celebrate their success. Don't be jealous and petty and be like, oh, and I mean, I've had those moments, right? Writing colleague of mine will be like, Oh my gosh, we just sold my script, or we just got this person attached. And you're just like, man, that's awesome, but at the same time you're like, Oh man, that sucks. I wish it was me. You're gonna have those moments, but don't just don't project that to people. It's hard enough man support other writers. That's why I always say to desert when we talk about a movie that I didn't really like. I don't bash people. I don't bash people's projects. Because why? Yeah, right, like they made something. It might not be perfect for you, but don't bash it. Don't tell people not to see it and all that kind of stuff, right? But, yeah, it's all part of it. It's all part of the game. With believing in yourself. A lot of times people get down, because you'll hear this big sale happen, oh my gosh, the script. Say script sold for \$1.8 million this writer is an overnight success, and I'm like, so

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they're not an overnight success, because how many years and how many drafts and how many failures have they had to get to that point?

37:00

They didn't just write the script of the day and send it out to the top Studios in Hollywood and sell it in a bidding war. That didn't happen overnight. They've probably maybe it was their first screenplay that does happen, right? But that first screenplay, it doesn't mean the first draft of that screenplay. It means that that first screenplay went to people. People helped them develop it. It went to this person who happened to catch it when they were teaching a class. They pass it on to someone, that person like it goes places over time. It doesn't happen overnight. But most of those like, overnight successes, that's their like, ninth script, right? And they've, you know, like, don't believe everything you hear these days. Click bait, every headline, everything is designed to make you click it, even if it's nothing to do with the story you're about to read, that's part of it, right? It's reported. Things are reported to get you to believe and so don't believe everything you hear. And the biggest thing, okay, be good to yourself. It's man like I could cry right now thinking, stop how much this industry breaks people, especially writers. Writers are just not valued anymore, like they used to be. The writer was everything because they created it now with AI, even, like all these things, is that writers just aren't worth it. Writers aren't as good as we think. It's, it's your worth it's Thank you. It's gonna break you, guarantee but, but don't let it break you forever, right? Believe that you have something to say and that you are good at this, right? And and let people see it, and let people tell you, and then believe it. Okay, so listen

38:31

to this quote. Yes, you don't have to be everyone's cup of tea. Instead, be gasoline and set stuff on fire.

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I love it. I love it. That's great for the give Yeah, even as a screenplay, right? Yeah, your script is not for everybody, but put gasoline on it. Light it on fire and see if the world pays attention. Yeah, right, yeah. It's a great quote, yes, keep going. Yeah. I did look up the suspend disbelief and suspend belief. Oh, you did, yes, of course, I did pay off. Yep, we had to set that up earlier. That was a setup. Here's a payoff. Here's the payoff. This is

39:07

suspend disbelief. This is what it's what it is. This disbelief is about accepting something fictional as true for the sake of enjoying it. That's suspending disbelief. Okay, okay, accepting something fictional is true for the sake of enjoying it nice. Suspension. You have a very difficulty. I don't do that. Suspending belief is about holding back on a judgment or belief, often due to a lack of evidence or willingness to reconsider.

39:38

Okay, so in your case, it is the suspending disbelief, disbelief, right? Yeah, you just won't enjoy something if you're like, that's not can happen, yeah? So, okay, well, that has something to do with this, though. I'll just it can happen. Yes, it can happen. You can become a writer. You can become whoever you want. To become suspending your belief system. And don't let. Anybody say otherwise? No man, if I if, if I believed the people when I was 1617, years old, that's that you're from some tiny, small town, you know, in the middle of nowhere, there's no way you're

going to be a Hollywood screenwriter. People said that to you. Yeah, exactly. But if I believed those people and just was like, Okay, I'll just go and get whatever job I'm supposed to get that you wouldn't be writing, no, I would be miserable doing the podcast like you always say, it's funny, because I'll be in a funk in this or say, when was the last time you wrote something of your own? And it'll be like, I don't even remember now, go and write something of your own. You are only yourself when you're writing pages. That's that's the support you need. That's a reminder belief in yourself, that you know what? Yeah, I'm not me unless I'm doing this, this is who I am, right? So the other day, I was like, when are you going to do this? This, this, this, get on it. Stop wasting, stop procrastinating, stop doing other people's stuff. Get going. Yeah. So anyways, find a support system and believe in yourself. So with that in mind, we're going to have some information on one of our specialized services at scriptreader Pro.

41:05

Feel like you've taken your script as far as you can on your own. We know how frustrating it can be sometimes to get the great ideas that are in your head properly on the page, but imagine having a professional screenwriter jump in and rewrite it for you to create a market ready script. Send us your script for a rewrite proposal, and the pro of your choice will write up a page or so of notes on exactly how they'd approach a rewrite head on over to [www dot script reader pro.com](http://www.dotscriptreaderpro.com) forward slash rewrite and use the code rewrite 15 during checkout for the rewrite proposal to get 15% off.

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We are back, and we have come to this section in our podcast where we have questions and answers, and I want to tell the listeners, if you have a question, you can submit that to Hello at [script reader pro.com](http://scriptreaderpro.com) we have a first question here. It's with many major contests shutting down or changing, what other avenues are there to gain access, access to what

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to the industry? Okay? I mean, a big part, in our last 1015, years, the only way you can get anywhere is if you win a major contest, because it's hard to it's hard to pitch stuff to people without some type of vetting system or an accolade of like, hey, these people said it's great. So you should read it. A lot of these big contests, big company bought a lot of entities, and those entities are now closed and not sure why. I'm sure it's something like, oh, let's put a new one out there with AI or whatever, right? And even, like, the biggest fellowship in the industry, then the academy nickel fellowships, right? The thing that, if you win, your career will start that is now changed, and the blacklist has now taken over all submissions and entries, and it's never going to be what it was. And that was the that was the one that filled writers with the most hope, if I can win that, if I can even place. I had a script placed in the semi finals of nickel, and I had four people call me personally to ask if it's available, and even pitch it to them. They just read it in the contest. And so it was something that actually had had something to set fire, right? And now it's just all political and business based, and it's no longer what it was. So how do you gain access? You just have to do the footwork. You have to enter your scripts. Well, you don't have to enter scripts in the contests that are still there that can give you traction. So when you pitch someone, you say it won this, replaced this, or it had this that to tell them it's worth reading. Out of the



other 5000 scripts that didn't get those accolades, yours did. So do the work, do the work. Research. Yeah, pitch market. Put a market plan. Marketing plan together, if you if you don't know how to do it, we have a new service, actually, it's a portfolio creation service, where we will help you go through all your scripts and your projects, help you with your query letters and log lines and whatever it needs to put your portfolio together to put a plan in place to get stuff out there. So if you're struggling and you're not sure, check that out on our website. Scriptreaderpro.com Okay,

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question two, what exactly should be in a scene heading and why? Yeah.

44:11

I mean, this is this a good question? I mean, it's a basic format question for newer writers, but I see other, you know, more seasoned writers making mistakes all the time. So a scene heading is, is basically a production thing. We need to know where we are and when we are right during the time of day too, because I see day night, yeah, just day and night is really all you need. So interior, exterior, and then not, not the whole word i n t, period, or e x t, period, and then a space, and then the location, right? Desiree's house, right? And then if you've introduced, yes, no, you're going to introduce as right, it's the location, right? And then you're going to have a space and a dash and a space, and then the time stamp, day or night, day or night, because they need to know if they're producing it at nighttime or in daytime. Not specific. Specific, though, you know Well, the thing is, if you have specifics like 235 why? Like, what does it matter if it's 235 unless it's specific, like, you set up that we are going into the bank at 245 right? And you cut to 235 but if it's in the Scene Heading, the reader may not pick it up, because readers don't necessarily give deep focus to a scene heading. They just move into the next scene so it that's all. It should really be interior or exterior, the location we're at, and day or night and or at sunrise, because it's a sunrise scene. But you can have day because sunrise is day, and then describe the sunrise. So don't make it complicated. Basically. Okay, simple is better. Yeah. Question three, how do I get a name attached to my script? And how does it actually help? I don't know. I'm no idea. Do you know people? Can you, can you get a script to homes worth because your cousin's his hairdresser, and that hairdresser is his stylist, and that stylist knows his brother, like, can you get them that script? Right? This is the thing, right? Anyone who's anyone who can get a project moving, has people getting them on projects already? There's no reason for them to get on your project unless, for some reason it speaks to them. And to get to those people, you have to get it through their reps. So it's the only way to get to them. So when you pitch the reps and they don't know who you are, they're not going to even read it. So it's kind of like a catch 22 because producers are saying, Do you have anyone attached? And writers are like, No, isn't that your job? So if you can, great, if you can, but only if they're going to move the needle, if you have like, some C level actor who's going to who you think, Oh, I've got this person attached on my script, and no one really knows who they are. It ever doesn't speak. If I put that person's on a face, person's face on a poster, is it going to bring me money from investors overseas or whatever, then it's not worth it. So don't even waste your time it, because it doesn't actually help. So it's, it's kind of a tricky, tricky one.

46:45

Okay, final question today, should I write a short film about my feature script to get it sold and create traction for my feature?

46:53

Yeah. I mean, if you can, if you can, go ahead, right? You called a sizzle reel or proof of concept is really what it is. It's more called a proof of concept, right, where you're shooting a short film like, almost like a trailer, right? A little short that sets up what your feature is and what it would look like and feel like, and why would have an audience. And if you have the capability to do that, and you can make it look good, then do it, because then you can pitch someone, and you say, I can send you a proof of concept link if you want to see it, right? So, yeah, if anything that you can do to add value. I mean, if you want to do it, don't do someone tells you you have to for free, right? But if you want to do it, do it right? It's all, it's all your choice. But, yeah, it can help. It can definitely help. So that's it. Guess what, Scott, we're done. I believe, do you believe that we're at the end of our podcast? Nice. I will. Has been all about belief. Believe in yourself. I will, I will validate that. For you,

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we are at the end of the podcast today. Thanks for

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listening, everyone. It was a bit of a heartfelt like I said, it's one of our we have these real talk, you know, because I don't think anyone really does this, I haven't heard a podcast that kind of like talks about the real kind of mental health aspects of screenwriting. It is a mental health thing. It is you give me mental health issues. I know that's the thing. That's a whole other episode, but if you liked it, if you found it entertaining, engaging, educational, whatever it might be, please subscribe. Please give us a rating. Five stars are wonderful for Desiree. She loves gold five. Five gold stars, as many gold stars as possible. Share the podcast, share with your friends, other writing colleagues, whatever. Let us know. Give us feedback. Let us know what you want to talk about. What do you want us to talk about? Given when you want us to interview or pages or a script you want us to kind of go over that's been produced, you know, things like that,

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right? Just let us know. Let us know at [hello@scriptreaderpro.com](mailto:hello@scriptreaderpro.com)

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Yeah, and then check out our webpage. [Scriptreaderpro.com](http://Scriptreaderpro.com) for all of our services, everything that we have here to help writers out, because script reader Pro is all about helping writers craft wonder with every page you.