

Ep #38: Building a Portfolio

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In this episode, we're talking all about building your portfolio. You really need to have a solid body of work before you start sending it out to people. 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 the Script Reader Pro podcast. I am your beautiful, wonderful, talented, funny host, Desiree, ah, and I am, anyways, what I'm talking

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hey, I need some I need some good descriptive words about me.

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And this is Scott with his shirt that doesn't fit him, his stubbly face. You make

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it sound like every day I wear a shirt that doesn't fit me,

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like you haven't shaved you keep cutting your fingers in the same places from knives.

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Hey, you're the one making sourdough like a maniac. Man, some regular bread would be nice once in a while.

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What am I away from the 60s? Yeah, sounds like it. Well, you well, regular bread would be nice once in a while. Like, sourdough isn't a 36 hour process.

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Well, I know you think I don't know about this. Think I don't know about the process and the coil folds and the inclusions.

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Anyways, I'd love to know if there's fellow sourdough makers out there? Yeah,

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don't email us about it. You email me. No. Why? Because I don't need more sourdough in my algorithm at home. Because now, when I bring up Google, I got 17 suggestions about sourdough videos, and I don't make sourdough. You're so lucky. Hey guys, we're not talking about sourdough today. What am I talking about? Talking

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today all about sourdough, how to build your starter,

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how to build your portfolio. I was gonna say starter,

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but then I was laughing so hard I couldn't I couldn't see because when I laugh, you guys,

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her cheeks, push up her eyeball or eyelids,

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and then I can't see through my eyes anyway. I don't know what that had to do with me talking about building your your sourdough starter.

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I don't know. But once, once we begin an episode after this nonsense, what do we

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usually do, guys? What we always start our podcast out with is what we've seen

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lately. Yeah, we started a new TV series because we were like, We need something fun. We miss trying, we miss shrinking on the

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people are getting really tired of hearing us. Shows anyways, platonic, it's a fun show. Seth Rogen, and what's her name? Rose Byrne. I want to say. Anna Kendrick,

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no, not even close, but yes, Rose burn and it's fun. It's light hearted. Has some serious stuff too, but it's really great character, slightly vulgar. Yeah, I love the vulgarness. Yeah, it's just entertaining, right? This is fun. Just a fun show. Doesn't doesn't take itself too seriously. So that's why I think I like it. We're enjoying it, yeah? So anything else you want to say about it? We just started it, so there's not too much to say. Yeah, watch it. It's good Apple TV, that's what we're gonna say about it. Yes. So what we were talking about today is building your portfolio. So when you have written something great, like platonic, you can then pitch it to people and send it

out with all your other stuff. And that's the key here. All your other stuff, you need to have stuff. Okay,

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wow. That sounds very, you know, business oriented. When I think of portfolio, though, I do think of a business suitcase,

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an actual physical portfolio, yeah, yeah. Of an artist's

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bag, they have a portfolio, yeah. But I think of this, the suitcases that were, like, really big in the 90s. To remember,

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Roma Lotti, what's his name? When you're in there, says, Paul, what not Paul? You always, no, I know I always call him Romani, no, but I call Paul romelotti. What's Paul's last name? Oh, anyways, Paul would always carry around that silver brief. Yes, right, wasn't Paul? No, he's a detective. Yeah, he's but I always wanted a silver briefcase. Everyone knows what we're talking about, usually assuming movies with like drugs in them, but they're like the stainless steel silver ones on the outside. I always wanted to carry one because that'd be so cool to carry on a silver briefcase. And people are like, Oh, why does he have a silver briefcase?

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So when you're when you're putting together your own portfolio, do it in a silver briefcase. Make sure that you send

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that when you walk by that studio, you walk in with that silver briefcase, but if

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you're gonna put a lock on it, make sure you know the code. Yeah, be awkward. If you were like, just second,

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I have all my scripts in here, just a second, and then you there's a buy

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what your password is, 0000,

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yes, no one will guess it especially if there's like, important, expensive things in there, like screenplays, Scott,

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yes, that's what I think of. But what is a portfolio? Well, first of all, reason I thought it was good to

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talk about is because it's a new service that we launched because a lot of writers just don't know how to put stuff together. It's kind of like a mentoring thing, where you get on with one of us for a few sessions, and we kind of help you get your stuff. Ready build your portfolio, help you get your query letters and everything together that you need to be ready to market, because it's an overwhelming thing, right? And when you don't quite know what to do, you think, how do I query people? I guess I'll just enter a bunch of contests and hope something happens. There's more to it, right? So we're talking about things that you need to keep in mind when you are building your

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portfolio, but if you do, hey, but who's the Script Reader Pro will help you build

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it? Yeah? Like, well, yeah, exactly. That's exactly what the service does. We'll look at all your scripts, figure out how to market them. What goes with what? What's a good follow up? If someone reads this script, oh, you can send them this other script that would fit well. Like, we'll help you get ready for that process,

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hopefully. Like, if you help them build it, they will come. That's a brilliant line. Did you just come up with that?

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You try to keep a straight face, like you did come up with it. But then, if you build, if you ever seen Desiree, try to hold a straight face. It's so much fun because you, because I just stare, because I know what she said is a lie, and I'll just stare at her, knowing at least within 1520 seconds, she will crack. And then she has this laugh where her face crunches up, and you would expect laughter to come out, but it's, it's, it's complete silence, and you're wondering, and I always hear it because she talks to her friend Johnna on FaceTime all the time, and and all of a sudden it'll go silent, and I'll be in the other room and I'll just wait, because I'm like, I bet she's laughing, and, like, 30 seconds later, you just hear this wheeze intake of air, because she's been laughing in silence for so long. But that's the face that eventually will crack. Okay? Speaking of cracking, yes, my dad a great, great, great segue. Speaking of cracking I hate

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cracky. By cracky my dad, that's my dad always says for all those listeners, my dad, I had sent him a picture of that picture of me, and he just responded when we were talking about the picture, and it says, You're looking good. They don't know how mean you are. If you have to give them a blast,

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if you have to give them a blast, like when you have to call call someone who owes us some money for a job he did, and then have to give him trouble. Anyways, you do not want dads on your bad side. Now, let me tell you that that's so she seems so sweet, but that shirt that she has that's savvy, sad and sappy, sappy and stabby. That's, that's not mean, though, Scott. I'm just very scary. Scott,

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this picture though, now they really have to see it absolutely now that I just said what my dad said,

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Yeah. And picture, Dez. Picture, Dez, anyways, they don't know. I mean, she is, yes, she is mean sometimes. All right, so what we are talking about is how to build your portfolio, what should be in it, what you should have, what you should keep in mind, where you should put your time and focus after you've written your work. So we're going to go through that. So first of all, this is the most important piece. You need more than one script if you've only ever written one script, you're probably not ready for the stereo stage. Well, not necessarily. You're not ready for pitching a manager, right? You got a management team or agent, you're not ready for that because they need to know that you are worth putting their time energy, like these people don't get paid till you get paid. So they need to know that the time and energy they're investing is for something bigger down the line as well. So if all you've written is one and you send it, they say, hey, yeah, sure, I like that. I'll read it. And then they say, Okay, what else do you have? And you say, nothing. I've never written anything. They're like, okay, so how do I know you're going to continue to make any kind of money? That's good, right? Like,

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so, yeah. But the thing is, Scott, there are the one ups, but that's

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what I'm saying. For Matt, but for producer, If all you've written is one script and you want to start pitching it, producers, go ahead, right? If everyone's told you it's great, pitch it. You never know. It happens all the time, right? People will write their first script, send it out. Some will be interested in hey, let's do this. And it happens. Like, it happens.

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Wasn't that the one with, I see dead people? No, no, didn't write anything

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before that. All that. Oh, I'm sure he did. And that's, I mean, you'll hear people all the time. Oh, that's the first script I wrote. No, it wasn't six, yeah, six cents. No, it was, he was made. He was making movies since he was like, eight. Okay, so he's, he had written it, but that was, like, a first script. But there is in the rare case, but maybe it is, maybe I'm wrong, but, yeah, like, last year this, there was a story online. This girl wrote this script, and she sent it into, I think, stage 32 or

roadmap writers, one of those places that can kind of help you get your stuff out there. And the person who read it on there was like, oh, I want to be involved in this. She was a producer. She optioned it from her. They did some rewrites on it. She sent it out. Netflix bought it, made this movie through Lindsay Lohan in it, and bam, now she's a working writer, right? So it does happen, but if you're building a portfolio to try and go out there, because you always want to have stuff, because everyone's looking for a certain movie to make, or a certain TV pilot they want to invest in, right, a certain one, they're looking for something specific, right, not just whatever comes. So if you pitch something like, Yeah, I like that. That, and they read it, and they love the writing, and they think, oh yeah, this isn't the movie I want to make, but I like this writer. What else do you have? And you're like, nothing, not necessarily a problem, because they might be like, Okay, well, still, I want to work with you, but it sets up the opportunity for that door to close. You just got lucky opened, right? So if a lot of times that's what will help you build those relationships. Else do you have? I'll read something else. Oh, yeah, you know what? I really like this much better, and I have a friend who's looking for this and, like, you never know, right? It

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doesn't add value to your talent,

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right? That's a good question to ask. What? What? What are you bringing to that relationship? That's valuable? Yeah, that's a good that's a good

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point, right? Like, it doesn't, and it doesn't speak well for you. If you're like, Oh, I just wrote

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the one, yeah, exactly you want to show especially with a manager, like, like, again, they don't make money until you do. So managers are out there, busting, busting, busting, spending their time spreading your name, talking to people about you. Hey, you got to read this script. It's amazing. And then, like, they're just opening all these doors, right? And then if you don't write another script and deliver it for two years, are any of those people gonna remember your name? They probably won't even be at the same company anymore, right? You need to produce consistently, and if you only show you can want write one script and you've rewritten it 1000 times, then that doesn't show that you're bringing value to that person. Does that make

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sense? Yeah. So when you're building, my question is, when you're building your portfolio, though, or or all the components to your portfolio, because it's not just one document, right? It's a several things. It's your log line, it's your

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and it's, it's an it's all your. I mean, you don't sell, you don't be like, Hey, you want to read my portfolio? Like, that's not what we're

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meaning. No, I get it. It's like, but you want to have, like, it's like, having an artist portfolio and being like, Hey, do you want to do you want to look my portfolio? Then be like, Yeah, that's a nice bag that you're carrying your pictures. Then yeah, it's like showing all of the contents. Yeah. Well, not even showing but having it ready, available and ready if, in the event that someone is requesting it, which is what you want to be always

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ready for. Yeah. And you should be pitching more than one thing, because if it takes 1000 nos to get a yes, even just say, I'll read it if you are only pitching one script, because that's all you have. Rather than I have four scripts ready, I'm going to pitch them all to different because if they're different scripts, not every producer is going to fit right, or not every manager is looking for that kind of right. If you have a horror and then you have an action thriller or whatever. So you should be pitching more than one thing you should always be pitching, just as you're always writing. Do you

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want to be, do you want to be doing both features and pilots or or, what do you want to be doing? Like, do you want to be doing TV and show that you can do

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both? Yeah, I would, I would say so, mainly because TV is overtaking everything.

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I know it's makes it's making me sad, because the other day I said to you, let's watch a movie. And we could not watch a movie. We tried. How many movies did we try? And we were like, Yeah, this one isn't good. Or, Yeah, we actually saw that one.

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Or yeah, it's getting harder to find movies like TV is. So I mean, that's if you want to be a working writer, a consistent working writer, you're usually not a consistent working writer. If all your right is features. Do you think that it's, do you think it's as time goes on, people are just losing their attention spans? I mean, part of it is patience, or what do you think it is for watching? Well, there's that whole second screen syndrome, right, where you want to put something on and watch it, but you want to be able to scroll on your phone as you're watching it, right? So you're picking it up, but you're you're not. If it's a movie, you're done, right? If you lose focus for five minutes and then, oh, wait, I have no idea what's happening where, if it's a TV series, you've got like, 12 episodes, so you can probably keep going. You know what? I mean? Like, that's, I think that's part of it. The other part of it is that 95% of of entertainment is now viewed in the home, right? So you don't have to go out to watch it. Movies also takes eight months to shoot a movie sometimes. And the Terry series is, I mean, how it used to be is every week they'd have another episode ready, they'd shoot it that week and then

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put it out to people. If people are busier, they're needing to work more to make a living because the cost of living is higher. They're not going to be able to have the time to sit for two hours uninterrupted to watch a movie. A lot of people watch

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stuff on their phone, and TV shows don't tend to be as cinematic as movies, so it's, you're not missing much watching on the phone, but a lot of it, and it's such a strange culture thing, because it's like, I'm not gonna watch that movie. It's like two hours, like two hours and 45 minutes long. Okay, I'm gonna watch five episodes of this television series. So you're watching five hours of content. So what's you know, but it's just a thing, but it's a mentality television is definitely overtaking, right? Because television is brilliant.

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Now, that's obvious, though, because you put the movies coming out, like you said, like, not much. We used to have three, four choices. Oh, we'll go to this one this day, and this one another day. And now it's like, you're lucky if there's one thing to see. No, I read an

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article in deadline today because they're having this big kind of producer conference in Italy, and they were talking about Hollywood and how no one's there anymore, and people are going elsewhere to shoot their movies because it's so expensive in Los Angeles and Hollywood to shoot. And this one pretty. Was like, it's a different culture now, like 1015, years ago, right? You or 2030, years ago, every weekend, there was three big movies to see in the theater, and if you didn't see them, you would not be able to have that water cooler conversation on Monday at work about those movies. So everyone would go and see them, because that's what you would talk about. You don't do that anymore, right? You'll just whatever, like, there's just 1000 things out, right? Oh, you watch hands made stale. Nah, it's number 17 on my list of all these shows my wife needs me to watch, right? Like you never so, so it's just a different culture, but television, that's regular writing. So as I said, as a feature writer, it's gonna be really difficult to have consistent work. You'll write a feature. You might not sell another feature. If you do for two years, then what are you gonna do live off that for two years? Like, probably not, right? But in television, it's a weekly thing. You're getting a consistent paycheck for at least the contract of that show. And there's, like, how many writers? Sometimes there's 128, right, whatever it is, right? But it's consistent work, because there's constant television, there's 1000 channels, right? Like, so you even if you don't want to write TV, and you don't want to be a TV like, my lifestyle, my life, I I don't think I could be a TV writer because of the demands of my life, right? But I if someone said, Hey, we want to bring you in this writing room, I'll make it work. But so I have a couple pilots, because someone asks me if you read my features like, these are great, but I love your writing. But do you have any pilots? Because we're actually looking for something, I can give it to them, right? Same thing. If you're under pilots, they're like, Oh, I love your writing, but we have a feature we want to make Do you have a sample like so having both, if you can do both, they're two very different mentalities. If I sit down and write something 100% the first thing I'm thinking of is a movie script, because that's just who I am, right? Where some people will never write a MOOC script, so it depends on who you are, but and if it's a strength and if it's

exciting for you. So yeah, you want to have open to it, I guess good thing to have. It's definitely to have in your back pocket, yeah, for sure. So when you're doing a portfolio here, and you're getting all these things together so that you're ready to go and market yourself and have people show interest and ask you for material, right? How do you know if you're ready to go? If everyone has told you your writing is unbelievable, that's when you know you're ready. Even just one project that they've read

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is this? Is this the stage then that you would want to contact Script Reader Pro to get their feedback, or you want to get the feedback before you even start compiling everything together?

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Well, I mean, when you're done a script and you think, Okay, I think I'm done even if like first draft, even a first draft, it's always important to get feedback. You should have a writing group to share scripts with, right? Everyone wants to be a screenwriter. You'll find them anywhere. But, yeah, you want to have people reading your work until people are like, Oh my gosh. Like, this is perfect, right? Like, or, yeah, I, you know, if I, if I give a script to recommend, or even a strong consider, it's like, yeah, this is ready to go. Go get it out there. But yeah, even if it's just one script, and then, as you're marketing, write that next damn script. Because marketing takes a long time. If you start pitching your script, you're not going to sell it in two weeks, right? It might take six months for everyone to even ask for it. So, yeah, it's about making sure that all of your stuff, you've, you know, you have confidence. I placed in the semi finals and finals of five contests with the script, so it should be good to go, right, whatever it might be. So you want to make sure it's ready to go. Otherwise, if you, if you shoot too early, you know, and someone reads it, they're like, oh my gosh, this is just filled with mistakes or holes or not good writing. You've wasted that opportunity, right? Yeah, so it's like, it's like, meeting, meeting someone that you're like, oh my gosh, this is like, the perfect someone. I'm gonna go on a date with them. And then you go on a date, and you don't shower, and you have food in your teeth, and Your fly is down, and you you order, you order something, and you go to put your ketchup on, and you spray it out, and it explodes all over them. Is that person gonna want to want to continue seeing you? Probably not. Right barriers. Who show up polished and secure and confident probably going to go better. It's the same kind of thing. Yeah, it's not the same. But, you know

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the polished piece, right? Like you want to get polished and

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ready to, like, ask, ask your mom or your roommate, is there any food in my teeth before you leave yourself in the mirror. You know what? I mean, right? I get it, yeah, so that's important. Another thing is to try and gain accolades for your script. And that's, I mean, it's getting harder. Used to be like contests, where accolades are contests. Accolade is basically saying, you know, this script was well liked, or this script got a recommend from this place, you know, or a contest win, or whatever it might be, right? It's, it's adding value. Like you said, what's the value you bring? Oh, value I bring is, I was a top 10 in this contest that had 8000 entries. Okay, that's

bringing value. It's probably good, right? So you want to try and find accolades. And with a lot of these bigger contests that are being phased out or shut down, or like moved to different things, it makes it harder and harder to get those right, but something that people really forget a lot of times, festivals. There's endless film festivals. And when you went to Austin, film well, even just like every state has film boards, every there's just. Festivals all the time. So even if you don't go to them, you can also enter your unproduced screenplay in them. And, yeah, getting some like, we always say, Oh, I won the Pottsville, Arkansas screenplay competition. Okay, how many people that entered that? Like, seven, you know? Like, it's not a big deal. So you don't want to have a whole bunch of those, right? But if you can be like, I placed in this this festival and this festival and this festival, right? And it's consistent, then people are going to be like, Okay, well, it's probably worth reading, right? So anything you can do and at festivals, man, you can meet people. It's you can meet that director. You can meet your next writing partner, producers. They're looking for new work. Like, it's probably the only place an unknown writer not living in Hollywood and Los Angeles or wherever, can actually go and interact with people in in film and television. So, so you want to try and or getting a stamp recommend, or something like I got, I got a recommend from a big company I don't know, 25 years ago, and then and I got a second one. So two recommends on two scripts I've worked with them a long time, and then when I sent that out to people, it just opened doors. It was like, I haven't won any contests or anything. But it was like, Okay, this is a big company. Everyone knows it recommend to, okay, who is this writer?

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Right? It'll be like, Script Reader Pro, exactly, getting your notes done with Script Reader

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Pro, gotta, gotta recommend from Script Reader Pro, if you can put something back, it's tangible that someone's saying, okay, so somebody in the industry, in some way read this and thinks this is, this is they would put their reputation on it. They're saying, Yeah, I say this is amazing, then it's probably worth a read. That's the thing is, is it worth a read? Is it worth taking the time? Because I've said this before, but in this business, everyone in the business and working that you're trying to get to read you. They already have people they know, they trust, who have managers, have agents, whatever, sending them scripts. They don't need your script. So why are they going to open themselves up? What value do you bring to have them risk that time, energy, whatever it is, right? So that's important. You know you want to also have more than one script, because it shows that you aren't just a one trick pony, right? You want like you read a you read a book Desiree, right? You read a self help book by someone. And then you think, Oh, this is actually good. I think I'll actually put this into practice. And then you look them up, and they don't have anything else. They've never written anything else. They're just silence. It makes you think, Okay, well, maybe they, maybe they don't know what they're talking about. Maybe they just made this up. Maybe I shouldn't do this, right? You want to make sure that you're, you're backing up what you're putting out there, right? So you want to have a good, solid follow up, and in your portfolio, you should have a solid follow up in the same genre. Doesn't mean you have to write seven thrillers. How many should you have? Though, at least one of the same genre. Because if someone reads a thriller, because they're looking for thrillers, and they loved it, but

it's not the movie, they want, send us another one like it, and you have a faith based movie and a family film, and that's all you have. How are they going to know if that is something to bring you on board for or like, hey, yeah, we can hire you to write this idea, because you've shown all icky. It's just good to have a follow up piece, right?

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So when we're talking genre, we're in the same genre, yeah, but what if we are talking about someone who has gone through the steps and has written, say, 10 or 15 scripts, has had them reviewed and read by Script Reader Pro, for example, has had notes made changes. They're fairly solid. How many scripts do you choose them? If someone says, oh, what else have you written? Do you send them? 15 scripts? Yeah, no, what do you send them?

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Yeah, you send them. You send them. Usually a good thing to do is, well, I have these. I have these scripts. Here's the log lines. Which one would you like? Give them two or three, right? Don't list 10, because, like, it's overwhelming, yeah, yeah. But you should always have at least three projects in your portfolio before you go out, because you are always going to have that question, what else do you have? And you have to have stuff to create a relationship, right? So it's important to have to have quality work that you can back your other work up with, right? Or you're just again, wasting your time, right? You need to show that you can produce work as well, but not overwhelm. Oh, I have 27 scripts. How old are you? Um, I'm 19. Okay, so are they good? Are you just like pumping out endlessness, right? Right? You want to show that you've put the attention and time in, and it's, you know, you understand the business, you know. So stop rewriting that same script 673 times. What do you mean by that? So I know writers, and talk to them, and 10 years ago, you know, what are you working on? Oh, I'm working on this script. I'm like you were working on that script 10 years ago. How different is it? Now, if you're going in and you're doing a rewrite on your script and you change five words, it's not a rewrite. You're not actually doing anything. Move on. You have to create consistent

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work. If you wanna be a working writer. How often should this consistent work be done? Then every three to five months you should have, what a new script, brand new project ready. To go. So if there's someone that's like, Oh, I'm just working on this, because I'm just figuring this out again, after like, a year, you're like,

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can you maybe set it aside? Yeah, well, what else? Or you can still tinker with that script, but write other things too, right? I mean, part of it is probably, like, a psychological thing, right? They're just like, Oh, I'm not ready for it to go yet. Or, Oh, if I do and they don't like it, then am I gonna question myself? Like, I'm sure that's a large, large part of it, right? That. But you, you have to show someone again who's willing to put the time, like so many people, like, oh, I need a manager. I need a manager. I need a manager. Okay, so are you? Are you delivering a new script every 346, months? Like, are you because a manager needs to know you are because they don't get paid till you get paid. And if you don't generate consistent work, you're a waste of

their time, right? So when you're putting your portfolio together, you got to be able to be like, Look, this is what I have. This is what I've created here. Here you want, you need a synopsis. Here's a synopsis. Here's my career letter for this. Here's my pitch for this. These are my log lines for these different things I've done. Here's my accolades. Here's this and that right? Like you're building who you are, right? Because a large part of writing is voice, and we've talked about that, and listen to our voice podcast, a large part of it is voice, and you only show your voice if it's consistent. And so you want to be able to show that consistency. Because if you're going to knock someone off some manager's roster, or they have one spot for a thriller writer. Why are you the one? What makes you better than the next person? Can you show? Right? So what else should you have ready to go then you were saying your script, you want to have your log line, yeah, for every script you have have a killer log line. Write a synopsis, a one pager, right? A one page synopsis that kind of breaks down, whether it's the pilot or series for your TV show or the story for your movie script. You want to have something concise and short. In case that's all they want to read. Some people don't want to invest in reading the whole script, so they might just ask for the synopsis. You want to have anything else, if you've done a Bible for your series, if you've done a pitch deck for your series or movie, anything that you think might help someone take you seriously or bite the bullet? Right? People just don't have time. They don't have energy. They don't want to read 116 page script if they can look at a lookbook to see if that is what they're looking right? Okay, right? So it's about branding, right? Branding, having your having your information, having your documents and query letters aren't easy to write. Pitch letters aren't easy to write. Some people think they know what they're doing, or they follow a, you know, a form letter online, you need to have something that's going to make someone stop in their tracks, right? And so putting all that together, getting feedback on that even, you know, like working with us, or sending it to your friend and being like, Hey, would you ask for the script if you got this email? You know, it's a matter of just getting what you need to be, that sales person, to put on that salesperson hat. It's completely different hat than a creative writing hat. I don't

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think it's just the script either. It's not just the portfolio. It's not all the pieces that you've, you know, melded together. I think it comes down to who you are as a person as well. Yeah, and what you bring to the table, right? As a person. And if you go in with like, zero confidence, and chances are pretty likely no one's gonna remember you, you have to be memorable, and you have to make an a great first impression, just like, it's like an interview, right? It

28:18

is definitely. It's exactly an interview, right? Just, it's like an actor's going in and doing an audition, right? They have to be able to pull out different characters and different accents and do different skills and like, yeah, here's my demo reel. Here's the seven things I've done. Here's a bunch of self tapes I made. Like you're building, you're not just, they're not just going in with one note of who they are as an actor, one headshot, nothing, right? They're bringing something to the table. It also shows you're hard working. And so TV business, it's fast turnaround. We're writing an episode. We need it. We're shooting it in two weeks. If you can't show that you're serious about this and that you're ready to do the work and take notes and present your work

and have your work ready to go and professional, they're not gonna have confidence in you at all, like people in this business more now than ever. They are more worried about their reputation than taking a chance on something. It might be a brilliant script, but the writer is a nobody, right? And it's shaky ground. Seven other people got laid off or fired this week. Do I wanna risk that they think I'm a waste of time by bringing the script that maybe they don't like? Or should I just wait for something a little safer that's maybe based on IP or blah, blah, blah, right? You have to showcase that you're professional. You understand the business, you understand the expectations you're generating work. It's, it's a business like anything else, right? Yeah, it's money, especially now, right? You know, it's changed. The world has changed. It used to be more about humanity and people, and now it's just who can make me the most money, and especially the movie business, like it used to be run by creative people, the heads of studios, the development people. They were they were creative people. Now it's like, this is a CEO in an office somewhere who's looking at the dollar signs. That's all they worry about. That's the sad part. That's i. You know, and that's and so you have to bend to that a little bit and show this is why I will make you money consistently, right? It's a it's a tough it's, it's the toughest part of the business, right? Everyone, everyone loves sitting down and writing a story, right? But then when you got to try and sell that story and and sell yourself, it's not easy. It's not easy, it's the hardest part of it. Breaks most writers. So be prepared. And don't you know, be prepared. Be prepared for rejection. Be prepared that the script you write isn't necessarily something they're going to make, but do the work so that even if it's not what they want to make, they like you. They like your voice. They like the conversation they had with you. They think you're funny. You told a good joke, you made an impression. I want to champion this person. That's what you do. It's all above anything else. It's about making fans of your work, not fans of your one script you wrote, no fans of your work. And it's being the person someone wants to be in a room with, exactly like I would want. I don't know anyone who wouldn't want to be in a room with you when it comes to anything creative, right? Like people gravitate towards you. We go to conferences, we go to different things, and I just kind of stand back and watch, and suddenly desert is like seven people around her because she's infectious and she's exciting and she's funny and she's charismatic and all these things so appropriate and inappropriate, and knows when to cross a line sometimes and sometimes not. But she makes me, she makes an impression. And be like, Man, I want to like man. You should, you should work for this. Can you work for a company? Can you come and do consultant like you want to get people excited, and if you're, if you're not ready for that, this is not the business for you. Yeah, you have to be, you have to be comfortable with that. You have to be confident being like, I am valuable. My writing is better than other writing. And you need me, right? It's if you don't have that attitude without being cocky, it's gonna be a really hard thing to do. So if you don't have the work that you can prove that with consistently, you're not ready yet, you're

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not ready, and then going back, that's what Script Reader Pro offers to help you get ready. Yeah,

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check it out. It's our portfolio creation mentorship. So give that a look, and we're just gonna take a pause here. Have you guys listen to something else? We do

32:11

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.scriptreaderpro.com forward slash rewrite and use the code rewrite 15 during checkout for the rewrite proposal to get 15% off.

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Okay, we are at that part in our podcast where we go through questions and answers. And for those that are new listening to the podcast, you can submit your questions to hello@scriptreaderpro.com with the subject being podcast question. And we'd love to get some of those new questions on air. But the one question we have here first, Scott, is you said, once you need to be confident, but not cocky. How do I do that?

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You just said that, yeah, how do you do that? It's, it's tricky, because I know a lot of writers who are just like, like, I write the greatest things ever written, and I'm amazing and I'm perfect, and I don't give them a note, and it's like they're crying or they're angry at you. I mean, that's cocky, right? You're not, you're not following it up, but also you're you have to be humble, right? Like you have to be able to say, I am the best person for you to work for. There's no other writer that can do what I do the way I do it, but also be humble about it, and take notes and take reactions and don't get defensive and don't get pissy, and especially, even just with other writers, right? You get a writer that's going to read for you and give you notes, and they give you notes, and then you're you never talk to them again because you don't like it. That's cocky.

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Yeah, you know what? Everyone likes that? What I find. And I mean, this has come with time, but you got to be a good reader of the room. You have to read people really well. And I will say, I do have that. I do have that ability is I can I know my audience? So I'm like, These people seem like, low key enough that I can throw that joke in and I can get laughs. Or this is not really a joking crowd, so probably not good to throw joke out here, right, right, exactly. You read how far you can go with something, and that just comes, I think, with time. I think it's

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Yeah, and I mean, it comes naturally to some people hear you, it's just like, I'm like, Oh my gosh, I would never have said that to that person, but you said it, and now they're laughing, and they're asking you through your Facebook, and they want to be your friend. I know, like, I can say, know how to do it, like I said. So that's the difference. You're confident, because you know, right, that what you're gonna do will work.

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But I also know people, and it's, and I'm not gonna mention names, but not too long ago, I. It to you. I said to this person, okay, what's up with you? I can tell something's wrong. And you were like, how did you know that something was wrong? Yeah, like, how did you even know? But it's just that ability to be able to read emotion, read faces, know what's normal, know what's not normal, and go with it. I don't know. Yeah,

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it's true. So that's the thing, is, is, I mean, if you have to ask that question, right? What's the difference with cocky and confident? You know, it's, it's hard. It's kind of hard to it's just a natural thing. I guess I don't know. I mean, I know I can go into a room break down a story with the best of them, right? But I don't walk into being like, you know, you just don't even let anyone else in the room, because I'm freaking awesome. You know, thing is,

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listeners out there. You know the difference, you've all had that person that you're like, I don't want to spend time with them. Yeah, they, they think they're all that. They're not Chachi, yeah? And I don't want to have anything to do with that. It just gives you that gross feeling, right? Yeah, you

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know that be gross. Don't be the gross person. Don't that would be my new tank top. Don't be gross. Yeah, don't be gross. So there we go. So, so one tank top that we're launching for desert is, don't be gross. The other one is sappy and stabby, and the other one go suck a knife. That's my favorite sucker. Yeah, Hey, glad we had that moment, because this was a very dry, serious business. You hate these. You absolutely hate recording towels. Yes, you hate recording podcasts about business stuff because you're just like, I don't care, and I find it boring. Let's talk about it in creative things. So I know this is about me talking a lot in these episodes, but it's important information that we want people to think about. But I'm glad you had that. What was, don't, don't suck, don't, don't be gross. Yeah, don't be

36:39

gross. Okay, question two. Desiree, you are not a writer, really, what? But you were, but being married to a writer sucks? No, that's the question. No. Desiree, you are not a writer, but being married to a writer, does it make you view what you watch differently? Yes,

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that's a good question. Hey, 100 times over. Why? Why would you say it does? What about it makes you watch things differently. Because

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I look for I look for holes, and I look for like plot, and I look for character, and if it's something that is missing that I immediately am not interested. And I learned that from just having you watch movies and be like, Okay, do you want to know what's going to happen? Now,

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I don't say that. No, I just sometimes I'm like, I bet you that's that. Yeah, I know what's going to happen. I think that's the bad guy, because they showed that person like 13 minutes, and then I'm

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like, he really seriously? Why are we watching this then? But I don't know. I think it's just made me more analytical when I look at things like that,

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probably I think you also like a lot of times you'll watch something, even if it's bad. You used to, and now you're just like, next. Can we stop? I usually am the one that says that you kind of know it's not gonna like people. I won't. I don't know the name of the movie, but we started watching it the other day. We watched like, 15 minutes, and I used to have to sit and just sit through really bad movies with you, because you would just watch because usually, no, I gotta keep going now I just wait for you to say, to not even say, you just kind of look over at me with that look, and I'm like, Yes, we can stop it now. Okay, let's I know, right? You now can identify if something is, if it's just like a script, right? You if you read a script and 20 pages in your life talked about the first page, and that's right? Page, and that's what's happening. I don't even know where this is going. You're gonna stop reading, but you've

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definitely picked that up. I picked up the crap meter. I know what the crap meter is. I know the scale, and I'm just not interested. So I don't know that definitely, you watch differently, yeah, and you watch differently. Question three, what is your best advice for getting into screenwriting? Don't whatever. You do is my answer. Not do it turn around. Do a U turn. Make sure there's no coppers around you.

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Your best advice. I mean, I'm almost I'm almost 50. Now you're old, and I remember my mom said to me, because I'm like, I don't have a backup plan, this is all I want to do. Like, all I want to do is talk about your mom. Yes, we do, because it's important. All I want to do is write movies. This is what I want to do. I'm gonna go to film school. I want to go to this. I want to go to that. No, go to university and get his green something, and then you can have that as a backup. Do not even a backup. And I'm like, no hobby. I don't want to. I don't I'm not a university. I hate school. I'm not going to go to school and learn how to do this and that. Like, no. So if you're gonna do it, no, like, and I said to myself, You know what? If I remember, I'm like, if I turn 50 and I'm still not successful, but I got to do what I loved to do up to that point, then that's worth it for me. So if you can't go into it with that mentality, like, I'm going to work my full time job, but then I'm going to spend evenings and weekends and even holidays. I'm gonna be writing my screenplays, and I'm gonna be, you know, if you aren't going to be happy you did that, then don't do it, because the odds of succeeding in screenwriting are quite low, right? But the idea of chasing a dream that never comes true if. That's gonna I think that's worse, yeah, if that's gonna be your life when you're 80. Man, I wish I would have done that. That sucks. Man, so if you can

make it work, and you can manage whatever, because some people in life, some are young, some are old, some are single, some are not. Some have seven kids. Some have three wives. Like you have to, if you can juggle that and your writing like I would say, Desiree desert will say to Me, Kate, what's wrong? What's going on? Like, when was the last time you worked on some of your own stuff? She'll know, she'll know that I'm not and to like, go. She'll be like, go write some of your own stuff, because that's who I am. And if I'm not doing that, if I'm not writing my own stories here and there, if I'm not creating I'm not myself. So if you can't go into it thinking, if I never succeed, I'm okay, then it's not going to be something that's probably going to make you happy.

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Same thing with if you go into it thinking, You know what, I'm going to be able to quit my job in two months and write full time? Yeah? I

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Yeah. I mean, Nothing's worse for me than hearing from someone, oh man, you know, I just, I don't want to get another job. I really got to sell a screenplay. I mean, this, I have to be working right here. It's got to happen in the next year. That's not gonna happen. I mean, it might, it might, right, it might, if you're hot, if you hustle, right? And, but it's, yeah, it's, it's such a, it's such an up and down tricky thing. And I'm not saying don't do it. Do it. I think it's the best thing in the world. Is telling stories, but, yeah, and, but on a more like, you know, like practical note, the best advice I have for getting into screenwriting is learn screenwriting before you start screenwriting. Don't start writing. Oh my gosh. Figure out how to tell a story, figure out a format. Figure out all like read, watch videos, read, listen podcasts, read screenplays. That's my best advice. Do the work first. Okay, all right, that's it. Are we done? Do we have anything else we have one more? Do you

41:42

want to do one more question? If you have one more, let me pull another question. Question four, I guess we'll have today. Is it smarter to focus on movies or TV for spec scripts? I

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think we kind of actually answered that in this episode too, didn't we? We touched on that TV's kind of like taking over everything, if you can have both, have both. Yeah, okay, that's really it. It's funny when, when you said, oh, I'll just reach in and pull out another, another question. This shows how old I am. I immediately pictured Bob Barker reaching into the little basket that had the folds. Was it? No, it was the, it was the climbing guy he would reach into that basket with. And I don't know what the top was, but it would like, it would like, eat his hand, and then he would bring it out, and we'd go, go back together. And I was like, I really want to know, I want to feel what it's like to grab but as soon as you saw that, I pictured that in my head. I picture Bob Barker reaching in

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and pulling, pulling them out, talking about good TV, good TV. That was

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good. That was good. Anyways, that's us. That's the portfolio building side of the business. And I know it's hard, and people don't want to hear it. They just wish they could just throw the scripts out, or someone finds it and says, Oh, here's a million dollars. But, man, you got to do the work if you're if you're not ready to do the work, if you're not willing to do the work, nobody is going to do it for you. Okay? Like, even our portfolio thing, it's not about us making all your stuff. It's about helping guide you, give advice. Do you want to check it out? Go to scriptreaderpro.com if you like the podcast, rate us. Give us five stars. Subscribe, Share it. Tell your friends. Just don't. Tell them to listen to this episode first, because it's not as fun as our

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others. It is not as fun. And then email questions, comments, all that kind of fun stuff to hello@scriptreaderpro.com

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Yeah, because we are about helping writers craft wonder one page at a time you.