

Ep #54: Importance of Originality

0:00

On this episode, we're talking about something that I'm very good at, which is originality. Yeah, originality is key. And so we're going to dig into a little bit more about that. So listen in.

0:12

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.

0:25

Hey everybody, this is Desiree, and I'm with Scott, and this is the Script Reader Pro podcast. Thank you so much for joining us.

0:31

Yeah, thanks for coming back. We're cranking through the episodes now, and I figured it is about time to stop and do something a little different and not be the same and be a little more original. So we're talking about originality. What does that make sense,

0:45

kind of, and it's something that I know quite a bit about, yes, why? Kind of original? If I ask myself, are you missing? Is probably like, what? What is it? This woman, the other day, I did a weird voice. When I was out at a friend of mine with her little girl there, and her little girl looked at me like, where did that come from? She was like, seriously, terrified, almost. I was like, hey, I can speak in all sorts of ways.

1:14

That's funny. Yes, original, yeah, talking about how to be original, why it's important, and then how to make sure you're getting those original thoughts and original kind of ideas and voice and everything down on the page. So that's, that's what we're talking about. But first, but first, what

1:29

we're talking about something that we typically don't do, which would be unoriginal. No, we're talking about what we've seen lately, which we usually always, yes,

1:40

we usually do, but this was an original movie that we watched. So I thought, oh, let's put this

1:44

down, because it's an original movie. Yeah, my dad recommended this one, but he didn't call

1:48

it the right name. No, he called it safe house. You're like, have you seen safe house? I'm like, Yeah, with Ron Reynolds, Samuel Jackson. She's like, is that new? No, it's called trap house, trap and with de Batista, and it was, you know. And it was a fun little thriller, you know? He was a DA DEA agent, and it was undercover, and his kids were at school, and they were all friends together. They were all friends, and one, one of the one of them, one of their parents died in a in a raid, and so they, they had to move away. And the kids thought, well, let's make how we can help them. They got no money. They have to move so they decide they're gonna go and raid a drug cartel trap house and take the money from it and send it to them. So that's that's kind of the concept, and it was fun. It was kept us, kept us interested, kept us focused.

2:34

I loved that. We're not gonna say at the end, but I do love at the end how it kind of was like a twist, a little bit big twist, and it was unexpected, and it was like, Oh, that's not what I thought was going to happen, right?

2:48

And because up to that point, we were saying, well, obviously, this character's mother is this person, yeah, obviously. So I don't know why they're not just showing it. And then as it all came together, it was actually even twistier. And there was a nice twist. Was like, oh, so they were actually leading us, trying to make us think that. Well, why haven't they shown it? It's clearly they're pointing to it, that that lady is who

3:11

we're not. What I'm talking about. Oh, what are you talking about? I'm talking about the part with the guy. Oh, okay, at the very, very end, motioning to Scott what I'm saying, because I don't want to spoil

3:21

No, yeah, that was unexpected, too. But I think unexpected too. But I think the bigger twist was, who the actual

3:25

saying the whole time, I'm like, why isn't he just doing something? Yeah, about it, and then he does. And it's the plan all along, which was very original. It was original doesn't typically, typically, like, I'm going to say eight eight times, seven times out of 10, it ends up being, oh, yeah, that's what I saw that coming. Yeah, yeah, that's what's supposed to happen. And then when it doesn't happen that way, it throws you for a loop, and you're like, hey, that worked actually,

3:53

really well. That was an original

3:54

twist, right? Lot of little, very not, like not keeping the character what you expected

4:00

the character to do, right? Yeah? Because, yeah, guessing yourself. You'll understand once you watch that but, but it was fun. It was original. It wasn't like a game changer. It wasn't like life changing, but it was like a really fun original thriller, which is important that we see these original movies and original TV shows coming out

4:17

so true even the way that the villains, how the villains were portrayed, and how, I mean, that was original too. I thought in aspects very much. So, yeah, so it was, I thought it was good. Yeah, good watch. It was good. Goodness direction. Speaking of villains, Scott, yes, I don't remember where we watched this movie that I had taken this note down on this quote. And maybe you'll remember, maybe you won't. It was this quote that you typed to me, and I screenshot it to save, oh, and it was this line, yes, what is it? The truth is, we need our villains alive and well, because without them, we're left to face out.

5:00

Ourselves. That was in the beast in me. That was the last one. That was in the Yeah, in the beast in me, that, and that's what does she say that yeah. That was in the we should her book that she was writing. We should have Yeah. But yeah, that was it. And I was like, What a great line, right, which? And it defined her as a character so well, because the beast in me wasn't. It was about the bad guy because he's a psychopath, but it was also about her, because she was fighting this guilt and responsibility that she didn't want to face, and it was tearing

5:27

her apart one more time. Yeah, the beast. Okay, the beast in me. The beast in me. The truth is, we need our villains alive and well, because without them, we're left to face ourselves. Yeah, that's great. That's a great quote, but it was a great line. Great line, yeah, and that was that. But the thing is, villains without our villains? Yeah, we have no movies.

5:50

No, we don't and, and villains, so, and this is the part that is, that's great that you brought that up. So you always desert, doesn't read these notes, or know a single thing about the podcast episode when we start. But yet, you you say these things that are like, that's such a perfect thing to say, because when it comes to villains in so many scripts that I read, and a lot of movies we probably see, is the villains are all the same. They're so they're kind of the same, the same kind of, you know, oh, this is the disguise, you know, he's doing this to blow up the world. And, you know, this villain is just a bad criminal, and this, you know, like, this woman is just this boss that overtook her husband, and now she's this cliché character. And we've seen them. We've seen the same villains time and again, and a lot of times when a script especially stands out, it's because that villain is so original, like in the beast in me, for example, we just talked about that villain was so unique. He was so different than what we've seen in trap house.

6:46

The villain different than what we expected. Yeah, I

6:49

mean, a lot of it was the same old cartel head. Oh, there's a rat. We're gonna go here. You take this gun and you shoot this person to prove that you're, you know, we feel like on this guy's just angry and, oh, I want to all the money in the world. And, right? So like that, the brother, like, it was like, Okay, we've seen this guy a million times, but the other ones, we hadn't, they were different. Yeah, it was original.

7:10

Yeah, that's why I wanted to bring it off, because I'll just touch on the originality of it. So, Scott, we're talking about originality. Yeah.

7:17

So basically, do you see my first tip here? My first note under how to be original, what does

7:22

it say? Oh, gee. It says how to be original, be Desiree. Exactly.

7:27

Be Desiree. Like Desiree is probably the most original person you'll ever meet. The main reason why is because, and I'll never understand it in all of my years, how her brain is so freaking fast she comes up with a retort, with a comeback, with a burn before the person's even done speaking the sentence. I don't get it. I listen to her sometimes. I'm like, How did you even know that that was gonna work when the person hadn't even finished talking? But anyways, she's she's original. Everything she does, everything she says, like, here's an example. So we had this the this lady was over at her house, and she washed her hands in the bathroom and went to dry her hands on on the drying towel. And she said to Desiree, oh, I hope you don't use this towel for your face, because I just cleaned my hands on it. And, like, within a millisecond, Desiree says, Actually, I use that to wipe my butt, right? And it was just like, it was so perfect timing. The woman just started laughing. Like no one else would say that, right? Like I'm inappropriate too, though it's but yeah, and that's part of the thing is you're but you know when and when not to be inappropriate. You're, yeah, you're crest, you're sarcastic, you're you just have really dry, fast, affected humor. But it's just all the things that you do are so original that people are constantly surprised about you, because you say things and do things that are just unexpected,

8:54

right, right? And that's we've talked about this before, too, where that gets me in trouble, and then I have to backpedal a little bit you do because it is unexpected, yep, so then you're having to fix it, and you're like, ooh, I wonder if I went too far at the same time. I wonder myself, are there a lot of people in the world that are like this? No, I don't believe so. And I think, though, that's what is slightly lacking when it comes to movies, is that originality and originality in character. We don't see very many original characters.

9:23

I don't think, No, and that's the biggest thing, right? Is, is people just aren't they're not giving enough thought and time and energy to making sure that their characters are one of a kind, right?

9:33

One of a kind. But to the extent that it's not like, hokey one of a kind, that it's like, no, but wow, really?

9:38

But one of a kind, like, for me, when something is one of a kind, when overall script or a character, or dialog or whatever, when it's like, this is one of a kind, is it's unforgettable. You don't forget it like as a reader, certain screenplay, certain things, certain characters, I'll never forget because they were so original, so unique. Same thing in. Movies, characters we've seen were just like, I'll never forget the character, right? It's the same with you in life. Every single person who meets you will never forget you. You'll see someone they're like Desiree, and you're just like and it's like, when did you and then you find it. You met them like, six years ago at a craft fair, and you sat at their table and talked to them for 15 minutes and made such an impression on them, they remembered you seven years later. Remembered you seven years later. So that's what I mean, is your originality is unforgettable. So that's what you have to strive for

10:30

in your script, yes, and to make them memorable,

10:34

very memorable. Yeah, it has to happen. You know? It's having them say and do things that are different. So we're gonna talk a little bit about that. But when it comes to, you know, coming up with original ideas, right? Ideas are, well, ideas are endless.

10:50

Ideas are but original ideas are, is the tricky part.

10:54

It is tricky, yeah, because it's you have to figure out what makes it why this story should be told by you. What do you bring to the table that's different? That's usually how you take your idea and make it different, original,

11:08

and going back to trap house, that's what I found with this. Is I even said to you, I think I said to you, that's crazy, that no one's done that idea, yeah, because it's like, yeah, DEA. Like friends whose kids are friends, decide to do something with the DA Yeah, DEA equipment. And, you

know, because we've seen lots of movies with DEA and Yeah, nothing with this kind of twist involving the kids, right? That's what made it different, a different

11:37

angle, right? And so it's a matter of like, and I always, you've heard me say before, my rule of a dozen, right? I always go. I was trying to think of a dozen ways to do something, everything, a line of dialog, a choice, a character makes, a story beat, even an idea. Okay, here's my idea. What's going to be about an undercover FBI agent, or he's going in, he's going to go undercover with the mob, okay? Basic idea, what's different about it? What? What? What's going on with this mob organization? What's the organization? Is it a mob? Is it this? Is it that? Is it this? Who's this character? What's a dozen different things that can be about this character. What? Why is he doing this? Here's a dozen different reasons. Why. When you start challenging all of the bits and pieces of an idea, that's where you can get your fun and games and your original thought, because if I say to you, Desiree, come up with a, you know, put a story together about a guy going undercover in the FBI in the mob, you will think up different ideas and directions than I would, even though we spend every day together and we're, you know, We click on everything, right? Our brains work differently. So you only you can make that specific idea, just like only me. I can make only my specific idea. So it's a matter of why, what about you? Right? How can you infuse your experiences, your worldview, your trauma, all these things right that make you you don't just go with the Pat idea and be like, Okay, I'll just, I'll write what I've seen 1000 times before, because then it comes off as that, right? So the other thing is also finding your lane, right? What about you? Do you do well? Like, what is it that you do really well?

13:20

Like, You mean, like, character or plot, or what do you say?

13:23

Yeah, like, for example, right? When I write a spec script, mostly when I write a spec it's horror and thriller. That's just what I write. But that's not my favorite thing to watch. I get scared by horror movies. I don't go and watch every horror movie that comes out, you know, because I just, I get scared. And so why don't I write comedy? Why don't I write drama or romance or like, why don't I write those things? Because that's not that doesn't get me excited to write the way I view life, the way I make things come alive on a page. It works well. Works really well for horror and thriller. So that's my lane. So that's the lane I stay in, right? Not to say

14:01

you can't write other stuff. It's just that that's what makes you feel like yourself the most and makes you come up with ideas that are probably most original.

14:10

Yeah, exactly. And that's because that's how, like, my brain works, right? Like, my brain just goes to dark places, right? Not that I'm a dark person, like, I'm not a violent person, and, you know, like, all those things, but I see things, and I'm like, I hear like we were watching, we were watching a show. It's a silly show called scary. What ugliest house in America? And then they

did, like, a spin off for Halloween, scariest house in America. And it's a silly show where they go to these houses and walk through them, try and find, oh, okay, what's scary about this house? And they'll rate them. And this one house, these people go to this door, and the door had like scratches on it. They open it, and they go upstairs to this creepy attic, and they said, Well, this is what was called the disappointment room. And I was like, as soon as I heard that, no, it doesn't there's been, I can't write like there's been movies about it, right? But as soon as I saw it, I thought, oh my gosh, a movie about a character a. Kid who was born with something. Because what happens is, when someone was born disabled or or had something wrong with them, they would stick them back in the day in the 19 years, whatever. Yeah, they stick them in a disappointment room in the attic, so no one knew they were there, and they couldn't be out in public and ruin the family's name or whatever. And as so the second I hear that, I just that's where my brain goes. How do I put that movie together? What is it gonna feel like when right? That's my

15:21

lane, right? Even see the rest of the show, no, because all you did was think about that. I was

15:25

zoned out. I was gone, yeah, but that's my lane, because that's where my brain puts things together, right? So I I try to stay in that lane, right? If I try to write a comedy, full blown out comedy might not work like it would from my other lane. So So find your lane, and that can help you be original, because you're not trying to do trying to do too many things, right?

15:44

Speaking of that, though, what was that one movie that we saw that took place? Did we talk about that one already? Which the one in the attic where the girl was the babysitter? Oh, we did. We talked about that one the house, oh, the House made Yeah, that makes me think of the disappointment

16:03

room too. Yeah. But that's the thing is. So then that's originality, right?

16:07

I'm saying is that person could have, you know, seen, say, the same cheesy show we watched about the scariest house or whatever in America goes and has that idea, oh, there's a room in the attic. And whereas you would think, Oh, this is like, a movie about this. That person then turns it to be like, Oh, this could be a room that's used for this, yeah, right. And goes a completely different way.

16:31

Yep, exactly. And then that's where you have to embrace your originality, right? So in the disappointment room, for example, right? I thought, oh, disappointment, that's amazing. I'm going to do it, and I look it up, and I'm like, oh, there's a movie called The disappointment room back in the 70s, and it was about that. I'm like, Okay, well, I can't do it that way, but I don't want

to just give it up. So I'm going to write it anyway. So how am I going to write it? What's it going to be? How do I put my own spin on this? Because my brain, my experiences, wire me to go in a certain direction. So so then I came up with an absolutely in my words, in my brain, a brilliant way to know this, I haven't told you yet, but a brilliant way to take the idea of a disappointment room and make it into a different kind of movie. So how do you do it take that idea, how do you make it your own? How do you make it new?

17:17

And it comes up to the whole, I think, the whole idea of coming up constantly with new ideas, for example, looking around, looking around you for those new ideas, right? Like gaining a little bit of this and that from just going throughout your day, right?

17:34

Yeah, yeah, exactly. And look do what Desiree does, just listen in on everybody I know, and go and go and sit somewhere and listen to people's conversations. And you can do just, don't, just don't go over and start in, you know, inserting yourself into people's conversations like desert will see, desert will see a family taking a picture, and they're getting ready to take a picture, and they're, oh, before we take a picture, everyone take a here's, there's whatever donut holes or whatever. Hand it out to everyone. And desert will be like, Oh, can I have one? Can I be in the picture? I'll be in the picture. I'll have a donut, see, like, and suddenly they're all laughing, and they're giggling, and then they'll put her in their

18:07

freaking picture. Okay, so it did not happen, but Scott, that didn't happen. But here's an example at home sex. You overheard someone talking about this and this and this. I don't remember

18:19

what it was. Yeah, a lady said to her husband, oh, well, you're in luck, because they don't have the pillows that I want. Yeah. And I thought in my head I should say to the guy, dude, I feel ya right. But I didn't say anything, because I don't like talk to people. So I told Desiree that. I said, Why didn't

18:33

you say something? That would have been a perfect moment to say something, Scott, that is what you need to work on in 2026 I said this, yeah, you need to put yourself out there more into social settings like that. And he said, well, like, I'm gonna just go, like, you can pull it off. The way that you deliver the line, yeah? The way that I can deliver it and be like, the way I said

18:52

it, they'd be looking me like, why are you listening in our conversation? Why are you listening? But listening, but yeah, listening on people, it's delivery, yeah, but listening on people, and that you can get ideas just from their conversations, from the people read articles, right? Go online and just see what's new, like, news stories, because there's a lot of little things that you can pick up and be like, Oh, that's brilliant. I could take a story and make it like this, make

19:13

it like this, but like, infuse that story. Was this story, just that little

19:17

morsel of the story, right? Like, Oh, that character, that person's crazy. What's their story, right? But, but do that, and don't just, and this is a trick, and this is what's happening a lot lately with people, is you go, but then you just get stuck in the scroll. Right? Don't go and scroll and scroll and scroll. Go for go. Be intentional about it, like I'm looking for articles. I'm looking for cool little, little ideas that can spark something. Right? Don't just be another AI platform, right? Creativity is what makes you human. Embrace your weird, right? Embrace how weird you are. Embrace what's so different about I mean, some people are boring. Can't help it. Some people, some people are weird in a bad way, like, I don't want to know, know you,

19:56

okay, those boring people though, Scott, we've said this before, too. Those boring people. And if you think you're boring, sorry if you think those boring people, we've said this. Isn't it weird that those people always end up with other boring people? It's not weird.

20:12

It makes sense. Because they're just they're boring together. Because if you're boring, if you don't know you're boring, you don't so the person that you meet that doesn't see you're boring because they're boring. They don't know. They think they're the coolest, most story, craziest couple, but they're boring. So but, but embrace your weirdness, right? Like, and that's the thing with you, Desiree as well. And I'm not just complimenting my wife because I want to compliment you know, want her to feel good about herself. I'm just these are true in the house, is what it comes down to. But desert is weird. Like, you are weird with You're so different and quirky, and you do these strange things all the time, and you're just like, like, I said to the weird I said to like, that woman that was at her house, I said, she's like, Yeah, she's like, I'll come back next time I've done I guess I'll be back and see you next time I've done something wrong in my life. Then it's like punishment to see her right as a joke. And then I said, Well, you know, I said, and then she's like, good luck, Scott. I said, Yeah, you you've been here for 10 minutes. This is my life. And then I said, the, you know, when Desiree's on, when she's got having an on day, because she will be giving you burns, right? She'll be burning you or insulting your some comeback, but she can't even finish it because she's laughing so hard at her own comeback. That's weird. It's a weird way to

21:29

interact before I even say it. And then someone will say, What's so funny, and I'll deliver the line after

21:38

I've left, but it's just, you're you're weird, right? But you embrace it. And so that's the thing, is, embrace your weird when you're writing, embrace what makes you like. Make your characters weird. Makes them, make them different. Make ideas weird. Take an idea and just throw in the

21:50

crazy way. Want to know crazy thing that I did. You know about this? Which one? They're way too many. Weird, okay, weird. I'm down. I'm with my best friend in Arkansas. We love the strawberry lemonade at Chick fil A, and so I'm like, you know it'd be really, really fun if we went

22:08

through and both her and her friend are in wheelchairs, if we both went through

22:12

the drive through in our wheelchairs, because if you know Chick fil A, you know that you're supposed to keep driving while they're taking your order. There's people standing outside to keep it going. That was weird. It was weird. Scott came across

22:26

it, I will, I was, I was across parking lot. I came over to find you guys, and found you giving your order at the drive thru.

22:34

And we're stuck between a stinky car, a stinky old car, and another car, and giggling the entire time, and everyone's looking at them and laughing, and it's like, it's weird. What are you weirdos doing together? It is weird. Yeah, it is. It is. But an adult too. It is, especially for an adult. That same day, we went and we got some kind of pretzel bikes, and they were really hard. So I thought it would be fun in the parking lot for almost a 45 year old here to go and hack them at her head to see if I could drill her in the middle of the forehead. Weird behavior for the age, yeah, for 12 year old. Anyways, that was that

23:07

story, but, but it's, it's, but that's the thing. Is, if you, if you didn't embrace that, how boring would life be? I know if you don't embrace weirdness in your stories, your stories are going to be boring. You're not going to come up with something unique. I'm not saying they have to be, like, weird. Like, Oh my gosh, it's so this is weird. I don't like it, but, like, just weird, off beat different, right? It's unexpected. Unexpected, yeah,

23:27

not weird, more unexpected. Like, oh, I never thought that that would happen exactly.

23:32

But at the same time as you are kind of looking for ideas, and, you know, looking for kernels of interesting things, shut the world off, once in a while too, you have to, what do you mean? You

have to close everything off and and and just take your own influence in something, right? You have to sit with your idea. You have to to let it ruminate and marinate and and try and figure out, okay, so now, because it's all about me, and I'm the only person who can tell this story, because that's what a producer will ask you, why why this story? What do you bring to this story? Like, what? What about this? Why did you write this? What are you trying to say? Like, you need to you need to understand yourself. You need to shut off the world, understand okay. Why do I want to tell this story? What do I bring to the story that's different? How do I do it? Right? You have to have your own moments, right? It's the only way to keep your originality right. And because, I mean, I asked all my writer friends and stuff all the time, hey, I haven't What do you think I could do here? And do you like this idea? And what do you think of this? And I take that outside, you know, ideas and thoughts and stuff, but I still have to sit with it and figure out which pieces of it make sense to me, which advice, which notes I'm getting from people makes sense for my vision, makes sense for what I'm trying to say and do, right? Because if you just take all those ideas and you just do them, it's not you anymore, like your script will be less and less like you, right? So that that you want to take a note, you want to make it your own, if you like the idea behind it, and. And put it through that so you have to shut all that off and not let everything else influence you, or you're just another cog in the wheel, right?

25:09

Speaking about a cog in the wheel? Yes, no one either. If you think about it, no one else in the world can have the same thought.

25:19

No, not possible. Like, it might be similar, but not exactly the same. No, we're all different cogs. Yeah, what a stupid word, cog. You're a cog. That's what you'll that's desert. Is classic comeback. No matter what you're talking about. I did that will be here today. You're a blank, right? Talking about different colors. Oh, yeah, I think this is, I think this is more beige. You're beige. Like, she'll just say, like, She's weird. Just weird things to say, right? So, but yeah, you want to, you want to make sure you know that's the things, right? So that's part of shut yourself off. Like, don't let everyone else's thoughts become your own. Still find your own in there. So we're gonna do a little example of how to take something and and give an original twist. So speaking of your friend Jonna that you throw pretzels at, yeah, I'm forced to go drive through lines. We're gonna talk about Jonna. So oh, this is gonna be interesting. Not Jonna specifically, because she's a specific person, but you're gonna make like an original version of John Jonah. So when you're thinking about Jonna, if someone said to you, here's your character. This is John of the character in a movie or TV show. What would you say makes her her. What makes tell us about Johnna? What makes you think this is what I like about this is why she's awesome. This is what

26:28

John is, very caring. Okay, she listens to you. She wants to help in any way that she can. Yes, she's a fixer, like I am. Yes, she likes to be a fixer. Yeah, she loves her family. Yes, she has strong beliefs, religion wise, she makes me feel bad if I say something inappropriate. Yeah, no, but that's who she is. Oh, yeah. She's like, she's proper Yes, because she's Southern, yes? So

she has this role of wife and mom that she feels and likes to fulfill that duty of being a wife and mom yes to certain Southern Right, like she's expected to be a certain way.

27:15

Yeah. She lives in Arkansas. She's in South there's a, you know, Southern, Southern wife. What about her makes her, makes her extremely original from everyone else. What is it about her that you think that is why she is specifically Jonna? I have one, but I want to

27:32

hear I changed her.

27:34

You didn't change her. You brought her out of her job. What is it that's original when you think of Jonna, no one else is like that, but something specific, something specific about for me, here's my example, yeah, because I want to know what you're thinking, this is what makes John original to me, that I don't see other people do. Okay, so John is blonde. Well, she's not, I don't think she's natural blonde, but she's that classic, like you're so blonde kind of thing, because she comes across sometimes as absolutely clueless. Yes, when someone, when she says something out loud that is so inappropriate or such like sexual innuendo and has has no freaking clue, no clue. But at the same time, I think she plays it. I think she knows exactly what she said, but she pretends she didn't hear it. It's so it's so funny. And so to me, when I think of jonette, that's what I would use in the show about that character.

28:30

Yes, 90% of the time I think she's really clueless.

28:35

I know she's but there's times when I'm like, when it's like, none of the time. There's no way that she did. There's no way. And now that we're all laughing, and you're still, you still don't get that what you said, like, we'll just put it in the bush or something. We were talking about something, and, you know, like, and then we all laugh because of how she said it was, like, she meant, like, Yes, I know, right. But she just sits there with that look on her face. And you're like, are you You know what you said, but why you have to pretend you don't know? Like she that's what's full but she's she's also simple, but not yet simple, but

29:07

she's so smart,

29:08

she's an on the ball, like she knows exactly what's going

29:12

on, but the things she says sometimes it's like, and I call her on it, that's what's beautiful about it. Yeah, about our relationship is, I can then say that was such a dumb thing to say, yeah, why

would you say something so stupid? You poor, right? Yeah. And we have all of these names we call each other, yeah, that make no sense to anybody else, like jerker and dorker, yeah?

29:35

But that's the thing is. And along along with that too, and that's what I would use in the movie, is how sometimes she'll say stuff, not the inappropriate stuff, but she'll say something, not realizing she said it, or not realizing that probably did not come out. Well, case in point, she went to see a doctor, and her new neurologist came in and she said, out loud, you are incredibly happy. Handsome, and no one would normally say that out loud, right? She wouldn't have said that, but then she was so embarrassed after she said it, but she wouldn't have said out aloud before she met you.

30:10

That's what I was gonna say, Yeah, I have formed her, yes, or I had not formed

30:16

I have helped her. You've brought her to life. More. Come out of her shell, a little bit more, yeah, but that's the thing is. So to me, those are the things that make her original. Is that? So that's to me, those are the original pieces that make her unique from anyone else in the world, right?

30:29

From someone who's also unique when she does things unexpected that the typical genre for 3940 years would typically do, yeah, the first thing I say is I'm so proud of you, because I like you, have now joined that club of weirdness and uniqueness.

30:51

And then after you point out something and she finally clues it in, what does she do? She snort laughs, right? Drops her head down. Snort laughs, right? So that would be that quirk of originality, but, but that's the thing is, when I had you explain her, she's a southern wife and mother, she's caring. She's, you know, she's her religion's important. There she she wants to take care of people. She's a fixer. So are 1000s of other people, right? That's a kind of a generic person. It's those little quirks that make her different from everywhere. So that's, that's the thing you want to think about. You want to be like, How can I build this character? What makes them original? So that's the example, and the thing they wanted to share there with, with

31:33

her, or anybody in general. You can gather all of this information about someone by listening. If you're sitting beside them at the coffee shop and you're listening to them talk. You can gather 90 80% of that just by listening into who that person is, yep, you know, the same kind of yeah quirks, the same kind of person.

31:53

And take that and use it when you see something funny or unique or original or even creepy or whatever, about someone to put it, give it to a character. Like, I'll never like, I haven't used this

yet for a character. It has, but I will one day. It's in my book of use this for a character. But you went on when you were younger, before I met you. You went on a date with a guy. Seemed like a nice guy, normal guy. We went on a date

32:16

with him. He's a booger guy.

32:20

And you were sitting there in the conversation, and the guy reaches up with his pinky, yeah, and this is what makes it so different. A lot of people will pick their nose, put their pinky in their nose, pull a booger out, whatever, maybe eat it. This guy put his pinky finger in the corner of his eye and took the sleep out of his eye. But then he ate it in front of you on a date. And you're like, did you just put that in your mouth? And he's like, Well, it came out of my body. Why can't it go back in my body? I'm like, first thing I think is, so do you eat your poop like it came out of your body? Doesn't mean it goes back in your body. Who are you like?

33:01

I'm really concerned for the person who listens to this, who has to write what this episode is about. I hope it does not make this

33:08

will be the one minute clip on Instagram. Their poop. Does he eat? But that is so original. No one does that. So one and no one can use it. That's mine. If you're listening to podcasts, you cannot use that. But that is, to me, that's that. That's just a quirk that I heard in this story, that I thought that goes in because of when that is in a movie one day, that's gonna say a lot about who that person is, right? Whether it's like those little dating montages that you see in movies, and she's across from the table and dating at a date, and then the guy does that on the date, like, right, like, it would totally turn you off, right, yeah, but, but, so anyways, it's little things like that. There's gold mine south there. There's little nuggets everywhere but right, take them, right? That's the thing. That's my next note. Write these things down. Have a book, having a notepad, have your app. Write all these things down. Save them so they never disappear, because you go through them. And even that one kernel can inspire a whole idea, even that one eye booger, it can inspire idea, who is this guy? Like this guy? How is he even on a date? Like this guy doesn't leave his basement? I know,

34:10

but remember, like, who is he? Remember he worked at a and w?

34:13

Oh my gosh. Now I can never eat a and w again after knowing that gross. But that's the thing, right? You want to write these things down, you know? You want to take a risk. You have one shot at this. If someone's going to read your script, you have one shot at that person. They will never read it again. If you don't impress them, they'll never read anything you've written again. You want to hit for the fences. Use every original thing you can stand out, be different. Do it

differently. Make it your own, right? You take 10 different writers, right? Take everyone who's listening to the script. If I gave you an idea and I said, Here's your core base concept, go and write it, or write the first page, or write the basic premise of your outline, every single one of them would be different. They would be different. The same, but every single one of them would be different. Use that to be different. Don't be the same as everybody else.

35:06

I think a thing to touch on too is that, if you think it's been done before, like, a lot of scripts are done, right, yeah, or maybe you're like, Oh yeah, that person's kind of working on that same kind of idea, yeah, I would say to still do it, yeah, because

35:22

it's different. Like, that's what I said. Like, with the disappointment room idea, it's like, okay, someone's done it. I'm not just gonna give it up. I'm gonna do it how I would do it. It's different. Yeah, do different. Yep, that's just how it is. Yeah, a lot of people just see that. Oh, no, I was writing this movie. I'm halfway through it, but this movie just came out, and it's the same thing. I saw it on, on the Facebook group, the inside pitch, run by Christopher Lockhart, head of William Morris Endeavor, and this guy's like, oh, I had this pilot go, got an eight out of 10 on blacklist, and it's trending, and it's moving and stuff. And now this happened, and now my project's dead. And it was like this that they're they're redoing, or they're trying to turn point break into a pilot and make a series out of it. And his pilot was very similar. It was both surfers. And it was like, took on some, some point break stuff and played with it, and now it's dead. And he's like, Oh, now what I do? Okay, fine, yeah. But so someone else, your idea was written based on being influenced by something else, and now that's what everything is, right? So that doesn't mean no one's like, especially in television, it's less about your spec being picked up, and lockhart's answer was essentially that he's like, you're a writer from outside the TV system. No matter how great your script is, it's probably not going to turn into a television show, but use it as a sample. It will get you work. If it's rated that well, it means your writing is strong. That's what will get you working. Concentrate on that. It's like, yeah, concentrate on that. Be the voice on the page people are identifying it with, not because of the plot, but because have you written it right? So that's the key. Is, even if something's done already, or you hear someone's doing it, do it anyway, right? Yeah, so that's, that's it. Just basically, choose your passion over chasing a trend or commerciality, right? Always try and write something that you know you have a way to set try and sell it or pitch it. Just get something's not commercial. Doesn't mean it's not worth writing. But when you've written, you have to understand, Okay, well, how do I if you can't put in a log line that makes any sense, or you can't explain it to someone in more than a couple sentences, it's going to be harder to sell it. That's the only thing. It's going to be harder to get people to read. It doesn't mean you shouldn't write it make sure whatever you're going to go on. Doesn't mean, oh, this a blockbuster is going to make all this money and blah blah. But is it going to be something that can get people excited to ask to read it, right?

37:43

And that's the thing. It's not even just the idea. We've talked about this again before. It's not just the idea of the script or the story of the script. It's the writer, and it's the originality of the writer

that often gets hired because of how they write and the original, originality that they bring forward on the page.

38:05

Yeah, exactly. So like, for example, a writer will will make, like, a pitch deck for the TV pilot. Everyone says, oh, make a pitch deck. Make a pitch deck. So they spend like \$5,000 to get this perfectly polished, awesome looking pitch deck. And, okay, yeah, maybe it's beautiful, and it will get people excited to read the script. And then they ask for the script, and they send the script, and the pilot is is not good. It's written poorly. Doesn't pull it off. Are they going to want to continue knowing that writer, or continue that project just because, like, they got excited about the pitch deck, but the pilot's no good. Are they gonna? Are they gonna want to keep going after it? Well, they might. No, they won't, because it's garbage, because it's garbage, but what if the pitch deck is good doesn't so then the well, they can't make it. They can't hire someone else to write it. It's that person's idea. So if the writer is not good and it's not original and it's Pat, it's exactly what has been done before. They're not there's so many other projects out there, they're not going to go after that. If the writing, if that pilot,

39:00

is just not good enough, really, even if it's just a good idea.

39:04

Well, no, probably not. There's so many good ideas out there, right? And it's so hard to sell a TV idea, especially, right? What you're saying, but maybe they'll, they like, hey, we want to, we'll buy the idea, we'll buy your script, and then they'll throw it out and hire someone to write an actual right? No, but I'm just saying, like, it all comes down to the writing. Was my, was my reason for going off of your answer? Yeah, okay. It's all about the pilot. It's all about the writing. It's all about how great that voice. It's all about the originality. Yeah, because if it's on, if it's forgettable, they'll forget it.

39:32

See, I wouldn't even know that. That's why I was like, yeah, why wouldn't they know? Why wouldn't they if they liked the whole idea?

39:39

Yeah. I mean, if, even if, as a writer, you write this awesome spec, and it's amazing, and people want to make it because they know it's going to make money if you put this, oh, well, let's put Mark Wahlberg on it, and it's going to make \$100 million okay, sure, but they get so then they buy the script from the person, and then they pay a higher level writer to rewrite the script. So, so in movies, you'll see that. Happen more, they'll buy your script for the idea and hire someone else to write. Okay, right? But that's what I was thinking, Yeah, but it all. But focus your writing must be amazing. It has to make sense. Yeah, so that's it. So be original. You know, be that original voice. Make an impact. Be unforgettable. Do it the way you do, because no one else yourself, yep. Be yourself, yep, unless you're a real,

40:22

you know, like Desiree, and don't be yourself unless you're around people.

40:26

The world would be less fun if you weren't yourself. It would be, it would be everyone in this world deserves to know you, and they don't, which is sad. So yeah, for a lot of people, at least here, they get a little bit of a glimpse. No, I'm saying for you, oh, and I'm saying

40:39

in general, is that I feel like a lot of people have been molded and trained and taught on how to be, yeah, oh, yeah. And what's correct, politically correct and what isn't correct, and that's not what you do in public and go against the norm. Who cares? Be who you are.

40:54

That's what life is. Too short man. And that's the thing is, you and I, from experience, have been told, Do not be yourself for most of our lives, yeah, until we met each other and grew and realized, No way, man, I want to be me. I'm awesome. You're awesome. These people suck. Let's just be us, right? And so, yeah, yeah. So you have to, you know, just you have to believe that you're worth knowing, first of all, as a human. And then you have to believe that your writing is worth reading. If you don't believe it, if you can't put that and make it known, it's not gonna work. So yeah, so that's it be original. And while you mull that over, we're gonna take a little break and tell you about one of our services.

41:32

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/rewrite and use the code rewrite 15 during checkout for the rewrite proposal to get 15% off.

42:15

Thank you guys for sticking with us. Here we are at the part in our episode when we talk about questions, and Scott gives answers questions that have been previously submitted by listeners like you, that sounds like listeners like you. And if you have a question, you can submit it to [Hello@scriptreaderpro.com](mailto>Hello@scriptreaderpro.com), yes. Does that sound like a radio voice

42:39

that does? I don't like it, though it's kind of creepy. Use your voice.

42:42

Okay. So if you have a question like I said, please submit them to [Hello@scriptreaderpro.com](mailto>Hello@scriptreaderpro.com) Yep. Question one comes from Steve from Vancouver. I don't know if it's Vancouver, Canada or

Vancouver, Washington, Washington. Why do people say not to have a script? Be about a struggling Oh, thank you for asking this question. Steve, why do people say not to have a script to be about a struggling screenwriter? Nobody wants to see it if you're not a screenwriter. Yeah?

43:16

Screenwriters like screenwriting? Yeah? I mean, it's okay, so okay, it's been, yeah, it's been done and it's been done well, and so it's never, it's always going to be compared to what's been done well. But the thing is,

43:31

watching someone write is the equivalent of of watching someone going to the bathroom, right?

43:37

Okay, yes, pretty much. Yeah, boring. And let's move on. Okay, but Okay, so this is the thing. It's a kind of a loaded question. So a lot of times, when someone does, and I've read so many of these scripts, and that's like, that's why they're not original, because there's, there's tons of them, because everyone thinks that they're struggling. Screenwriter story about them, and, oh, and they find success. And oh my gosh, hold the script for \$4 million if that's what the movie is, don't write it if you if you're gonna make your character a struggling screenwriter, that can only be something about the character. That's who they are, but that's not what the movie should be about. That's not where the plot goes. That's just part of who they are. That's okay. But no, the biggest problem I see is people write these movies about screenwriters finding success and breaking in, and it's so inauthentic, because you can tell they don't know anything about the movie business. They don't know how it actually works. So everything that happens, like, they go into this office and, oh, I want to, you know, read my screenplay, and they, they force their way in and throw it on their desk, and then they read it, and then, like, stars explode in their eyes, thinking, Where have you been all my life? This is the greatest script I've ever written. Here's a \$5 million check. Let's go to the Oscars. It's like, okay, no, thank you. That's not right. That's not like the and the thing is, the movie business, as a screenwriter, it doesn't take, it takes years and decades, and a project getting life takes years. So it's just doesn't it just doesn't seem it just isn't real. So, I mean, so many people have done it just. Do it differently. If you're gonna do it, do it. Just don't make the movie about them finding success. That's just boring. Word word.

45:08

Question two is Davis from New Jersey. Oh, I skipped one, but we'll do this one first. Okay, how do I know if notes are good or bad? That's a tough one.

45:19

Scott, that is a tough one. The best way to do it is take a step back. Take your personal out of it, right? Don't you can't take it personally. You can't get defensive, right? But, but your personal out of it. Take your sorry, take your personal emotion out of it. Yeah, right. Don't be like, Oh, I don't know. I don't know if these make sense. I don't know if they're good or bad. Like, you don't know. So So you have to step back and then try and look at it from their viewpoint. Try and think, Okay, what? And I always say, look for the note beneath the note, right? Try and figure out

what exactly they're saying. Why they're pointing this out. Is there something else going on there? The other way is to get more than one set of notes, because if you get one set of notes only ever for your script. You won't know if they're good or bad, because everyone has their own viewpoint, own skewed bias, whatever, right? So you have to get some consistencies, then you'll know. Okay, well, that set of notes, I don't think they fully read the script. That's this is garbage. That's bad notes, right? Because the other ones pay attention, or they have the details, or they both. There's a couple that are consistent, saying, I didn't get this part. Okay, well, then you know what's good, right? So that's the biggest thing. Try and step try and take a step back.

46:27

Yeah, the thing too, with something like requesting notes from Script Reader Pro, the readers that are reading your notes have been meticulously selected, so you want to a place that's reputable, yeah, that you know, has readers who are in the industry, who know what they're doing. And I mean, for me personally, if I went with a company that had 600 readers, I would be questioning, how can I have make sure that I have good quality notes from that's a good point. Do you know what

47:00

I mean? I do? Yeah, and that's, and part of that's why I say to sometimes, some people that getting you're paying extra for notes at some no name contest probably not going to be great notes, because you don't even know who's reading it. A lot of times that contest, they're, they're, they're bringing anyone the credentials behind I mean, the high end contests are better. But like, Who is that? Yeah, what are they? What have they done? Do they have? Oh, there's some. That's a niece of some 17, some 17 year old niece of some guy. Like, yeah, yeah. So that's so, yeah, if you can find out specifically that who's doing your notes, that's great. And that's why we're so transparent here, because we want you to know who's actually reading your script, you know, so you know where it's coming from. But yeah, it's a it's a tough one, because I've gotten notes before. I'm like, Oh my gosh. Like, these are awful. But then you take a step back and you're like, okay, one by one, let's go through and then you're like, you know what? That makes total sense. I can't believe I didn't notice that notes can be that's a good catch. And if that's all I got out of that whole set of notes, if it made me catch something and then go and do it, great, but you have to do it yourself. You have to put your own spin, but yeah, that's it's a tough one for sure.

48:04

Okay, question number three, how do I handle feedback without losing my voice? And this is a Laura from Ireland.

48:12

Oh, that's a good one too. And we've talked about this before, like there's nothing worse for me than a writer who I give notes to and then they deliver their rewrite back that night, or like, morning, like 245 in the morning, with every single thing that I noted in the exact same way I said, maybe try this. That's not them anymore. You're saying they're trying to, like, make me

happy, or like, prove something no originality, yeah, I pointed out. And I mean, I every right, every reader is a little different every minute. But I like throw tons of suggestions and ideas at people just and I always say doesn't mean I'm not saying this is the best choice. I'm putting it here to get you thinking and brainstorming and and coming up with your own way. And if my suggestion is great, go with it. I don't care if it is garbage, throw it away, but something that at least gets you thinking right. So that's exactly. That's how you do it. You take a take a note, simmer with it. Think, how can I make that match my vision and be my own? Exactly?

49:07

Okay, question four, what should I make sure is happening at the midpoint of my script? And this is Shannon from Idaho.

49:14

I mean, that's a big one, middle of the second act for me. I think the easiest way for me to do is that character must go through something where they stop and they realize, okay, you know what? The only way for me to keep going, the only way for me to be successful, the only way for me to win this story, is to stop reacting to everything else and everyone else, and take control as the active player in my story. That should happen, yeah? Character take control of their own story. Yeah? Because they're reacting to everything, right? They're, oh, they put in a new position. Oh, this person did this, and they're pushing them over there, and it's like, Okay, I can't control anything. I, you know, I can't do this anymore. I'm going to be the one who makes change. I'm grabbing the reins of my story. That should happen halfway through your. Movie. So for me, like I said before, I base everything on character in my structure. So that's for me, my midpoint is that character, something happens that they realize the only way to find success through this is to stop reacting and be active. Okay, so yeah, and that's it. That's our podcast on reaching I hope it was original enough. I hope everyone found this original. And if I know everyone wants to have Desiree in their life now I get it, and sorry, but she's mine. So if you have, if you've enjoyed this, our goal here is to always kind of, you know, we want to entertain you. Want you to have fun while you're listening, but we want you to learn something and and I know a lot of what I talk about has been talked about by so many other people, but I try to explain it in a way that hopefully might make sense more than what you've heard someone else talk about. And so if you did great, if you did, pass it on, share with your writing friends, subscribe and give Desiree. What is Desiree?

50:50

Love stars. Gold stars.

50:52

Yeah, you

50:54

can always email us your questions, comments or suggestions for future podcasts. At Hello@scriptreaderpro.com

51:02

Yeah, and check out our website. We have every service you can imagine, right from reading your log lines, giving feedback, treatment, synopsis, your whole script, few pages of notes, a lot of notes, mentoring, building your concept with you, everything you can imagine. If you need something, we're there scriptreaderpro.com where we are helping writers craft wonder one page at a time.