

Ep #60: Impactful Character Intros

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On this episode, we're talking all about impactful character introductions, yeah, the ones that leave lasting impressions and maybe the ones that don't. So listen in.

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This is the Script Reader Pro podcast, hands on advice, insider hacks and deeper discussions for the screenwriters who are serious about breaking into the industry.

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Hey everybody, this is Desiree, and this is the Script Reader Pro podcast. I am your host of this show, and I am with Scott, my lovely husband today. I'm lovely today. Today you are because I'm dressed and not in my house coat, because you have nice warm heat in our area today, which makes me so happy.

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I'm Scott. I'm one of the Script Reader Pro team. We are a team of writers and analysts and mentors and such that try to help you become better, and that's what our podcast

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is all about. What don't you do? Scott?

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We're one stop shop, I'm a one stop shop. You're a one stop shop.

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Scott is a one stop shop.

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We're here to entertain you and educate you and maybe explain some things in ways that haven't quite made sense to you, and hopefully this time they do. So that's, uh, that's why we're here.

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Hey, Scott, yes, this is our 60th episode, holy 60. That's a lot, almost as old as you, almost 6060. That's crazy. That old.

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Yeah, sheesh, 60. Did you have one

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of my chocolate cookies? Because you have, like, something in your teeth at the bottom?

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No, I didn't. Right here. I didn't, but thanks for pointing that out. There's some broccoli in my teeth and some spinach as well. In the morning, first thing in the morning movies, when they do that, because it's so awkward, what with broccoli? Yeah, like, we just watched a movie, what was it called? Shell with Elizabeth Moss, and she was, like, really awkward on dates, and she smiled and she had the big broccoli in her teeth.

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Yeah, I know, but I guess so funny, the thing is, is I'm that person who will always

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tell you I know and I'm the person who's so awkward. Like, how do I tell that person? Yeah, you wouldn't. I would eventually, but not right off

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the start. I would the second I saw that embarrass the person. I wouldn't even wait a second.

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You would go up to someone you don't even know strangers, kick it out of their tooth. Or I would,

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I actually have, do you remember when we I think it was last summer. We were on the street, and then there was a daughter looking at her mom's teeth. And I said, let me just check and make sure she's got everything picked out of there for you. Yeah. And they laughed, it's delivery, Scott, it's all about delivery. Hey, Scott, yes, we always start our podcast the exact same way, exactly we talk about what we've seen lately. Yes, we do. What do

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we have today? Together together?

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Why do we have words? Why do we have together Together together? There's a movie together together

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and there's a movie together

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together. Yeah, really watch both of

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these within the last couple weeks.

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What the heck I watched a show called together, and then I know I watched a movie called together together.

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So together together was what I saw together. Comma together. What was that one? Like that

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one was following the journey of man who wanted to be a father. What's the character? What's his I mean, the actor? Ed, something from hangover seems. Ed, something, yes, I can't remember at the moment. And Ed, aka whatever his character's name was, because I don't remember, wanted to be a single dad, which was kind of a stigma, yeah. And so he wanted to find someone who would carry his baby. So he got a surrogate, yeah. It followed the journey of her pregnancy throughout the trimesters. And such good I mean, it kept me entertained. It was interesting. Yeah.

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And you said the ending just but the ending, oh my God, for you almost, it was just unfinished. You said it

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was so brutal. And we talked about that yesterday. We went for breakfast yesterday, and we talked about how, at the end of a movie, how you said you feel the same way that there should be some sort of ending, even if it's not the ending you expected something to tie it up somewhat.

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Yeah, it's tricky, because writers sometimes don't know when to end their movie. Directors have a really specific reason why they end a movie certain way. But yeah, you we talked about that, and it kind of explained how sometimes you want to let the audience just, you know this the story is done. We don't really need to know where it goes next, because the audience can kind of think of where it goes. But yeah, endings are tricky. For sure, we should do a whole podcast on ending sometimes

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we could, and what works well and what doesn't work well, and why, and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. But I, I liked it, I was invested. And then the ending just was very disappointing, yeah, so check it out. I mean, it was good. The acting was good. It was, like, really believable. That's good. I liked that they cast at their roles really well. I thought you read an article too, and because we were looking for

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what you wanted to know more about why the ending ended as it did. Yeah, yeah. So, but what about the movie? Be together, I don't know, because I don't remember, imagine you and I kiss, and our lips fused together.

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Oh, that one. Didn't we talk about this one? I don't know if

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we did. I just thought it was funny that together, together, together, it was interesting. It was like a culty this couple falls into this cave, this hole in the forest, and they come out, and if they're to, if they're if they touch too long, they their skin starts to fuse together. It was essentially the concept. But it was interesting the character, stuff like, they were really kind of falling to pieces. And it was interesting marriage, you know, yeah, I did marriage. And I didn't really care much about the character, no?

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And I didn't see more about going where I didn't really see it going where it went, Yeah, we're

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pretty crazy. But it was more like, it's like, they focus so much on the plot, like, and the and the like, the elevating beats of the plot, yeah, more than the characters, yeah, the character stuff were just like, Oh, he wants this life. She wants this life. They're trying to stay together. And I was like, just don't, but that's the whole point together, right? Like it was about them staying together. I understood the themes and the metaphors, yeah, but I care enough.

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That's gonna say I didn't care. I didn't care enough about the characters either. And I was like, okay, so what? Who cares? Yeah.

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So anyways, sometimes that happens, right? That you're so read a lot of scripts like that, you're so focused on the story that you you miss the character. So today we're going to talk about character specifically, character introductions, like how to introduce a character to make a lasting impression. And there's different kinds, right? There's there's hero introductions and villain introductions, introductions that showcase characters and who they are, kind of reveal them through action, through their dialog, things that instantly set the tone of the whole story. So we're just going to kind of go over some kind of like the iconic characters that, like everybody listening will remember, you probably won't Desiree. But most people who watch movies and write movies will kind of think of these characters when they think of ones that are unforgettable.

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So, and are you saying characters in general, or you're saying first

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like character introductions, the first time we see a character. So you're talking about the first impression, Yep, yeah, exactly that the first impression. What? What the what you are going to pay attention to, what it does, ways to make a character stand out or learn something specific that really kind of like defines the character very quickly. And that's a large, large part of what I see, what we all see here in scripts that we are reading for people, is the characters don't stand out enough. Maybe it takes sometimes, like 15 pages go by before we meet the main character. We want to make sure that we we have a lasting impression, no matter what that character or who the character is, heroes, villains, anyone at all. So that's what we're gonna kind of go over. Guess what? What? I'm a character. You are a character, and you leave a lasting impression

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on every I am a character. And I do have to tell you, this was like there was a gentleman I go and I help out at a care home on Thursdays in the morning. And a couple weeks ago, there was a gentleman who I was talking to, an older gentleman, and he said, I've been looking for you because I wanted to visit with you again. And I said, Oh, that's nice of you. And he said, I sure love talking with you, because you ask way too many questions, and you're nosy just like me. I only met with, I only talked to the guy once, but he said he was nosy just like just like me. Yeah. Well, it's because you leave such a lasting impression on people. I thought, You know what? I thought, how the heck does this guy know me already one visit in and he knows he has too many questions. And I think that's what a character in a in a good movie is, is that it's got to leave a first lasting impression that makes you think, I want to see them more. I want to talk to them. Hey. I want to get to know what they're all about and how

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they tick. Yeah, right. Like a lot of people I meet, I probably forget them instantly, right? You do? Well, yeah, I do you. You remember every single person you meet, but there's just something about you, you know, like when people are like you seem like you, you, you talk to people like you genuinely care about them, even though you don't know them. Generally, yeah? Genuinely, there you go. Genuinely, that's, that's, that's what people kind of get from you. And the funny thing is, it's because you do. A lot of people just pretend they do, right, and they care they want. But you are just like, you instantly care about someone. You want to know them. You want them to feel seen. It's just, yeah. So that's why you make an impression everywhere you go, right? A lot of people are like, Oh, Desiree, and you're like, I Who are you? Yeah, I don't know who they are, but you make an impression. So that's what we're talking about today. Cool, all right. Well, let's get started. So let's start with some villains. Villains are like villains. I love bad bad guys and bad girls. I love the villains in movies because they make I always think, you know you're. Movie is only as strong as your villain, right? Any movie. I mean, even back to the future, right? You got Marty, you got Doc, you got George, you got, you know, like all these crazy characters of Lorraine, but if there's no Biff, there's no movie, right? Like Biff, Biff is so specific, and I don't have Biff in my list. But like, he makes an impression the very first time we see him. He's like the big classic bully, but he's so stupid. And this is dialog. Everything is just like a big idiot, right? So anyways,

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you but do you find, too, I find, with a lot of a lot of times with villains, they are you you love to hate them.

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That's, that's the trick, right? They're, they're entertaining. So, yeah, but you love watching them, that's

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the thing. And if they weren't in there, it'd be like, Oh, that kind of fell flat for me. And I wish there had been more to that, you know, yeah,

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exactly, yeah. Like, they're, they're just like, and bad introductions, like, I always point out, Die Hard, I don't know. I think it was, I heard four From Russia with love or something. Can't remember the title, but it was, it was the one with John McClane and his son. And the first time the villain appears, they're in this, like, warehouse. I don't know if it's the first time, but it's the first impression. That's only thing that made me remember him, is they're in this, like, you know, like 27th floor of a office building being built, and there's like, scaffolding and tarps everywhere, and all of a sudden you hear this crunch sound, and you're like, what's that? And then this like shadowy figure comes walking through the tarps, and he's chewing a carrot, and he's like, giving his like villain monolog while he's chewing a carrot. And I was just like, What? What a What an odd choice. Doesn't tell me anything about the guy. What does it tell you when someone eats carrots, and it's so I hate carrots, I know, but it's so distracting, and it is the chewing there, and it's like, Is that supposed to make me fear him the way he chomps a carrot? I was just like, what is wrong right now? Could they have cares about this guy? I'm not afraid of him.

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Okay, wait question, what if it was sticking with food? What to you, would have been a better food choice than a carrot bowl of tokiaki

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chewing on an octopus tentacle and it's flipping on the side of his mouth while he's like, or maybe he's like, about biting off each little tentacle. Or what if he's like, something unique, hopping, like grasshopper, like popcorn, right? Just popping. Like, oh, here's an insect popping, crunch, crunch. That would have been interesting, but a carrot,

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I was just like, so there's nothing. Get it. You're thinking it's got to be, like, more messy and like something to it that grosses you out.

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Or, like, oysters. Guys got a bag of oyster like, he's slurping the oysters out. That's kind of like, gross. And like, Slurpee. And like, hey, my best friend likes oysters. She does. But like, creepy and like, that's not and it's like an aphrodisiac. So is this guy getting off on what he's about?

Like, you know what I mean, that that's a more interesting choice. But I was just like, who decided on the carrot? So anyways, I didn't care about the carrot. I didn't fear him. I was like, Okay, I don't even care right now. So you want to leave an impression that that is exciting and interesting and makes you think, right? So let's, let's start with some classic villains. These are people Everyone should remember.

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Well, death Vader, what? What did you just say? Did you say? Death Vader,

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oh, the comments are gonna get now. Death Vader, Darth Vader is like the one villain name that everybody I

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meant to say Darth Vader, and I came out as death. It's not,

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I didn't even make a typo. And you said, death.

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Oh, I know it's first thing in the morning this,

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this is shows you that Desiree does not like sci fi at all.

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Who is death Vader? So Darth Vader? Is death Vader? To you? Yes, Darth Vader. No, I knew it was Darth Vader, but I said, Dad, sure, sure. I don't even care. Yeah. The thing is, a lot of times people would be like, like, embarrassed about that. You're like, I don't care. Do I care? Stupid name, whatever. Why is your name? Darth? Who named you Darth, who thought Darth is a scary name. What's your name? Hi, I'm Darth. Hi, I'm Darth. Nice to meet you. Party on Darth. Party on Wayne.

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Okay, so the first time we see Darth Vader, he enters through

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smoke after he dies. I've never seen anything to do with Darth Vader.

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It's a great scene. There's like, it's a big, like, battle shoot him up with stormtroopers, all this kind of stuff. And then there's all this like smoke and mist, and the music comes in, right? The classic, right? But Darth Vader walks through the smoke. He's in this big black outfit with his mask and his cape. He's towering above everyone. He's taller than everyone, everything else.

All of his kind of people are dressed in white. The ship is white. And then he's just this black figure. It establishes how powerful he is, how people, like, bow down to him, how in control and intimidating, and he just says one thing, and then that's it. But you never forget that moment. You're like, you know what he says? This guy,

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Hi, I'm Darth.

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No, he does not, Hi, I'm Darth. But then the voice, right? Like that. It is the voice. Well, it's James Earl Jones voice, Darth Vader. You know what? It's like that, right? It's got that breathing, and it's a really low voice. And find him, or whatever he sound, remember what he says. But it's, it just makes an impact visually, right? We get a great visual. It establishes his, his power over everyone. Why we need to pay attention to him. It's just he didn't have to do much. He just walked in and walked out, right? But it was the way he made an introduction. And that's probably more of like a directing, producing. What more of a producing? Yeah, well, I mean, the writer, writer, director of the first one, he did it all, but it was just such a beautiful, perfect scene. But the thing

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too is it would be interesting then to go and actually read the script and see, do you actually see that, like with any script, right? Yeah, and you've seen the movie, and does that actually compute the same when you're seeing it, yeah, on the screen versus reading it, and how much was changed, you know, to Yeah, it's interesting.

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You said too, because, like, I was having this, doing this rewrite, accelerating program, and was talking with all the writers on our on our zoom, and one of the writers, Steve, was talking about how he just watched Casablanca, and then read the Casablanca script again. And he got to that point where he's like, why? I'll never be as great as this. I'll never be able to write as great as this. I don't you know, like, what? What am I doing? And I was like, Yeah, but if you read Casablanca and you had never seen the movie, do you think it would have made as much of an impact on you? When you've seen something and you read the script, you're still seeing the movie, right? Like, even if it's different, you're still seeing what you've seen. You cannot see it.

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That's why you should, like, if you write a script before, that would be more interesting. I read a script before you see a movie. Yeah? Like, like, yeah, the same thing. Like, you've said that too. Like, sometimes you'll read a book before we go to the theater to watch the

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movie, or I'll read a script, like, 80% of it because I don't want to know the ending, yeah, just because I want to you've read

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books before. What was that one? That beautiful one years ago where the like, the description was so good, and she was living in a marsh.

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Oh, yeah, the where the crowdads sing. Yeah, you read that book. Did we both read it?

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You read it too. I read it too. Guys will know how many books I read in the last five years, three, probably. But yeah,

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sometimes you can't, you know, it's hard to see the differences. But anyways, that was a, you know, one of the most iconic entrances in introduction of all time, and hardly any dialog, like one line, right? So, example, there next one Anton sugar. Anton sugar from No Country for Old Men. You've never seen this movie, but this is, I probably have, one of the creepiest. Wasn't this from like, the 90s? Yeah, no, no, not that long. I don't think 2000s maybe. But anyways, it it so this character, right? The opening sequence, you see him in a cop car. He's taken out of the cop car, he's led into the prison. He gets into the cell, the whatever officer is there, he turns around and the and Anton suddenly lifts his arms, pulls like over the cop's head, uses the handcuffs and strangles him, and the guy drops to the floor, and he just kind of looks at him, and then he grabs his keys and he walks out. That's the first time. That's the first time we see him, right? Doesn't say a thing. He's creepy looking. He has a really bad haircut, and he but, but what? What it does? He's so calm, like he doesn't show an even a flickering of emotion. He's killing someone, and he doesn't he's an affected by it. It's just like stapling a piece of paper in an office. You know? He just does it calmly, quietly. It's terrifying. He's emotionless, right? And that brutality in that moment defines him immediately the next time we see him is one of the things I've never been able to forget in my forget in my life that I've seen the first the first time I ever saw a movie where it like, it like emotionally scarred me, probably because it was quite young. Was Beverly Hills Cop, funny movie, right? But there's this moment in the beginning where a guy goes up to an apartment door to knock and he gets shot in the head. And you show and they show the guy on the ground, he's got the black hole in his head, okay? And I was just like, that's the first time I'd ever, like, seen death happen in a movie, I guess. But just, like, jarring, right? And so this one in in old country, or in old country, it's the second time we see him. But he, he he pulls over this guy. He's in a cop car, because he left the jail, pulls over this random guy, walks up to his car, and he has this big air canister with him. And you're like, What is going on? Like, what is this thing? He goes up, he has the guy open, you know, roll down his window, because he's, he's a cop or whatever. And then he takes this thing. And what this device is, is, like, it's what they use to kill cows, right? So I don't want to know about that. So it's this air canister, and it basically just puts this thing to the guy's forehead and pushes a button, and it shoots like an eight inch bolt into his kills. The guy instantly. Doesn't say, you know, just again, calm, cool, yeah. No. Motions. What? Pulls it out of the car, puts his air canister thing, and drives away. And you're just like, holy, like, Who is this guy? Like, he immediately you're afraid of because he's so unpredictable, random. It's crazy.

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You know? It would have been really cool instead of using, what did you say went through because a cow, cow, something, no, no, but the it was a bolt, yeah, it would have been really cool if you had a carrot and

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food a carrot, see, like, it's not the same thing, right? Like you got that, you got a villain who chops a carrot as he talks.

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But the thing is, I'm saying, if they had the carrot introduced in the beginning somehow, with him chomping at carrot, yeah, and then later using that carrot in that tool to drill into the guy's head, that would be like, holy cow,

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makes sense. But it is strong enough to shoot through a human skull,

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if it's forceful, maybe. But anyways, does anyone want to try that? No, don't tell people to violence. Don't do violence. I'm not saying, I'm saying, like, try to put it through pumpkin or something. No, that's just creepy. So then you can make a soup, pumpkin and carrots.

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Anyways, that's the second time you see him. But the first time you see him, you're just like, okay, no motion. Just killed a guy. A cop doesn't but

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he has no motion anyway, like he just seems like no emotion, like he has no soul,

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exactly he so then it makes him, makes him very unpredictable and scary. So that's a great introduction of him. Next one, next villain, one of the best of all time, I'll tell you, yeah. What's his name? Come on. Hannibal Lecter. Lecter, yes. Hannibal Lecter, yeah. So the first time, first time we see Hannibal Lecter, he's, we come. We come down the hallway. You slowly see through the plexiglass of this cell. It's very calm. You're like, Who is this guy? He's like, they build him up. So it's like, this legendary, like, iconic, like, Who is this guy? And he's just standing there calmly in his cell, eating a carrot, no hands behind his back. He's polite, he's intelligent. And that makes it deeply unsettling, because you know that this guy is a cannibal. He is in this cell the way he is locked up, completely cut off from everything, because he is so dangerous, because he will eat you if he wants to, but He's so polite and well mannered and well spoken, and using contrast like that is a great way to make someone remember what's going on,

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because We've talked about this before quite a bit. It's unexpected.

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Exactly. You expect the cannibal to be this raging

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Manson kind of, yeah, someone who likes to peel skin and stuff, yeah?

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Maybe, like, if he was, like, peeling the skin off a kiwi or something, and be like, Oh yeah, cuz he's cannibal, that'd be cheesy. But he's just standing there, and he's just like, waiting, and he's really

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high when you were a kid. Because, I mean, we've talked about how I'm into crafting a mod podge. I think we have. Did you ever glue your fingers the fingertips and then peel them back off,

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and then I would like, twist it and twist it and twist it and twist it, and I'd set it down on the desk and it would like, unwind and move like a worm. I thought that was the coolest thing.

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Well, anyway, what if he, like, was peeling, like he had a thing with peeling his skin back on his thumb, and, like, pulling the flesh, you know what I mean, like, and then just shreds of skin. Yeah, that would have been, I'm saying that

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is, like, gross. You like, makes your skin crawl. Wasn't reacting to it.

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I'm saying, Yeah, that's what you expect. In his case. In this case, you didn't expect, no, it

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was more like you were meeting with the professor to talk about your paper, right? So makes makes an impression because of that contrast, right? Next one, Hans. Gruber from Die Hard. Everyone loves Hans. Who's Hans? Which one is Hans? He's Alan Rickman. He's the terrorist. He's the guy, right? He's the guy who is taking over the tower and taking all the money ends up John ends up throwing him out the window and him plunging to his death. But the way it's that movie starts, they're terrorists. They're here to take over the tower. The these trucks, these trucks pull up, all these guys get out, and then Hans gets out, and he's in this beautiful, perfectly tailored suit. His beard is trimmed. He just looks really sophisticated. And he walks with a sense of confidence. He walks in, he speaks politely, he speaks carefully, and you don't expect that this guy is a terrorist who's willing to kill everybody in this building just to get

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some money. You know when? And we've talked about this, I can't remember where we were the other day where, and that dude that was there, I was like, Oh my gosh. Oh. We were, like, going and looking at furniture, and he was doused in Cologne.

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Oh yeah, you're as you were leaving. You're like, Man, did he bathe in his cologne? Like, I tasted in my mouth right now, right?

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It was that. And I see this. I see him, yeah, as being someone who bathes in Cologne.

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Yeah, you cannot let that's good, that's true, because someone like that, yeah?

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And that's a description that you could go to even describe the character. That's true, right? Could you not? Looks like he bathes like

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cologne, he looks even, yeah, he looks like he bathed, right? Because, right away, description,

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yes, that's what I'm saying. You think, oh, he's rich. And he takes time in himself and his care and meticulous anyway. It just made me think

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that it's true. And that's the thing, is, you get an impression from every single one of these characters without a single line of dialog spoke right? You're using, just remember, it's a movie or it's a TV show. You're you have to use the visuals. That makes an impact. I've said it before. You watch something, you get out, you tell someone about it. Do you tell them any of the dialog? No, no. Tell them what you saw. Yeah, tell them what happened, right? So those are great ways to introduce villains. They make an impact contrast, right? Terrorist, who's in, you know, he's brutal guy, but he's in this perfectly tailored suit, cares about how he looks, you know, speaks carefully, right? Yeah, use contrast when you can, right? Even the Darth Vader thing, everything around him is white. He's in black. It's just contrast is a great way to make something stick out so that those are legendary villains. Legendary villains. Yeah, so iconic hero introductions. We'll look at, okay, my, I think, my, my, I think the greatest opening of any movie, the greatest introduction of a character, is Indiana Jones and Raiders of the Lost Ark. Everyone knows this. It's him in the jungle, going in, moving through this, the cavern, the booby traps. He gets to the golden idol. He replaces it with the sand. The ball comes down, runs. We don't really hear any dialog from him, either, but we pay attention to every single thing he does. He's smart, cool.

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He's cool. The first time you see him, you're like, This guy is cool.

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Leather Jacket, the satchel, the hat. Like, what is he doing in this jungle? He's, you know, he He's brave because he's willing to, like, it's a life or death thing. The guy he's with gets stabbed through the forehead with these spikes through the wall. But it doesn't faze him, right? He's, he's brave, he's intelligent. But then he gets in the plane to to leave after he's got this idol, and then he freaks out because there's a snake in the plane, and it scares him to death and he and that's his flaw. And it's like, here's this guy who's so brave he can go into this thing and risk life or death and escape, but he's afraid of a freaking snake, right? So it's a great I mean, it tells us so much about this guy. Again, without dialog, exactly.

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And so what you have here, too, the next one you have, is Rocky Balboa, yes, do you know what movie that's

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from Adrian? Yeah, yes, Rocky. The first time we meet him, he's fighting in a small club is underground. He's obviously skilled and good at what he does, but he's not in the big time, right? So immediately shows this underdog status. You know that this is a guy that we want to root for. He's, you know, he's, he's not all flashy, he's not all about the big time, the money and everything. This is just who he is. He's a fighter. You know? It makes us pay attention and root for this guy immediately. Maximus and Gladiator, one of the greatest movies ever.

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I hated this movie. Why? I don't know. I just, I don't like the killing war movies. Yeah, you're not really into that, not into like, oh, gonna stab someone with my sword and cut someone's head off. It's just like, and then the when the horses fall, that kills me, and they, when they make the horses fall, why did you make the horses fall?

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I know it sucks, but it's reality right back then. But I mean, it's a love story. His wife and daughter are killed, and so he goes on this vengeance spree, and that's the movie. But the first time we see him, he's he's, he calmly prepares his soldiers for a big battle, right? He has a great presence, a great charisma. Everyone respects him. He doesn't do much. He's calm, and they're going into this battle that most of them will probably die in. And he just makes them confident and relaxed and feel like, here we go. And we were like, Who is this guy, right? It makes an impression. It makes us, makes us see him, makes him stand out. We're like, Okay, this guy's important, right? So then when he falls from grace and he's basically nobody again, it makes even more of an impact. Ellen Ripley, an alien. This is the first, one of the first movies we saw a really powerful female leading character right in a position we don't normally see. And if you've seen alien, great if you haven't go watch it. But basically, when we first see her, she

doesn't make much of an impact, which is different. She's She could be anyone on the crew. We don't know that she's the one kind of in charge of everybody, but she's it's her professionalism. It's her calm competence on the ship. You know this the what happens is this character's name is Kane. He returns to the ship after he encounters an alien egg, and she refuses to break any quarantine rules. She's following everything to a T which is important, because as everything starts to break down, she has to throw every single rule out of the window, because they've never dealt with something like this, and that's the only way she'll survive, and that's the flaw that she has to overcome. She's almost too meticulous to detail. So it's the little things sometimes that aren't important off the start, but they show themselves as to why they're important. As a

29:39

comparison, here's my question, which I think writers out there need to be aware of, and maybe look at making a change in what we're seeing all of these, except for one, all of them are men, yep, because these are all why?

29:55

Because they're all order movies coming from a time when female. That's why I pointed out and. And rip one of the first female characters, yes, one of the first why?

30:06

Even nowadays though you're saying, Oh, these are older films, the same problem. It's the same problem. So that's what I'm saying. Like, what who decided men are going to be the villains, or men are going to be the heroes, where

30:21

are the patriarchy of society? That's just all it's unfortunate. It is, and it's changing, and it's still gonna take a long time. It is because we've seen stuff, and I'm like, and like, oh, okay, let's give women more opportunities, and let's put women directors in seats of power, and then they don't get the support they need. So then they fail, and they're like, Oh, see, women can't do it. Like it's, I know it's just, it's just, it's a system designed to make everybody fail, except men. It's, it's just how it is. And that's unfortunate change, right?

30:46

This could, like, be a second podcast, really, it could be,

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because I didn't really notice that as I was going through this, like, I'm looking at the rest that we're talking about here. And pretty much, pretty much, every one of them is a guy, yep. Yikes. Good way. Good job pointing that out that is not good on our next podcast, not our next one, but one of the next ones. I'm gonna actually go and let's look at all of the great female characters in movies and why they talk about Yeah, I feel really awful now that you pointed that out.

31:13

You're very misogynist stuff. Thanks. I didn't do it purposely. Dani, right now, I know you guys, but listen, I'm saying you guys like they're sitting here listening to me, but honestly, you can't think of any,

31:29

probably just not at the top of their head. Think, oh, you know, who are these, you know? But I mean, recently, there's been a lot more

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there have, yes, but I still like this is worrisome.

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Reminds me the story, I heard it at at Austin. So the writer of Bumblebee, the Transformers movie about Bumblebee, the main character. It was a movie about a relationship between Bumblebee and a girl, right? And that had never been done, yet the transformers, women and Transformers were just there for for showing off their bodies and things like that, right? And so I remember the writer was talking about how, you know, she wanted to do a take on this, and so she she met with Spielberg and all these people in pitch, and people like, no one is gonna want to make a movie about Bumblebee and a girl. That's a problem audience, that was the first problem, right? And then Spielberg heard the pitch, and he's like, that's what we're doing. I love it. That's the movie we're making. And then they made it, and then she went on to write all these other powerful movies, and, you know, really good stuff. And she just got a big deal on another one, and it just shows that, yeah, people are just ready to say no, and a large part of that is audience, right, like the audience, demographics and stuff, people just don't. People just don't flock to movies where it's a strong female letter or a full female push movie, right? It's just, it's, well, that needs to change. Does need to change? Everybody needs to change that. But, yeah, that's a really good point.

32:48

Anyway, I just, I noticed it, and I thought, yikes.

32:51

Yeah, that's good. Okay, well, that's not good. That's bad. I need to make, make. See, the thing is, you just, I'm, I'm a guy, and I'm programmed to, obviously be drawn to guys in movies, strange,

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and this is very apparent. This is very evident to the listeners too, that this is not pre planned

33:10

podcast, because I was very pointing out, like, dude, like, that's the only

33:14

Yeah, one female on that whole page. Okay. Anyway, next, interesting. Next thing you wanted to talk about is character introductions that reveal personality instantly.

33:24

Yeah, that show instant personality. So one that always comes to me at mine, I think one of the one of the best personality introductions, is Jack Sparrow in Curse of the Black Pearl, I would

33:34

agree, where it's sinking, and then he jumps off.

33:38

He's He's bailing water out of a boat. He hasn't talked yet. His mannerisms are there. You see some pirates hanging, you know, pulls off his hat, his water, his boat sinking. Then he sees another boat. He sees a bigger boat, and then it cuts to him on the top of a mast of a boat, yes, sailing in. And as you see it pulls back and the boat is sinking, and it sinks just as he steps off the boat onto the dock. And it's just, like, tells you everything you need to know about you

34:03

don't know what you don't need to know anything else. The interesting thing is, we saw that set.

34:08

We did because our daughter, we adopted our daughter. She was born in St Vincent, in the Grenadines, where they shot that. And we went and saw the set and

34:15

but they never took care of it. It kind of was in ruins, a bit, really cool though, to see part of it, yeah, especially that, yeah.

34:22

And like the little cove where the pirates were hanging and stuff was all still there, but, yeah, it makes an impression, right? Forrest Gump, second iconic character sitting on that bench, you know, and just, you know, starts talking about how life is like a box of chocolates, and never know what you're gonna get, right? And just the way he spoke, the calm, mild mannered guy, he was, you know,

34:47

very bright, yeah,

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just, but it but kind and like, just enjoyed life, right? And just saw life in a different way. And it's like, oh, I want to know this guy. I want to hear what else this guy has to say. So it shows his personality, just the way. He's sitting there on the bench, and this lady sits next to him. And you know, it's just beautiful, beautiful way to introduce character. I agree. The dude in The Big Lebowski classic characters, he memes them all over the place. First time we see him, he's

buying, I know, have I seen this? He's buying milk in his bathrobe late at night in a store. That's a really strange thing. Who goes to the store, first of all, in their bathrobe, nobody, right? And just buying milk in your bathroom, when you look a mess in the middle of night, it just makes us wonder, okay, this guy's quirky. This guy's different. I can't wait to see what this guy's gonna gonna do. Ferris Bueller and Ferris Bueller's Day Off. He's one of those first characters that broke the fourth wall, where he starts talking to to the audience, okay, hey, let me tell you how you skip school properly. I got a story for you, right? He makes an impression, and it's iconic for so many reasons, and no one's really done that as well, questioning that fourth wall, yep.

35:55

Do you think if Fairhurst buehlers Day Off was released in this day and age, if it would draw as much attention.

36:05

I don't think any movie that was made in the 80s, I know, but like, if you really think about that particular movie, they could probably remake Ferris Bueller's Day Off. Yeah, and it would probably work. It would depend on casting. Who would you cast that would be as perfect for that type of it,

36:19

just because the whole concept of it is so simple,

36:23

it is the whole idea the end was crazy. You know what?

36:27

I mean, like, really, and so, and someone reading that on their desk would be like, now, so what? He skipped school, yeah, big whoop, yeah.

36:37

But it was, I mean it and it's iconic, it's like, yeah, and it's iconic, and it worked at the time, you know, but yeah, you're like, who? Okay, I want to watch this guy. He's got, he's sarcastic, he's fun.

36:47

Well, you also were like, I wonder how what he did do, maybe I'll learn something.

36:51

Deal, right? And it was just like, yeah, it kept going bigger and bigger. And then Tony Stark in Iron Man, he showed, like, this is a guy who's, like, all about war and money and selling arms and weapons and, you know, all that kind of stuff. It doesn't care about the fallout of it doesn't care if people die. And then, because that's set up so well, how arrogant he is, how he's sarcastic, but he's brilliant, and he's funny, and you're like, I like this guy. And then obviously he falls victim to violence. He's in a cave, he escapes, he sees what weapons really do, and then

he changes everything. It's like, we're not going to do this anymore. So it's set up in a way for us to be like, Okay, I like this guy. See some cool stuff in him, but he's not, he's not doing the right thing, right? So it merely makes us pay attention. So, so that's those are some examples of setting up characters with great personalities.

37:34

And I think the thing too, is we could continue talking about this on a different podcast, in different areas, like maybe the where they set the tone or action,

37:46

yeah, yeah. And females, that's what I'm going to do, is we'll write up some notes. We'll incorporate female start talking about character introductions in Yeah, through action, through tone, things like that, with all female characters, yeah, that'd be cool, because there are obviously tons. And for some reason, all of my, I mean, I grew up in the time all, all of these things that I'm pointing out in these movies are in my in my office, okay, yes. And I'm looking at your theater, yeah, there's not very many female characters. I am looking at your characters. That's what I was gonna say. And I'm always looking for them. I'm always looking for them. You have that girl. I was so excited when I found a really cool Harley Quinn character. There's one female from from Avatar

38:21

speaking, right? You can't, he can't. He's looking from Avatar in his room.

38:26

Princess, I have Princess Leia. I have Starlight from the boys. I have not, not much, three out of, like, 400 Man, you're really, this is important that you pointed this out. This is important that, yeah, so that we're gonna do and do a podcast on female characters and why they work, and the ones that work, and maybe the ones that don't, because there are examples too, of like that I've brought up before, two of characters, especially when it's like, a villain, yes, and you're like, doesn't pull it off, right?

38:53

Let's just be clear, though, that they don't work with female and male. They wouldn't work with either the way. Yeah, let's be clear on that. Oh yeah for sure. So okay, well, that's good.

39:02

We'll do that next time. But this is that's that's perfect, so that those are some ways to introduce characters, those are some things to think about and to look at all of look at your own screenplays and look at how you introduce your characters. What are you doing? What makes them stand out, what makes them unique, what makes them different, what makes them memorable, what gives them an impact, right? Those are the things to keep in mind. So, you know that's, that's, that's how you do it. And a large part of is you need to understand psychology when you write your characters. Take a psychology class. Read some books, like, if you're writing a narcissist, you should know narcissists, they're everywhere. Be a narcissist.

Don't be a narcissist, but write them realistically, right? Narcissist. And he said this to my wife the other I'm like, how do how do narcissists not know they're narcissists because they're narcissists, because that's the answer. Narcissists don't know. They think everyone is against them. They think everything bad in their life is everyone else's fault when it's all just their own. Because they don't realize that they do. And that's the craziest thing to me, and so. Trying to understand psychology, getting into it, understanding someone's trauma, someone's motivation behind something, why villains think they're heroes, why bad people think they're good? You know, the contradictions in who they are, all these things, right? So learning about characters, understanding who they are, why they are, that way, that will also help you on introducing your characters. So while you digest that, and I go burying my head in the sand for not having enough female characters represented here, listen to this little thing we got

40:32

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.

41:15

Okay, well, on this part of the podcast, we always get to the questions and answers and the questions have been previously submitted by listeners like you. How do they submit? Desiree, if you'd like to submit a question, you can submit them to the email hello@scriptreaderpro.com,

41:33

or show ideas things just want us. Yeah, about if

41:36

you want to comment on this, yeah. We got an

41:39

email the other day from joy many times in the past. And she was just talking about how absolutely adorable we are, and how I think I are. And she was like, this could make, like a really good movie. Like the screen reader does a podcast, and even as he does that podcast with his wife, she starts to realize that she's at the actual writer. And so, like, she writes this Hallmark movie, and she ends up being more successful than her husband, and then he just, like, has to go off and, you know, do something else. And now he's on the podcast. He's now the host, and she's the expert, and she's like, it would just be so cute, because you guys are just adorable together. So I love very nice. I mean, I know my wife's adorable. I'm not, but my wife is. She brings cuteness factor times 10,000 100. But yeah. So if you have comments, if you just want to pass stuff on to us, yeah, reach

42:30

out to hear from you. So first question comes from Kurt, from Columbus, okay, Kurt asks the question, and what makes audiences root for morally bad characters? You just

42:46

talked about that how characters we love to hate. We root for them when they're morally bad, because they're interesting, right? It doesn't matter if someone's weird and we're not actually rooting for them, no. But you're just like, don't I hope that character doesn't die because I want to see more of them, yeah? Or I hope that, you know, I hope they get, you know, like the Joker. Yeah, exactly. The joker is so compelling, you just want to see more of him, even though, even though he has to be stopped, you want to dies.

43:07

But then he has a story. So then part of you is like, Oh, I feel bad for this guy.

43:12

Yeah, yeah. You know exactly, because bad people don't just, I mean, some people are born bad, but some people aren't, if something happens to them, exactly, right? But, yeah, that's why, because they're engaging and interesting, right? Think of all your favorite villains you want to just you hear they're charismatic. Charisma is a big deal, right? You want to hear them speak. That's, that's the thing, I think.

43:31

Okay, this one comes from Denver, and it's David from Denver. Hey, David from Denver. David from Denver asks the question, how important is formatting really? Hmm, how important is formatting really? I'll tell you, Yes, don't send something in that isn't formatted. The end, yes, but that doesn't answer the question, how important is it very important. Incredibly important. It's there would be no script without formatting, no.

43:57

And I mean, there's like, and I've said this before, no one's ever commented on my formatting, ever? And I make interesting different choices in my formatting for effect, and I'll use it and it works and but I'm still using base format. I'm not doing scene headings differently or in different places. I'm not changing the margins of the dialog and the character. The important. It's important because this is going to be shot as a movie or a TV show. That's why, right? You're it's not going to be read forever and never made. If someone is reading it, they're reading it to make it. So they don't need to know how long a page will probably be, how much timing it will take, what the production elements are. So yeah, you can, you can play with a little bit, but you still need your bare bones to understand that they can take this and shoot this and shoot this tomorrow, right? That's why it's important.

44:43

Okay, the question is, third question is, why do villains sometimes feel more interesting than heroes? And that comes from from Dacia from Stockholm, Sweden. Nice. So why, or why do villains sometimes feel more interesting than heroes? For.

45:00

Me it's because messy people are more interesting true story. Like, the more messed up someone is, the more interesting they are to watch.

45:07

Would you want to talk to someone who's messed up or someone who's boring, someone who's messed up? I'm sorry, but it's a true story for me, because I talk, I talk to people a lot, and I know a lot about a lot of like, people just divulge. People just they vomit all of their stuff on me.

45:22

But that's the thing, is, you would rather, and I know this for a fact, without asking you the question, if you had the choice to go and talk to say, like some, you know, important person who did some really great things, or a psychopath for like, for people disability, someone inspiring, or a person in jail who killed 27 people, who would you rather talk to the person in prison. Sorry, because those and that's how everybody is, like I

45:48

would, that's why I watch all the dogs. I'm trees.

45:51

You just want to understand them. I think that's the biggest thing. That's why you want to try to why we feel more that's why they feel more interesting. Because they're just, they're so bad. There's gaging, yeah, it's, it's so, so much easier to have a bad person, to write a bad character, because you can go to endless places of just how bad they are. You can't have just how good someone is to a certain degree, right?

46:12

So they're so bad that they're good,

46:15

yeah, sometimes, right? But yeah, it's, it's interesting, yeah? So that, I think that's why, yeah, yeah.

46:21

Next one here is Lisa from Nashville, and she says, What do you do when you're completely stuck on a scene?

46:30

Ooh, that's that's good. I had a question from my rewrite accelerate program on Wednesday. This kind of, same kind of question. You know, she's like, so when you're when you're stuck and

you can't quite get through or you're trying to think of something surprising, but how do you get through a scene? Get through a scene, like, what do you do? So for me, when I'm completely stuck in a scene, you go to the freezer and you get one of my cookies. I eat a cookie, and then I go and I tell my wife, okay, this what's going on. What do I do? And she tells me really good answer, usually, or something that gets me going again. That's one thing. Talk to someone about it. The other thing is complete write it in a go in a completely different direction. I always talk about my rule of a dozen, and I think that's an important trick to use. Is the rule of a dozen if you're stuck, just look at even just one detail in the scene and think, what are a dozen different ways this can go right? What are some surprising what would this character never say? What's a piece of dialog someone can say that completely throws a wrench in this? Don't just try to keep writing it as you have envisioned it to be right? Even if you're moving working off your outline of your scene, if you're stuck, then it's not it's just not gonna work. Everyone else is gonna feel it when they read it. Surprise yourself. If Robert Frost said, if there's no surprise in the writer, there's no surprise in the reader. And that's key, because you want to surprise yourself, you're like, oh my gosh, I can't believe I came up with that. That's crazy. I'm loving it, right? That's a great way to do it. Also take, take the characters in that scene and just put them in another scene and just write a different kind of scene. And sometimes something in there will excite you and get you motivated to keep going. So those are a few tips that I use,

47:55

okay, to go back to the very beginning of the podcast, I literally wonder if that's what the person did with the whole scene with the carrot, maybe, did, we know, surprising and different? And then they were like, Okay, well, what could I have that person do? Well, they could eat a carrot,

48:09

and then maybe they didn't use the rule of a dozen, and they just went with the carrot. Was like, I'm gonna eat a carrot, because we've seen before, like actors too. I can think of a lot of places when a character's eating an apple. For some reason people eat apples in movies. I don't know why. Like, is everyone just running around? Okay, so when you grab an apple out of the fridge, do you rub it on your shirt first? No, people always do that in movies. They rub the apple shit, I know, but like, they rub it and, like, it's gonna do something magical to the apple, and they eat it like genie in a bottle. Yeah, it's just like, it's such an like, unattractive thing because you're like Trump and true and there's like juice and anyways, yeah, yeah, that could be why? Who knows? We just don't know. Hey, Scott, yes. Desiree, that is this episode Awesome. That's good. Episode 60. Episode 60.

48:55

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49:02

if you learned something, if you're embarrassed for me because I only had one female character and all this, tell your friends about it, but that it's going to be better fixed. We're going to go the distance here

49:14

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49:22

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