

Ep #68: Diagnosis and the Rewrite Process

0:00

This is part two of our series on rewriting,

0:03

yep, and I'm gonna give you some interesting tools on how to make the right choices before you begin. So

0:08

listen in.

0:11

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.

0:24

This is Desiree, and this is the Script Reader Pro podcast. I am with Scott, my husband. Hi. Scott is a writer with Script Reader Pro

0:33

I am. He

0:36

also was waiting for me. So instead of just waiting patiently, the dude here has to go and work on his puzzle and be in between here.

0:46

Well, I was waiting for you. What am I supposed to sit

0:48

here? Oh, I just noticed this puzzle that you're doing here,

0:50

Scott, I just put a couple pieces in.

0:53

Wow, there's quite a bit going here that's

0:55

pretty good. So far. I

0:56

wonder if a lot of writers do puzzles.

0:58

I don't know, because

0:59

if you think about it.

1:00

It's like you're putting putting pieces together.

1:02

It's analytical, right? You got to think, Okay, well, where does that go in the bigger picture? Right?

1:07

It is

1:08

right, literally, right. Writing, right.

1:10

Writing, right, right, right, right,

1:11

right, right, right. That sounds like Tony the Tiger.

1:15

You are right.

1:16

Okay. This is our, our, our second part of our two part series. If you missed the last one, I would suggest that you go back and listen to 6767767, yeah. Episode six, seven. Why most rewrites fail?

1:33

Yeah. Talk about some of the problems that writers have going into it. So you haven't listened to that. Go back, because now we're going to talk about actually doing the rewrite and creating a strategy to go in so you're making the most of your work.

1:45

Yes? And diagnosing, I mean diagnosing the issues, probably right,

1:51

yeah, diagnosing your issues, you know, things and things to keep in mind, my little acronym for rewrite that I think is

1:58

yours,

1:59

yeah, yeah. I made it up myself.

2:00

Oh, really it did. It's interesting.

2:03

My wife helped me a lot.

2:04

I could remember specifically us discussing, yeah, Mm, hmm, yeah,

2:12

it's ours.

2:13

Do you realize you started by saying mine

2:17

because of the ways, which is that he's, like, proud, like, like, it's just something that others have talked about. That's what I'm meaning, is this is specifically something that came out of

2:26

my brain,

2:27

this set of brains here, because my wife

2:30

is

2:30

actually, I couldn't be a writer without her.

2:32

Wow, if you guys actually, because

2:33

I don't know if you've ever heard her talk about how much she loves talking about how much she loves screenwriting. So I have to make sure there's a 5050, share of credit on all of my stuff.

2:43

Okay, good, good cover. Did you hear I just said it? It's reminding me of a girl from Down Under. No, maybe not that one the boat show below,

2:52

down down

2:52

below. I

2:53

love what you did there.

2:55

It was like one of the girls was a chief stew. I can't remember her name. I sound like her.

3:01

Okay,

3:01

just so, you know, good, Scott, you really if the listeners were to start this podcast again,

3:07

yeah,

3:08

they would hear how quickly you turned that

3:14

I turned because I realized what you were wanting me to say

3:16

no, but you were wanting

3:18

wife back, telling you that you should be saying, No, it's bad. You just say, don't fight it,

3:23

Scott,

3:23
don't fight it.

3:24
It is

3:24
don't fight it.

3:25
Fact. Anyways, guys, yes, yes,

3:29
we're talking about that today,

3:30
the idea that Scott came up with, we will be discussing. We talk about a show we've watched here. And I really appreciate that you wrote this show down here today. What it says. Here is what we've seen lately. Our show we watched dot talk, and it's blank,

3:47
yes, because we haven't watched anything since our last podcast we recorded. We just watched the one dates that we talked about last time. We're in the middle of some shows, right? We're watching friends and neighbors, which is

3:58
we've talked about this

3:59
before. Now there was a really interesting episode last time, one thing that we could probably talk about, and I don't know the name of it, actually, maybe you can look it up. Why? But you watched this documentary a long time ago, and it's now everywhere. About this, the husband who set up a website for other husbands to watch and they record videos of themselves sexually assaulting their wives. Why are you bringing this up? It's everywhere now. It is all over Instagram. People are talking about it because the website, which is disgusting, the website that hosts that had 62 million visitors,

4:36
no, yeah,

4:38
yeah, it's awful. So I remember you watched that months ago. I remember coming in. I didn't watch it with you, but I remember you were watching about it. Oh, it was the podcast. What is it called betrayal, or betrayed? That was what we Yeah, that it was betrayed. I think is the podcast

just looking here, and that was the whole season of the podcast was on that it was a specific. Face of the guy who probably started it all. So anyways, but we have been, we've been so busy. We haven't been, you know, we just get to the end of the day and we just want to watch mindless things. So we'll watch a lot of down below reality,

5:10

yes, but we also not things we've seen. But we really want to go see the Michael Jackson movie. Yeah,

5:16

Michael's out. We want to see that. We're huge Michael Jackson fans. And

5:19

then there was one that I think I already missed it. It was like a romance, something Tuscany.

5:26

Oh yeah, love in Tuscany or something,

5:28

yeah, I wanted to see that one. But anyway,

5:31

movies are just not in the theater for long anymore. And it's so dumb, because, like everyone, all these, like movie theaters, like these movies are like, oh, we need theatrical release. And, you know, oh, well, you know, people have to start coming back to the theater and support the theater, and then they'll put a movie out.

5:45

It'll

5:46

be out for like, a week.

5:47

I know it's

5:47

like, how am I supposed to see that exactly. It's it like, if you're gonna put movies out in the theater, or you like, you'll go and you'll look, be like, Oh, what's out right now? And there's four movies out

5:57

on

5:57

the 11 screens they have there.

5:59

I know.

6:00

Okay, so why do you have 11 screens then put movies out? Like it's so and I understand it costs a lot of money to put them out to advertise, but I mean, you don't necessarily have to drop \$25 million in advertising to put a movie in the theater, to get people go, to go. Just put it in the theater. People will look and see what's playing, and maybe

6:17

they'll I know, and that Tuscany one was out for like, five days, four days, because it's gone. Now, I just looked in. It

6:23

just happened. Like, that's the thing is, I always say that if I want to see a movie, I have to go when it comes out. But

6:28

baby, you guys can tell us what you've watched lately, what you might recommend for us. Yeah,

6:32

that would be cool.

6:32

Yeah,

6:33

yeah. Send, send us some some stuff on that, some info,

6:35

yeah, or give us an idea of something we haven't mentioned, and maybe we can watch it and then discuss it on the podcast and share our thoughts as well.

6:42

Yeah,

6:42

we're going to be doing a lot of breaking down movies, looking at scripts, playing with the pages, seeing how it works. And

6:47

yay. Sounds like fun. Playing with pages.

6:49

Your favorite thing to

6:50

anybody that loves to play with pages. Poor child. If you were a child that was

6:55

Hey growing up, love to play with

6:57

and all that your parents did was said, Here you go. Here's a stack of eight and a half by elevens play with it,

7:03

guarantee that person became a writer or a paper plane enthusiast

7:07

or a killer or a paper cutter. That's what I'm saying. A killer,

7:12

there hasn't been a serial killer who paper cuts people today,

7:15

you could kill people with paper that's why I said a

7:18

killer cuts all over and then, like pour vinegar on them. Holy, that's awful. Moving on. Let's stop wasting these people's time. As Desiree says, Hey, can we go a little faster this time last one was a little long. And then 10 minutes in, we're still talking nonsense. So here we go. We are talking about the strategic rewrite that changes everything.

7:41

Mind blown,

7:42

boom. And that's kind of how we fire

7:45

work process exploded.

7:46

Is that idea of having a strategy, right? When you go in with a strategy to not worry about the things you love, but to go in and identify and fix the problems that are there that changes everything for you. So that was the hard truth before, right? That's the part where everything clicks for you, because now we're not just talking about what not to do. That's what we talked about last time. Don't do these things. We're giving you the actual process, okay, a rewrite strategy that'll turn your random drafts into intentional, very intentional. Whoa.

8:20

Did you come up with this yourself?

8:22

I did random

8:23

into intentional.

8:24

Yeah, because you have to be having a strategy, having a roadmap, having an outline of what you're doing. That's intentional. If you just go, when you sit down, be like, ah, play with some words random, right? So you have to be intentional, or don't, or there's just no point. You can just take that time and start a new script while the other one sits for a little longer. So Desiree, what is the very first thing that a writer needs to do?

8:44

Well, actually, Scott, I'm so glad that you asked me this very important question. The first thing I believe that you need to do is diagnose before you touch the script.

8:55

Yes, I love your therapist. Explanation, accent, boy, strange but sex,

9:01

yes, died. It says diagnosed before the before you touch the script,

9:05

yeah, before you rewrite a single line, you need to, you need a diagnosis, right? You don't just start taking medication for something without going to the doctor and see if something's wrong first, or at least using meta Web MD to figure out why your elbow hurts and

9:20

then

9:20

seven pages later, you have cancer in your elbow, where all you really did is forget that the doorway is the certain width that's always been in your house, and you happen to move through it, bang, and go, ah.

9:31

Then your wife says, seriously, did you forget where everything is in our house again? And then the man says, yeah. So why are you laughing at me? Why do you laugh at me when I'm hurt? So you want to before you start taking pills, trying to hit the diagnosis. First, what about when you go through the doorway from the living room into our bedroom, which then goes into our bathroom, but the then you forget that you have closed

9:56

the bathroom door and you run into the door well. Well, because, well, because, because I forget everything I've done two seconds after I've done it. That's not my fault. The door's closed. It's the Scott from before, his fault. Okay, so you want to, right? You want to, okay, so, so that's to do. So how? That's the big question. How do you diagnose it? You can't see it for what it is by yourself. You just can't You're so close to it. Maybe you can, if you usually, if you set a script down for a few weeks, and you go back and you look at it, you see it fresh. And then maybe you can see some of those issues, right? But you want to have a strategy you want there's a great book by Sid field, and they have it on my shelf.

10:37

Scott's now left his podcast position. He is looking at his shelf currently, at all of his 50

10:45

I don't have it, had got water damage in a box when we had that flood in our apartment that one time when the but it's by Sid field. I think it's called the writers rewrite Bible or something, or rewrite plan or or something. But it's look it up, Sid field and rewriting, and

11:00

you'll

11:00

look it up so you want to have, you want a diagnosis, right? You want to have a plan, so you want to find out, usually, by getting people to read your script. Okay, so

11:10

it's called screenplay,

11:12

no, that's his first one, hon, there's a second one. It's about rewriting, screenwriters, rewriting roadmap or something. It's called, anyways, while you continue to look that up, I will go over these things. So you want to have someone, anyone as many people, as possible, read your script, even if it's your first draft. Okay, you need to know what works what doesn't. So what is

your core problem? What are people and consistency is key. If you have one person read your script, they may not see it as other people will. You want to get a few different opinions, because you want to look for consistencies. What are people saying? Are the problems, right?

11:47

We have several books,

11:49

okay?

11:50

Sid, field screenwriters, problem solver,

11:52

that's the one. Yeah, that's a great one.

11:55

Then there's foundations of screenwriting, yeah. Have you read that one?

11:58

I've read every one of them, every screenwriter, the

12:00

screenwriters workshop, the workshop book, okay, but the

12:05

problem solver is good because it actually asks, like, you go through it and it'll ask questions. It'll be like, you know, track your protagonist's flaw. Does that flaw have an end point, or does that flaw get realized like, it's those questions that you may not think of on your own? Okay? So that's a great way. If you don't have the the people in your life, if you don't connect with other screenwriters, if possible, if you you know, if you don't, then at least that's a good starting point. So Sid, field screenwriting problem solver, but you want to you know, where's the problem. Is the problem in your concept is the problem in how you're executing the concept is the problem in your structure. And you don't realize that your first act actually ends on page 43 because you thought that it ended on page 29 but that's really your inciting incident, because everything before that just leads to that point. It's not dramatic. Like, what is it your structure? Is it character? Are your characters boring? Maybe they're not to you. Maybe they all sound different in your head. But everyone who reads it is like this. Feels like they're all the same person.

13:00

Yeah, it was. It was like what we talked about in the previous episode, right? That to you, it seems okay. It

13:06

always seems okay, right? Stakes. Stakes are a big one. That's usually, that's usually the problem in a lot of scripts that just aren't working, is that there's not enough to lose, or there's not enough to gain, right? So, so even just looking at that, oh, what is it? What are the stakes, and how are they coming out? Right? You need to know the problem, right? You can't go in and rewrite a script if you don't know what isn't working.

13:26

No.

13:27

So those are some of the things to look at. Most of them, and most scripts don't have like, 20 problems or 50 problems, right? They usually have one or two important root causes, like, significant like, yeah, like, for example, if you, if you don't have a structure in place that is designed to send your character through a journey that grows and grows in conflict and tension so that they can hit a climax and right? If that isn't there, doesn't matter how great everything is. You might have the best dialog in the world, but it it just it falls to the ground because there's nothing below it that's solid, right? So a lot of the times, there's one or two major problems that just don't I was reading this script once, and it was like a science fiction twisty thing, and I kept saying, I'm like, Okay, well, this doesn't make any sense. There's no logic here. This character just does this thing, and it's fine. In science fiction, people can do things that aren't real, but you still have to explain why it's that way, right? Why can someone suddenly close their eyes and open their eyes and they're in another dimension, right? You can just do it and then have someone else do it with no reason. You know what I mean, like, a lot of times, that's that. So then that becomes the big problem is there's no logic in your story. It's not that everything isn't working. You just need to look and make sure that logic tracks right.

14:42

It's like that show that we watched with the boy that had special powers, and his it was something to do with his dad's work, and his dad died, but his dad wasn't was still alive, I think, and he was in the army, and the kid could, like, move things. Do you remember this and his do. Uncle, Godfather, dad's best friend or something, worked at the building. Me and Ashley watched it together.

15:07

Oh yeah, saving,

15:09

what was it?

15:10

Saving some kid's name.

15:12

It was really well done, I thought. And they explained things as to what was happening and why, why it was happening this way. It was all to do with them, with the dad, going someplace like the Arctic or something, and having something in the sky happen. And then this was in his dad, and then it came to the sun. It was really well done. I

15:32

never watched it. You

15:33

know, it's good, though.

15:34

Yeah, and Jake, no Jack Ritter, what's his name?

15:40

I know the uncle,

15:42

right? Son, yeah, he was in it. He's such a good

15:44

actor, it was

15:45

good. Yeah. So anyways, yeah. But that's the thing is, right? The root cause, if there's no logic to what's happening, then, then everything is not going to work. So it's identifying, what are the what are the big things, right? And that's the first thing you want to do. You want to identify the spine of your story. Every strong script has a spine, right, right?

16:03

It would be like a book having no spine,

16:05

yeah, will those pages all stay together?

16:08

Well, if you're a little child with your eight and a half by elevens, then they certainly will, because you'll make sure that you keep all your pages safe, because all you have is pages to play with.

16:16

It's true, but you have to have that spine in place. Your protagonist has to have a goal. There must be central conflict. There must be stakes that escalate over the story, right? Like, find your spine. If your spine isn't strong, if everything isn't tied to something,

16:34

well, it's kind of like you were saying, like a foundation. The spine is the foundation, right? And if there is no spine to the story, no foundation, then everything is going to eventually, like, collapse into

16:46

exactly and in this scenario, structure is your friend. There's nothing that bugs me more when writers are like, Nah, I don't like using structure. I like to I like to play with my structure. I like to play with my own structure. I want to follow a different thing. It doesn't have to be that way. Okay, fine, yeah, go ahead, but structure is your friend. It's so simple. You have a beginning and a middle and an end. You're setting up the world. You're making something happen. You're forcing your heroine to go through a journey. She goes through ups and downs and ups and downs. She gets to a point where she hits rock bottom, she has to get back up. She has to take control of the story and make it happen like that. It's a basic story structure. It's easy to follow. Have the foundation there. You need to have the structure strong and in place. You need to have character that is understandable, that's worth paying attention to, and has a reason for going through the story. These are things that are just they must be there, okay? So you have to have those in place before you even write your script. Okay, the

17:44

next one that you have here too is make big moves first. I don't know what that means. So,

17:49

okay, so this is where most writers hesitate, right? Because big changes are scary, right? Like, they're scary. You don't want to, oh, man, like, I got this is gonna, if I do this, it's gonna just, I'm gonna have to fix everything after right? If someone says there's not a strong enough shift in at the end of the first act, and maybe someone gives you a suggestion, you know what? I think, instead of going that direction, what if you did this, and it's like a really exciting idea that makes everything better, but you're afraid because it's it's gonna so you try piddling with the other stuff. Well, if, if you piddle with all the other things, the smaller things, and then you go and tackle your big problem. That big problem, when you fix it, might erase all those things that you just wasted your time playing with, right? So you have to, you have to do the big stuff, right? Like, if you, if, if you're, if someone says, Yeah, your protagonist goal, it's unclear, or it's not big enough, or that's not important enough, right? And that's what you're needing to do, change your protagonist goal. That's the first thing you should do. You shouldn't. Then play with the dialog and add, oh, I got to cut some scenes. And at the end of the script,

18:49

yeah, you want to work at the bigger because then if you're going to go and work on the dialog, and then you realize, after, oh, I should make this bigger change, and then you've changed all the dialog. You've done it for nothing, exactly, if

18:59

it

19:00

changes, the whole thing

19:01

we Desiree was doing our redoing our bathroom. She wanted to hang some housecoats on the wall, so we got, like, some 3m sticky holders or whatever. And I put one on, and it fell off overnight and peeled all the paint and drywall chunk with it. And so what did I do? First thing I did

19:15

you do, Scott,

19:16

I went and I was like, Ah, I don't want to fix all this. I don't want to do everything. So I'm just gonna sand that one spot I'm in and just paint it. And so I did. And what happened?

19:25

But do you remember, Scott, yes, your wife said, Honey, you should really start from scratch, and you should, like, doesn't No, no, I'm going back. I said, you know, on the instructions of that said hanger, it does say something about heating the glue first so that it just comes right off. Anyways.

19:45

So then, so then I painted it, and then you could see, like you could see the problem. Still, it wasn't smooth like the rest of the

19:53

wall.

19:53

So I recall, because there was just enough of the front of the drywall that keeps it together. Peeled with. The paint. So it was a little lower half a millimeter, but you could see it. So the problem was there. Even though I played with the stuff to make it look like it wasn't, it was there. So I had to then waste all that time. I had to go back and then and do it all from get right down to the base of everything.

20:17

Guess what?

20:17

What?

20:18

I'm looking at the problem?

20:20

Yes, I'm the problem, but that's an example of you fix that and you still see the problem, right? You put lipstick on a pig, it's still a pig, right? Who came up with that stupid thing? I don't know, but it's a good it's a good analogy. So that's, that's the thing, right? If you have to cut an entire subplot because it's a waste of time, doesn't go anywhere, right? It's useless. Well, what's the point of, like, playing with that? Say it's this other side couple, and you're gonna you show some of their relationship.

20:44

Yeah, there's no point. I get it now, right? Yeah, because it could rip the whole thing. You could be doing work for absolutely no reason, and then

20:50

later on, you realize, oh, wait, yeah, I don't spend enough time with any main characters. Okay, well, how about I just cut that love story, because it didn't really go anywhere. It doesn't help the story. Well, what was the point

20:59

of playing with it? I think what it comes down to, as well, though too, is that, like what you're saying with the wall? Is that going and making little fixes here, like moving this here, moving that there, like I talked about before, switching words around and stuff, making little tweaks like that at the end of the day, doesn't it still doesn't fix the problem, right? Is what it comes down to. If

21:19

you remember your script and it's still the same, still just as good, then why you wasted your time? You need to make sure that whatever you're doing is making it better, right? Not just different better. So re if you have to rework your whole act two, why are you playing with act three, if it's gonna maybe lead somewhere different, raising stakes across the board, if you have to raise everybody's stakes, there's no point in playing with other things, like do the big stuff first. Once you get the big stuff, it's gonna affect all the little things, right? So you some small tweaks. Won't fix the problems. That's basically what it comes down to. What's the next one? Desiree,

21:50

rebuild.

21:52

Did you

21:52

get this from painting? No, I

21:54

didn't. It wasn't even planning on talking about painting until you got here.

21:58

This next one is rebuild.

22:00

Don't patch, there you go. So once you've identified the issue, you have to rebuild it intentionally, right? You don't just go in and patch the problems. A lot of times, I'll see that and just and I mean, like, that's why we did this rewrite accelerator, because a lot of times writers get their notes and they just don't know how to take those notes and put them into action to do the rewrite. It's a scary thing, right? And so a lot of times writers it'll just be like, I don't really get how to fix that, so I'm just gonna fix all these other things so people don't see it, right? You have to be intentional, right? You're not editing. Desiree, what are you doing?

22:33

You are redesigning,

22:35

right?

22:36

I love that.

22:37

I know you

22:38

because I keep redesigning everything. Actually, it's just currently, right now it is April, and I am already thinking about what I'm going to do to redesign for fall. Same thing. Not

22:52

even summer yet,

22:53

same thing. You can do with writing. So you're working on one thing, but then I think, as a writer, because I live with one, it's like your brain never stops. So you might be working on something, but you're still thinking, Oh, six months from now, I'm hopefully gonna be working on this.

23:07

Yeah, but, I mean, that's a great if you go in with that mindset that, okay, I'm gonna go in and do my draft. You're not just editing your stuff. You're actually trying to redesign it to make it work better. That's a if you go in with that kind of viewpoint, that kind of makes it more

23:19

exciting, or if it helps you to you can think, I'm going in to make it more pretty.

23:25

Yeah, that's true. Make it prettier, right? It's a pig, but we'll throw some lipstick on it, right? But right? It's all about, yeah, redesigning it, right? You're gonna, you know, a great way to go in before you start, is to re outline, whether you outline or not, and it doesn't matter. There's no real way to do your outline, even if you just have scribbles on a paper of 11 drop notes of here's the things to look at. You want to make sure you're going in for a reason, right? You want to make sure that you are aligning your characters and your plot. Most of the scripts I read, the main problem is that they are either focusing so much on plot, the characters get lost, and that's not as important, because we don't need to know every detail, or it's all about character, but the story doesn't go anywhere, right? You have to have both. You have to have a strong plot that's moving things forward, and characters who are in focus that are affected by that story and affect that story. They

24:17

have to work together like a perfect outfit.

24:19

Yeah? Then, yeah, exactly, like, like, the Goonies, don't, you know, don't

24:24

talk about the sweater.

24:25

My Goonies sweater. I'm gonna put a picture of it in the in the show notes. Write

24:29

it down that that's what you're how

24:30

awesome it is.

24:31

Ready? Write that down. And then I'm the third one that you have listed here. It says, Then, then at that point, after you done, done, the RE outline, the aligning of the characters and plot, then you do the rewrite of the scenes.

24:43

Yeah, that's how you do it. You got to work through those three big steps. First,

24:48

hey, looking at this Sid dude, yeah, this Sid dude sounds pretty good. He's

24:53

awesome. Sid field,

24:54

yeah. It says here in the information about the book, which I thought was really interesting, that the listeners might find interesting. Saying. It says all writing is rewriting. But what do you change and how do you change it? All screenplays have problems. They happened to Die Hard With a Vengeance and broken arrow, and it didn't get fixed, leaving the films flawed. Did you know about this?

25:21

So many well, so many movies like that.

25:23

Then it says they happen to every great screenwriter. But this is the part good writers see their problems as a springboard to creativity

25:35

that's showing, not telling, right there.

25:38

Good writers see their problems as a springboard to creativity.

25:42

Like, I love that. That's, I mean, that's a perfect example of visual writing, right? You then see the writer running up, bouncing off the springboard to be like, here we go. Here we go. Let's do it. Let's let's raise this another level.

25:53

Get excited. Get excited

25:55

for it. I always say, like I love rewriting. Like I love it. I love going in and playing and like challenging everything. I always say, anybody can write the first draft of a screenplay. Desire. You could go to moral and you could write a whole first draft of a screenplay

26:10

if you

26:11

wanted to. No thank you. But anyone can, but the real writers, the greatness that comes from rewriting. What is there for me, first draft is like, I use the analogy of a sculptor, right? They take their block of clay and they take it out of the plastic and, bam, slap it on that table, right? That, to me, that's the first draft is done. A lot of people think, oh, no, it's once the sculpture, you know,

it's got the first form. And, okay, now I know what I'm looking at. That's the end of your first draft. No, no, no, no, your first draft is a lump of clay. You've put it on the table. Now you got to figure out what is there. If you can build what you want from what is there?

26:49

It's

26:49

the exact same with any single thing in life. When it goes to making a recipe. Do you just say once the muffins are in their tins, okay, and now I'm making muffins? No, you have to start somewhere. It's always a start to finish, right? Anything in life?

27:04

Yeah, exactly. And if you don't put those muffin tins, those muffin papers in the muffin tins, and you just pour your muffins

27:11

in, you're gonna get a mask. Don't

27:12

spray it. They're not coming out. So there's your problem. You should have put the muffin tins in, go through what you're supposed to do first, right? Yeah, yeah.

27:20

Read the recipe.

27:22

Read the recipe

27:22

and the read the recipe is the same for screenwriting if you don't know how to do it, read the recipe, watch the screenplay, watch the movie. Read the screenplay, yeah, read the books. Learn how to become a master. Yeah.

27:37

Yeah. Exactly. Perfect advice for Desiree once again. Okay, so one of the things that you can really you know that that that most writers never do, which is why rewrites feel endless, is because they

27:49

don't

27:50

this one here, yes, the next one, yeah, because

27:51

they don't

27:52

always track your progress. Yeah,

27:53

they don't track it. Because sometimes you just feel like, I'm just nothing's happening. I'm not doing anything right, I'm not making it better, right? Track your progress, right? Go in there, finding what you're going to be working on. So what you're fixing in the draft, this is my biggest tip, don't try to do it all in one rewrite

28:13

so

28:14

many. Like, I'll give all these notes to someone. Here's all the things to focus on, and they'll go in, they'll do it all in once and send it back the next day and or whatever.

28:20

And it's done.

28:21

But don't like you can't, right? If one of the notes is the you know, desire is dialog should be funnier, because her character set up to be really clever. So she, if that's one of the things, and you go in and trying to do that with everything else, it's not going to get the right kind of focus. It's like me all. It's like me. When I go and I clean the house, it's like, oh, Gary here. Desire gives me my list of like, here's the 11 things I need you to do. It'll take you two minutes. That's her classic line. It'll take you two minutes. Hi, sometimes I say, but the way I go through it, I can't finish one. I start one, I do the next one, I go back and forth. But if I don't have that list right, and if I'm trying to do everything once, it takes me forever. So I always have to stop now and be like, Okay, finish this one first. Really,

29:02

that's

29:03

what you're doing.

29:03

I have to write the laundry now. Okay, now I've put a laundry, right? Because I'll be like, Oh, doing laundry. I'm like, Oh, right. Now we'll go in the room and, oh, I got to take this, and I'll sweep this. Oh, the garbage, right? And then, and then I'll forget to

29:14

do the reason why. And I'm so, so patient, though

29:16

you're very

29:16

I am, and I a lot of times I'll say to you, did you forget where what you were doing? Did you forget where you're going? Do you forget where you are right now, most

29:23

of the time I have but I just say no, I'm doing this because I don't want you to know that I forgot. Well, I know anyway, but you already know, but that's the thing, right? You want to make if you try to do everything at once, it's just not going to give you the right focus. And then things get half done.

29:37

They get forgotten

29:38

or missed. Like, Oh yes, it's counter only half white, right?

29:41

Yes. Like with screenwriting time, if you miss something, because you're doing everything all at once,

29:47

yeah, you're too focused on the one, you miss the other. So that's the that's the thing. That's what success looks like. That's how you improve your script. Otherwise, every draft just doesn't get stronger. You want to like. Like, man, so what? So? Oh, you have to do 10 drafts. You have to do 10 rewrites, because each rewrite has your own specific thing. Well, who cares if it makes it better? Like your goal. Should like my goal when I sit down, that's probably sounds stupid to certain people, but when I sit down, say, I'm going to write a contained thriller. Okay, so, okay, I got my idea. I'm going to sit down my bar I set, I say to myself, I am going to write the single best contained thriller ever written. That's my goal. Doesn't mean that's how it ends up, but that's my goal. Your goal should be to create the best thing that's ever been done in that specific genre or subject, whatever. Right? You want to be the best, and you can't be the best if you just try and do it all quickly and rush through it and just get everything done because you don't want to deal with

30:47

it. Can I say something? Just a really quick thing

30:49

for sure,

30:51

you've done that very seriously. No, no sarcasm. Here, you have reached that when it comes to being a husband. Oh no, I'm I'm telling you truthfully, Scott, sweet, that that is what you have achieved.

31:04

Well, I tried the best husband I can in the world. I

31:06

know

31:07

I don't always succeed, though, but

31:09

you do pretty good, honey. That's

31:10

my intention,

31:11

yeah, and

31:11

that's the thing you need to be intentional, right, right? So, so that's, that's what you want to you know? That's, that's the difference between your rewrite that goes nowhere and one that changes absolutely everything, right? It is clarity, strategy and the willingness to make real changes.

31:27

And what did he Sid say again? What was the word he used at the end?

31:30

It's a springboard.

31:31

Springboard. Yeah,

31:32

your first creativity bring Yeah. Rewriting is a springboard to open up your creativity. Yeah? So, so we're gonna go over my and Desiree's that should say Desiree's method, because really, Scott, you helped me with it. I'm not taking all credit for it.

31:46

We did this actually when we were away

31:47

accident.

31:48

We were away for my birthday, we went to a spa that's a few hours away, and I remember we were sitting and then you're like, I'm just trying to think of ideas. And you came up with this all by yourself?

32:02

No, I didn't. I came up with the idea, like, I want to use the word rewrite. How can we use, how can we use rewrite as an acronym for all the kind of steps to keep in mind? And then we went through and

32:15

you okay, yes, so, so I will tell them this,

32:17

and this will be in the show notes, right? So

32:19

write that down with the Goonies

32:21

sweater. I have it there, yeah. So

32:23

sorry in advance for you guys having to see the Goonies sweater. I think you have a picture of you and Mike, actually,

32:29

yeah, because he has his lost boy shirt on.

32:31

Yeah. And

32:31

you're like, what a bunch of dorks,

32:32

yeah. And Mike, Michael Eckland, is an actor in Vancouver, British Columbia, and he has done really well for himself. So check him out too. But you could probably post you and Mike in that. That would be a good

32:44

for I'll put that in. Okay, so rewrite, R, E, W, R, i, t, e, what are those all stand for? What does the R stand for?

32:52

Read,

32:53

yes, you need to read your script. I before I do rewrite on anything, whether it's mine or someone else's, I read through that script three or four times before I even think of doing anything to get my brain in there, to get the vision, to understand the voices, all that kind of stuff. So that's the first thing you need to do before you go in, is read it a whole bunch of times from different viewpoints as much as possible.

33:15

Second one is E for evaluate.

33:18

Yes, evaluate. So this is the hard part. This is stepping back, using that analytical eye, and really, just like, it's great if you could, like, write down a whole bunch of questions, like, like, like, the SID field book does, right? But like, write a whole bunch of questions and evaluate that, right? Like, is my character strong enough? Is this voice specific? It's a comedy. Is there enough funny in this are funny things that like, right? Evaluate what it is that's the problem, right? So get evaluated from other people. That's a big deal. Ask in there, right? Go in there and evaluate. Okay,

33:52

so we have r, e, w is the next one, which is wonder.

33:56

Yeah, wonder is huge you. I mean, you have to have a sense of wonder about the own, own world you've created. It has to keep exciting you. If it doesn't excite you, if you're not filled with wonder as you're going through it, no one else is going to be filled with wonder when they read it. That's the thing. If you're just like going through it, to get through it, it's not going to feel good. It's not going to get people excited you. And if you, if you don't have that, when you go in, then stop, step away and work on something else. As a writer, you shouldn't just have one project anyway. You have to write. You should be generating a new script every four to six months, hands down, minimal, minimum. So set that project aside. Work on a new one. When you go

back into it, you will see it with new eyes. You will see it with a better sense of one. Sense of wonder. That is important. You have to have that passion to find the Wonder.

34:48

Okay, next one is r which is rule of dozen?

34:51

Yeah, rule of a dozen is kind of my thing. Maybe I didn't come up with it. Maybe I heard it somewhere, but it's what I do. Every choice I make. In a script. When I go in it and I think, oh, this dialog isn't working, what else could they say? I think of at least a dozen, right? If I'm thinking log lines, if I'm thinking, you know, like the scene description, or, Oh, okay, I got to have a twist. What's a cool twist? Or this character needs a flaw. What's their flaw? I don't just go with the first thing I come up with. Think of a rule of a dozen. When you go into rewrite and you want to make it better, think of a dozen different things to do in that specific situation, right? This? This has to be like, my we're gonna need a bigger boat line. Okay, so let's look at that. What is that? What are some options? It might still be your first one that you come up with when you've gone through them all, but it might be number seven you need go until one knocks you out of your chair. That's the one you go with. So rule of a dozen, because a lot of writers just go with their first thought and run with it. It's like, Oh, well. They said that. My kid, that. My character isn't this character isn't deep enough. There's not enough about her in the script. Okay, I'm gonna make her like gardening. That's it. You're just

35:52

what about that? Though?

35:53

Why? Why is there a reason behind it? What else could it

35:57

be?

35:57

Oh, I don't know. I'll make her no sign language. Or maybe she wasn't. She can sing a full opera. Maybe she she has, maybe she's double jointed in her fingers, and she can do weird things, like think of a whole bunch of stuff, until one's like, oh my gosh, yeah, because that dictates that actually speaks to this. And like, have it be relevant, right? But rule of a dozen go over as many things as you

36:18

can. Okay, got it next one is i, which is intrigue?

36:22

Yes. Are you intrigued? Are you making the script intriguing? Is there enough about it that is pulling people in that is surprising? Are you holding certain things back? Are you creating a bit

of mystery? Are you having customers or having customers, having characters give a little bit but not everything? Is there a sense of intrigue, right?

36:40

Holding something back, basically.

36:41

But yeah, it's and that's again, that stepping back with that analytical eye, when you have to think to yourself, how is this going to hit someone? Is it going to intrigue them, or is there just enough here? Is that a great line of dialog that makes them go, wait what? Right, and keep going. So that's a big part of what needs to be in all pieces of your screenplay, is it has to keep intriguing a reader. So that's important. Okay,

37:02

so we have R, E, W, R, i, t, is the next, next one, which is testing.

37:06

Yep, test absolutely everything. I always tell people, go in and just challenge stuff. Like when I work with a writer, once a script is just really, really good, I just go in and I try to poke holes at everything, just to see if there's a hole that pushes through, right? You have to stress test it. You have to, like, say, oh, what happens if I pull this scene out? Okay, so if I pull this scene out, this crumbles here, or this doesn't make sense, or

37:31

going back to the foundation and the spine, right?

37:34

Yep. Or, like, I pulled the scene out and absolutely nothing changes. It doesn't affect anything.

37:38

And you take the scene, right?

37:39

So you got to challenge and test everything about it, right? You have to, that's the way you make it better. You don't just go through and be like, Yeah, it feels good. You have to test it. You have to try and rip it to pieces.

37:50

Last one, if you know how to spell correctly, yeah, is E for Elevate,

37:55

right? Elevate everything, right? You like, if you just write, if you're going in and you do your rewrite, just to kind of, you know, and at the end, it's just, it's, it doesn't change, right? You've made a whole bunch of changes, but it's not really any different. You can't really tell from one

draft to the other that it's any different. Then, then you're not doing it strongly enough. You're not You're not doing enough to it. You have to make sure that it gets better, right? You have to, like, try and make like you should feel okay, you know what? I think this draft is so much better than the last one, and then see if someone else says the same thing. But you always want to be elevating, and this isn't even just in the rewrite process. Like you want to be elevating your writing overall. Every page you write, every script you write, you should be getting better and better and better. So, so you'll see that on the show notes. We've got that. It's a good kind of, you know, post it note thing to stick on your computer, as Desiree loves me to say, by now,

38:46

there's like 500 posts. You don't

38:47

really see the screen much anymore. No, you can just go over top. You can put them over top,

38:51

okay, but

38:51

yeah, you want to put that because that that's a good way to kind of keep yourself focused on these are the things. This is kind of the order that you should be going through. Kind of gives yourself a good little kind of sense of the structure of the rewrite process. So, so if you've been stuck in rewrite mode, this is your sign to stop spinning your wheels. Start readwriting with purpose, purpose, intention, like with anything in life. If you just go in and you just kind of do it, to do it, or you don't put enough, and you think, Oh, it's good enough, then that's all you'll be is good enough. If you want to be great, if you want people to pay attention to your writing, you have to elevate everything. You have to be you just have to be undeniable and not stop until everyone tells you the script is that great. So while you soak in that and realize the bar you need to set for yourself, take a listen to one of our services.

39:37

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. A choice. We'll 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 all

40:22

it okay if you guys are still here and not bored out of your minds by listening to Scott talk to himself basically for the last 40 minutes, then in this part of the podcast, what we're gonna do,

40:33

what a great wife I have,

40:34

is questions that have come from listeners like you. Please submit your questions. Please, please, please, please, please

40:40

and like ideas podcast. What do you want us

40:43

to talk about?

40:43

Yeah, we're here for you so

40:44

you can submit them to hello@scriptreaderpro.com first question today comes from Jameson from the UK. Jameson says, I feel like my script is technically good, but it's not exciting. Ooh, what am I missing?

40:59

Hmm, yeah. I mean, that's, I mean, yeah, technically. You have to, like, the thing is, your script has to be technically good, right? You have to have the structure, you have to have the format, you know. Okay, you read a script and you're like, Yeah, this works, you know, like, it works. It's effective. But is it mind blowing? Is it life changing? What are you missing? You're probably, I mean, I can't say for sure, but go in and do some more rewrites. Go in and just challenge everything. Look at every aspect of of your entire script and just keep asking, can it be any better? What if I do this? A great thing to do to make your script exciting is to go in and pull, pull, pull, like every single thing, pull, one at a time. What if I pull this character out of the script. Do they fight? Do they hold on kicking and screaming? Because they need to be there that can make sure that every single thing in there has purpose, that everything becomes exciting, and then track that it's that it's getting, you know, that the stakes are raised a lot of time the excitement comes, comes down to stakes, right? If you you know, like a ticking clock or whatever, like, I have to get to this end point, because if I don't, this is everything that I'm going to lose. If that isn't strong enough, then that can, can keep your script feeling a little less than, than important.

42:11

Yeah, that could

42:11

be it. Yeah.

42:12

Question two comes from Samantha from New Jersey. Samantha says, What is the best, Hey, what is the best book on screenwriting after you just looked at like you're 50, but you don't have the one, because it's water, water.

42:23

Yeah, my favorite one is how to write with emotional impact, by Carl Iglesias,

42:28

that's your favorite,

42:29

favorite, yeah, the way he lays everything else. It was like a it was like a window opened in my brain that made me understand. Because I don't think I understood before that how important emotion is, not just feeling the emotion between characters, but emotionally impacting your audience. Your reader has to be emotionally impacted to care, because, if they will, an audience will right? So that's probably my favorite. We did a very early podcast. So the guy who wrote, I can't remember his name right now, but the guy wrote, your screenplay sucks, right? And he had like, here's all the reasons

43:00

why

43:00

your screenplay sounds that was a really good one too, because it's fun, it's entertaining, but it also gives you that insight into into how to look at things.

43:07

Makes sense. Yeah. Next one we have is from tad from Oakland. Tad says, How do I know if I am over rewriting

43:16

easy, if you do a rewrite and it doesn't feel like it's better, you're over rewrite. You

43:20

know what? I also think, if you think you're over rewriting, you probably are,

43:24

yeah, yeah. But I know so many writers who've just, who just keep working on the same script, and they'll say, can you read the script again? And I'll read it, and be like, it's no better, do something different, change it, you know, like, it's good, but if you're gonna keep, like, either put it to bed or ask, what makes this better,

43:40

right?

43:41

So, yeah, that's kind of when you know, if it's like, yeah, it stays the same.

43:44

We have the last question from olu from Bridgewater, and olu says

43:49

people in Bridgewater, that's where Stu and Haley are from.

43:51

Yes, I have so many ideas, but never finish anything. How do I pick one?

43:57

Yeah, that's hard. A lot of writers are like that. They'll get an idea, they'll get going, they'll get halfway through, and they'll lose their steam. I say outlining is probably a good option. Then if you don't outline, you know, if you know where you're going, if you know kind of what your end point is, and you kind of write out that outline beat by beat, then you'll have a better idea of how you can stay excited to get to those moments. And another tip is to write scenes. Don't you don't have to, have to write them in order write your ending. Write your your act two turning point if you're still in the first act, write that scene. Could you get you excited on where you're going? Could

44:33

you not work on just writing a couple page, pages of a short make it and think, am I interested in writing this and making this the full feature, or am I just, like, not feeling it?

44:44

Yeah, that's a great idea. See, this is why I keep her around. She's so smart. No, but do you

44:48

know what I'm saying?

44:49

That's appropriate, yeah, because some ideas aren't full movies or full TV,

44:52

and then you're like, Okay, do I see this going anywhere? Or is this just a short Yeah, and it's not going to go anywhere else.

44:57

Or can you get excited enough? Do you write that short? Turn? Be like, Oh man, I'm super excited, right? Yeah, that's a that's a great, great advice. See, I don't know why I'm here. Just next time you

45:05

answer all that, I don't think that's a smart

45:07

idea. Well, if you want Desiree around, please let us know. Go and subscribe to our podcast and whatever you're listening this to, this on watch for our video series, video podcast, as well as audio coming out soon. If you have questions, comments, feedback, please email us. Where does

45:24

at hello@scriptreaderpro.com

45:28

yeah, and then check out our website. We have everything writer needs. We'll help you with you'll write your write a couple of pages of your idea, and we'll kind of go over with you. We have something called a game plan where we get on a phone for a couple of sessions and help you brainstorm all your ideas. Sometimes it's so hard to write in a bubble, it's great to have someone there kind of bouncing things off of so check that out. Anything, anything you can need. scriptreaderpro.com because we are all about helping writers craft wonder one page at a time.