

## Ep #70: The Lie Characters Tell Themselves

0:00

On this episode, we're talking all about how a character arc works in a movie. Yeah, and how change is and is not always needed. 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. Hi

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everybody. Guess what, we are live. Not,

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we're not live. No,

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what I want to be live with you guys, though, because I feel like we could have a real connection, a real bonding moment, a

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real bonding moment, not a fake bonding moment, but a real one. But this is our first time on video. Desiree, how does it feel?

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Not good.

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Why you're so pretty.

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Thank you, Scott. Because I had to do this, where normally what you get is not this.

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You look amazing every day.

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Well, thanks. I don't know why you want bonus points or anything here. Well,

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I'm making you do a lot of work here about screenwriting, which I know you love.

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I love, and this is actually going to be a two-part, yeah, two-part

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series, because there's a lot to cover when it comes to arcs and change and the deeper core of character. So, if you're listening just on audio, because we've got the audio version too. Check out our YouTube channel, just look up Script Reader Pro on YouTube, and that's where you will start to find our video podcast versions as well,

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and wherever the heck they want to put them.

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Yes, and by the way, this is Desiree. She's the host of this podcast. I'm a

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little rusty because I've not done video before, Scott.

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Oh, it's a little different,

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yeah,

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yeah, but I'm Scott. I'm one of the team here at Script Reader Pro, one of the readers, mentors, script doctors, whatever you want to call them, and we're here to talk about screenwriting, Desiree's favorite subject. I love it. She is here to essentially make fun of me and make this entertaining while I talk about screenwriting. So much

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fun, I look forward to it, so, so, so much.

2:02

Yep. So, how do we normally start our podcast for people who have not watched before or listened?

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Well, normally we start our podcast with what we've seen lately.

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Yes, but we've been so busy, you've been

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busy, I've been busy. Ah, it's been kind of May has been kind of a crapshoot of a month,

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yeah.

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You know what? Basically, all of 2026

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Yeah, it hasn't been great so far. We haven't had time to really just relax and enjoy life, but hopefully in June we can. But I really, I'm the only one who's actually watched much other than reality shows and documentaries, which you've watched a lot of, but I went to, went to Mortal Kombat two in the theater, because it's a movie that no one in my family would want to go to, and it was okay. I was just thinking, man, like, why is, why did this movie get a theater run when better movies don't? It just wasn't great. I didn't understand why Carl Urban was even in the movie. Yeah,

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Carl Urban,

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yeah, don't know

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who he is.

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Well, he's he's a movie star, and he's he's the star of the boys, and that is amazing work. But in this movie, I don't know, I just didn't think he fit. I just had a hard time believing he knew martial arts of any kind. So, anyways, it wasn't great for me.

3:16  
Hey, speaking of movie stars,

3:19  
yes,

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I started the new 90 day fiance.

3:24  
Yes,

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there's this woman in the, in the show who is dating a guy from Egypt, and the guy is supposedly a movie star. Oh, like in Egypt, yeah. And is it credible? Get this, you guys. He said I can't really show you what I've been in yet, because I want to wait to show you in person. Well, that's not shady or shifty at all. And let me guess, when he marries her and moves to the States, does she live in California? Does she live in Hollywood? I don't remember where she. I'm thinking southern,

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so then when he moves there, does he does, is he going to ask her to move to Hollywood?

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Probably, yeah, probably.

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I don't know, I understand these people, how they don't see these things coming. I don't know, it's kind of sad,

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but she tells everybody he's a famous movie star, so

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that's actually funny you brought that up, because that's what we're talking about today, is the lies the characters tell themselves lies

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and tell others,

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speaking of lies,

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yes,

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truths,

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truths or lies, truth, truth, truth. Here's the truth.

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I do not read the notes

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again, again, ever. Yeah, you've never read the notes.

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No,

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I was even pointing something out. I'm like, hey, pay attention to this, and she's like, I don't read the notes, just move on. So, anyways, that's where we are. So, interesting, yeah. 90 day, it's as I've said before, watch it just to help you create unbelievable characters that you just shake your head and think there's no way people like this are real. Yeah, because they are real, they are real. That's the crazy thing, you don't think these people would be real. So, anyways, yeah, that's what we're going. Be talking about is character arcs and change. Desiree, what is your favorite thing in the world to deal with?

5:08

I love change more than anything in this whole world.

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I've never known anyone who is so absolutely livid and has extreme hatred when anything has to change, anything, even like if I move a fork across the table, or I come out and the, the, the flower vase or tray on the counter is, she's like, that's not where that goes,

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shifted by where does it go, she's

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like, push it a little to the left, I'm like, okay, push it, no, too much to the right, and I've literally moved it, literally like this much, and no, she can't handle it. It's, I mean, it's OCD, but it's, you know, it's just.. anyway, she's, she's very, very brilliant. Yeah, uncertain about chasing. So, anyways, where that's what we're talking about today, you know, a lot of times writers are not quite clear about why characters have to change in movies, right? They'll always set examples like, oh, wow, look at Diehard, John McLean doesn't change, she stays the same. Yeah, that's true, because in every movie, not every character has to change, right? There's a lot of different ways to look at change, you know, the kind of the best way I heard someone describe it once, is that when you, when you set a character up to change, give them a lie that they believe, right? If you give your character a lie they believe, then that is where they start their movie, and the only way to get over that and to find their truth is to what I

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don't get it.

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Okay. Well,

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give an example, because that's a lot of information.

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Sure. So I'm going to read from my notes. People never see me do that. People think I just come up with this, just just improvise. But so, so if character arcs aren't really about change, and if they're about letting go of a lie, right, you're allowing these characters to understand why they are a certain way, right? So, example, in my life, right, I,

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that's what I want.

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Yeah, so I never understood that I had kind of this extreme need for validation, because if I had grown up in my life and that kind of stuff, so all my life I was the biggest liar. I would make up lies about making my life more exciting, and even to like my best friends, I just make stuff up and try and convince them that it was real, and convince myself it was real. And it wasn't until I don't know when I was like 45 or something, I realized, no, no, I don't have to do that, I don't need to. The lie was that I needed to make my life more exciting, so people would like me, right? That was the lie I kept telling myself, and the truth is that I had to realize and understand that I actually was good enough, and I didn't need to prove myself, especially to people that didn't matter, right? So I had, so I had.. that's the lie I told myself. So that's.. does that make more sense? You give your character a lie that they tell themselves

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that they start to believe is real,

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yes,

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or that they think actually is it's

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real, right? And that way it gives them something to uncover, but it's also

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interesting.

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It is, it's, it's, and we have some examples, we're gonna go over it and make it a lot more understandable for people like yourself, Desiree, but, but it is so, so the lie is not necessarily a factual misunderstanding about who they are, but it's a deeply held belief, right, about themselves, about other people around them, about the world, right, all the world just isn't fair, I

get a, I get an unfair advantage in this world, that's a lie, right? You don't necessarily have an unfair advantage, you just have a different track that you have to take.

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You have bad luck,

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you're bad luck, but that might be a lie too. Maybe the lie, it's bad, I have bad luck, the world's against me. But the truth is that you just have no ambition, or you just procrastinate too much, so you never get anything done. So, instead of admitting that and changing, you simply just blame everyone else.

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Scott, do you want to comment on that? Exactly, the procrastination and never getting things done,

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that's that's why I use that example, because that's myself, right? So, I'll hit that, it's an endless cycle. I'll be like, okay, I'm not.. I didn't get enough done this month, I haven't done anything this day, it was just been.. I was supposed to get so much more done today, and then I have to stop and go, oh yeah, because I sat there and I went to research something, and then an hour and a half later I was just stuck in a scroll or something, right? Yeah, he

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claims to be working, yeah, go on

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IMDB, I'm like, oh, I gotta look up this person, and then I'm like, oh, this.. oh, they were in this movie, and they'll scroll down and be like, oh, let's look at the trivia, because I was like, movie trivia, and so then I'll be like, get stuck there, and then I'll go back to my writing, and then I'll be like, oh, I forgot to look that thing up. So

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I was talking more about household chores, is what I was talking about.

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No

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things around the house, that's

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purposeful. I would just purpose doing anything purposeful. Yes, I purposefully don't do the things in the house, I'm. Supposed to, because I'd rather be doing other things.

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Don't,

10:04

okay? So, classic example. It's interesting

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that you guys are actually seeing

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the dynamic, the faces she makes, the avoidance side to have with eye contact. So, classic examples, right? These are things trying to change

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the subject. Now, can you tell?

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Here's a lie. Characters will tell themselves, I have to do everything myself. That's right.

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Do they have to do everything themselves?

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You tell yourself you have to do everything, because

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it's only done right if I do it myself. But

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the truth is, you have a control issue of clean house.

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Be very careful what you say at this point in time.

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Okay, another exact, another lie. Carriages tell themselves, love always leads to pain, right? So, if someone's been hurt in the past, they'll just avoid love, because it's just gonna lead to pain again. That's that's the lie they tell themselves, so they don't have to open themselves up and risk that possibility, right. My worth comes from my achievement, kind of like my example of that need for validation, right?

11:05

Think a little bit of you still is like that.

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Oh, it will be for the rest of my life.

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Yeah,

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like that's why I will always have an authority complex, because I don't like when someone who is kind of supposed to be above me in something tells me that I need to do something. I don't like that. So, same kind of thing, right? Showing weakness is dangerous, right? A lot of, lot of guys will just be too much. Oh, I can't cry. Oh, I can't have emotion, because that's dangerous. I'll, you know, people will, you know, I'll lose the.. the people won't look up to me anymore. They won't see me as this and that, whatever it might be, right?

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Do you know what I always say to that, to all my kids, like that I advocate for and work with, and friends that are really close to me,

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what,

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what do I always say about it?

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Sometimes we have to do hard things.

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No, I say that too. That's a good line.

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It is a good line.

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Um, no, instead of showing weakness is dangerous, or I always say,

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for help

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is a sign of strength.

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Strength, weakness

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is actually, and asking for help is a sign of strength.

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Yeah, and that's a lie. People tell themselves, no. If I, if I ask someone for help, like our daughter, if I ask someone for help, it'll show that I am not good enough, or I am weak, right?

12:11

Yeah,

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and that's the lie that people tell themselves. But you tell them the truth. No, no, asking for help is actually a strength, because you are willing to admit that you need help. Yeah, who doesn't need help? Everyone does. I need help.

12:23

You need

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every moment of that. You

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need mental.

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If I didn't have this woman in my life, I would. I seriously don't know how I'd function. I just don't know how I would function.

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Let's remember this guy's on a really bad.. it is now

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on record. And then another one, people always leave, and these are like these five are what we see in movies all the time, and a lot of times I'll see them, I'll be like, I'm so tired of this being the same old thing, oh, this this woman's pushing men away because the men in her life left her, and so it's a definite, right, it's like, okay, yeah, fine, and it works for the story, but it's like, why do people use the same things all the time, it's because that's life. There are so that's what we do, right? Like, so many characters are alcoholics, and they deal with alcohol because they've had something happen in their past, some trauma, and it led them to drinking, and it's easier to drink than face it, right? We see that all the time in movies, but it's because it's happens all the time in life, real life thing is

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real life. There's

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only so, like, like there's only so many core human issues, right? And so it's just the unique way of having a character say that and tell themselves that, right?

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I think that's why people resonate so much with movies, because they can relate to what they're seeing, right? So, if you go and you remove all of that messiness. What's the point of watching it? It's like, oh, wow, okay, your life is perfect.

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Yeah,

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boring,

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exactly. And the greatest movies are the like that. Personally, people believe this is the greatest movie. These are my favorite movies. They're the ones that actually do make you see yourself, right? Like Dirty Dancing for You was the huge one, but I think for the reason that that was such a huge movie for you, because this young girl was trying to be seen and wanted to make her own choices and go whatever direction she wanted to, and the world around her was telling her, no, this is who you are,

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I think, and I also, I just

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escaped, right?

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I think also it was that I could relate with her wanting to get that approval

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from her parents,

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yeah,

14:29

yeah,

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you know, and always reaching and never fully succeeding and coming to place where you're like, yeah, I've reached that peak and I'm there, you know,

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yep, yeah, exactly, and for me, like, my two biggest, most favorite movies, kind of like, as I was becoming an adult, was Braveheart and Titanic, and people always think, oh, because it's a big swords and sandals movie, or, oh, it's the big special effects with the boat, no, it was the love story, it was that core love story, because I grew up thinking that I just, I needed to settle for whoever would come along, because I'm just not good enough to, you know, get that girl, or, and I mean, look at my wife now, I obviously overcame that, I got the most beautiful one out there, but that was

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your kiss and butt big time, trying to

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help what I did earlier get erased, okay, whatever, but for me, that I, that resonated with me, because that was something that I just didn't believe, right, and so that was that lie I told myself. So, anyways, that's what we were, that's what really resonated with people. So, the lie in that character creates a story, and that's why I always say that you need to understand who your character is first. You need to understand who they are, what their, their kind of like core history was what's that thing that happened in their life that made them a certain way for the rest of their life, knowing that will allow you to understand what lie they'd had to tell themselves, right? So a powerful idea that I want you guys to kind of like soak in. Okay, plot often exists because the character believes the wrong thing, that is a great say that

16:02

again.

16:02

So, plot often exists because the character believes the wrong thing, right? Believes the lie they tell themselves. Oh, I can't ever be the.. I can never be the most successful hockey player out there because I just don't have the talent. Well, that's the lie that you're holding yourself back. Maybe you're the.. you will be the greatest hockey player. So then there's your story. Here's a hockey player who could be the best, but this is holding him back, and he, you know, he almost hurts himself, and he sabotages it. There's a story, right?

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Do you think, though, sometimes telling that lie makes that character push that much further to achieve that dream?

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Oh, for sure, because the only way they can achieve the dream is to overcome that, that's their flaw, that's that's that lies,

16:44  
they're lying,

16:44  
yeah, even so, even it's a lie, because that's what their flaw is, is the lie they tell themselves, right? So that's also a really great way to find the flaw in your character. So the questions that you can ask when you're thinking about character, yeah,

16:58  
I can ask these questions. Oh, you

16:59  
can. Okay, sure.

17:00  
I have a page as well.

17:02  
Yeah, okay, perfect.

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I will just pretend that they're in my brain. Here's a question you might want to ask yourself.

17:11  
Okay, I

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know you like that. Don't do the teacher face.

17:14  
It's the teacher face. I hate that teacher face.

17:16  
Okay, boys and girls, let's grab your pens and papers, the worst

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is your choir singer hands of face of the teachers. No, no. Okay.

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Here is the question that I just came up with in my brain, because I'm a liar.

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Yeah,

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how is the lie affecting their relationships?

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Good question. Thank

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you. I came up with it myself. Good.

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Another one. Another question you can ask.

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Another question is, how is it sabotaging their goals? That's a big word for you, Scott.

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Sabotaging,

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yes, very big word for

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you. A lot of consonants.

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What opportunities are they missing?

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That's a really good question, that because then that lets you know what they want and what they're going to lose, right? That whole idea of stakes, if they don't change, they risk losing this. If they change, they could risk gaining this, right.

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And this one's hard. What emotional walls have they built? I have emotional walls, basically wall upon wall upon wall upon wall with a lid on top.

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Yes, you do. I

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have full emotion, emotional walls.

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Yeah, but you are also the most emotional person in the world.

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I hate that.

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Yeah, but you don't. So there's a difference between like showing emotions of like, oh, that makes me sad, or you know, that me cry, and then making yourself emotionally available for people who don't deserve it, right? Like,

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and then sitting there and crying with them. Yeah,

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yeah. So, you're.. I wouldn't say you have emotional wall, I say you have emotional walls up for like connections, right? But you're also very emotionally available, right, which says a lot about your character, right? And who you are, and, and all that, right?

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Yeah, that I'm a mess,

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yeah, yeah, a little bit, little bit of a mess. We all are, though, right? That's what makes it

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messier than others.

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Yeah, so I've said that there's a I am messy. I've said that there's that is kind of like their lie can be their flaw, but there's a difference, right? There's a difference between the flaw and the lie. So many writers kind of can confuse them when they're building their character, so the flaw is the visible behavior, right? So, if they're arrogant, if they isolate themselves, if they have control issues or anger problems, right, that's the flaw, right? That's not a lie, that's just the flaw that they carry.

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I know people that have all of those issues, and

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it's one person, yeah, it's like narcissist, that's exactly, and you know who

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exactly I'm thinking, I do.

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I, as I wrote it, I was like, okay, yeah, that's all in one

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check, check, check.

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So, the lie, though, right beneath the flaws, the lie is the reason for the behavior, right? So, way back, so, so think, right, yeah, there's a reason there that way, right. And so there's a difference, you can have the lie, but if. Don't have the flaw that it causes, and it's not a complete picture.

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Also, the flaw they often, or the reason why is they often make excuses as to why that behavior is the way that it is.

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Yeah,

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like it's

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always,

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oh, well, I stuck my toe when I was five, so now anytime I get hurt, that anger that I felt when I was five comes out,

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yeah, it's triggered, it's triggered me,

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triggering, right? That word, triggering,

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yeah, it's overused, yeah. So the flaw is what we see, a simple way to see your post-it note, put on your computer, the flaw is what we see, the lie is why we see it. Okay, so some examples, if someone is controlling, that's the flaw, right? The flaws that they're controlling, right? The lie is that they tell themselves is, is, yeah, Desiree, you say the lie, yeah. Why the lie?

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I would like to be included in this podcast. Yeah, I don't know if you guys know, but have you noticed that he has a hard time letting me speak?

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Listen, you're not hostage,

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and I feel like this is maybe not a lie, this is maybe the truth from when I was younger. I feel not heard, uh, huh, definitely. And I feel not heard, yeah. And so, so now I'd like to speak. So, you tell the law, lie. So, the flaw is controlling the person is controlling. What is the lie? He wants me to do this because he knows I'm controlled. No comment. Okay. The lie is, if I don't control everything,

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you're my inspiration, honey.

21:35

Shut up.

21:36

If

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I don't control everything, everything falls apart. That is a true story, that is not a lie. No

21:42

lie,

21:42

no, no. Next

21:44

flaw: emotionally distant. If someone is emotionally indistinct, what could their lie be? Huh,

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Scott, this one really rings true to someone I know. Getting close to people only leads to pain.

21:57

Yeah, so that's why they make themselves distant. Interesting. Another flaw: a workaholic. If someone's flaws that they're a workaholic, what would their lie be?

22:05

My value comes from what I achieve,

22:08

right? So the way to look at it is instead of creating the flaw, right, don't create the flaw first, create their lie, and then that will allow you to understand what that flaw is going to, what the

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flaw is. Yeah, what a stupid word.

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Flaw - any word sounds dumb if you say it enough. We've said this

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before, but flaw, flaw, flaw. It's like cacao. So,

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I've got some movie examples. Desiree, next page, and we're just gonna go. There

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isn't next time. I didn't get a second page. So, I think, guys, I think that that is the end of this pod. No, it's right here.

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Here we go.

22:42

Thank you so much for joining us.

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Shush, shush, shush.

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Sorry, we don't have a question section this time. Um, but yes, what I can talk about here is some movie examples. Oh, here

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we go.

22:54

Oh,

22:54

there you go.

22:55

Yeah,

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there we were just looking at the wrong papers, Deb. We were, we were.

23:01

Anyways, okay, so these are movie examples, and you have your flaw versus lie movie examples. Yeah,

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so

23:07

can I just guess without, because I mean, you know, I have not prepared this.

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Yeah,

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I'm guessing most of them are 80s and 90s.

23:14

No, not necessarily,

23:16

but everything I see here is 89 I'm

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going to tell you the movie title, you're going to read the flaw, and I'll read the lie, and then you read the truth. How's that?

23:25

Read the flaw and the truth. Okay, okay.

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So, the Devil Wears Prada, Andy Sachs, main character.

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I never got to see it. The second one,

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not yet, but you saw the first one. So, Devil Wears Prada, her flaw. What is her flaw?

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Passive, indecisive, reluctant to commit,

23:41

right? So the lie is, if I become ambitious, I'll become a bad person, because that's what she sees around her. What's the truth? The

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truth is, success and integrity are not mutually exclusive,

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right, which she learns over the course of the story. She can have both, right? A beautiful mind, that's.. I don't know if you remember that, or you saw that, but it's about this brilliant mathematician who has Alzheimer's. I think it's Alzheimer's that he gets, but the flaw is

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emotional distance and obsession.

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Yep, the lie is that intellect is more valuable than human connection, and that is his problem. He, that's where his work comes from, so the truth

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is relationships are what ground him in reality.

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Yeah, because his mind takes some other places, right? Jerry Maguire, beautiful movie. What is Jerry's flaw?

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Self-centered and career-driven,

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right? The lie that he believes. One second,

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that could also be the same for what's that one with all the swears,

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Wolf of Wall Street,

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yeah, same kind of right, same kind of thing. Let me think of that.

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Yep. Okay, so the lie is that success and status is what will fulfill me. So he believes, and the truth,

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real fulfillment comes through genuine relationship. Oops, and connections, yeah,

25:01

and connections, yeah, for sure. The Lion King, Simba, right? His flaw:

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avoidance and running from responsibility.

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Yeah, he kills his dad, he thinks he kills his dad, so that's that flaw, as he's running and he always runs. The lie is that my past defines me, and I can't escape my mistakes. That's his whole journey, right? He's on the run because he can't believe he can overcome that. What's the truth

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that you can acknowledge your past without being controlled by it?

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Exactly, it's a good journey, right? Shawshank Redemption, one of your favorites. I

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love Shawshank Redemption.

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So, Red, not so Red is Morgan Freeman's character, right? What is his flaw?

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Cynicism.

25:40

Yep, and his lie is that hope is dangerous, right? He doesn't want to hope because he's stuck in prison for the rest of his life, so he's a cynic. So, what is the truth, though?

25:48

Hope it's worth the risk.

25:51

That's a great, great message we all need to think of. Mic

25:56

drop

25:57

the end. So, those are a few examples to just kind of like have it kind of ring, you know, make a little more sense, and if you look at every single movie that you love, you know, I have like 500 or whatever on my back shelf, you know, you can look at every movie and you can kind of like think of the character and understand their flaw, that's a good exercise, just start writing down movies, what the character is, what their flaw is, what their lie is, and what the truth is that they have to learn, so then you can see that, yeah, they learn that over time. So,

26:24

okay, so you've given examples of the movies, like, and how there's flaws, lies, the truth on each.

26:31

Yeah,

26:32

what about some best examples of movies where it's the best lies ever, the

26:40

best lies that work most effectively. Yeah, you mean it's a great random thing for you to ask, because I happen to have a list of some I can read for you if you'd like. What? So, how did that happen? I don't know. This is magic, movie magic and action. Some of the ones that are kind of ring true for everyone, right. Good Will Hunting, and it's said in the movie, right? The lie.

27:06

Yes, I will read the movie. You say the lie.

27:09

Okay, sure.

27:09

Because I'd like to participate in this podcast as well. That'd be

27:12

wonderful. Go ahead. This is your question you made up. Anyways,

27:15

it was mine, and I prepared all of this content ahead of time, just so everybody knows. Okay, so Goodwill Hunting, that's my first one.

27:25

Nice. Well, Goodwill Hunting, one of the.. I mean, it's one of the best scenes that people just love is the It's Not Your Fault scene, but that's a lie, right? He, that he, the lie is that it's not your fault. It becomes powerful because Will believes that the people who love him will just eventually hurt him, right. So that's that's the lie that he has to deal with, and and overcome, you know. So he can move on, right.

27:50

Next one: swimming, keep on swimming, swimming, swimming,

27:56

finding Nemo,

27:57

finding Nemo. So the lie

27:59

there is that the world is too dangerous, right? That's the lie. It

28:02

is because once that guy gets sucked up out of there, and then ends up in the ocean, that is pretty scary for a little guy. It

28:07

is, yeah. But the thing is that Marlin convinces himself that because his wife died, the world is just too dangerous, so he has to overprotect his son, and if he just kind of gave him some room, he would learn how to deal with danger, right? So, yeah, so that's that one. What's the next one?

28:24

The next one is Shrek.

28:26

Yeah, Shrek. If people know the real me, they'll reject me, so I'll just live in my swamp and not talk to anyone, right? And that's a lie he tells himself, because that's how the world's treated him. But he always has to overcome that and realize that he doesn't have to. He can be himself, and he'll get the girl and the best friend and win.

28:43

So, what the heck, this is all like cartoons. Hey,

28:46

most of them, yeah. Because everyone has seen them, that's kind of why.

28:49

Oh, all right. Well, next we have The Lion King.

28:53

Yeah, we touched on that. If you know, I must run from my past.

28:56

Yes,

28:57

if you never face your past, you'll never be, you'll never be, you might as well die mentally, might as well die healthy and stable. Yeah, you might as well die, yeah, because you're never outrun it. I was gonna

29:09

say, I told Scott not too long ago, and right,

29:16

yes,

29:17

and I, I had watched it, I think, on Instagram, that it translates in that language to something like the lion, it's a

29:24

lion,

29:25

it's a lion.

29:26

Do you know that's not true?

29:27

It isn't

29:28

that guy who did that video,

29:30

yeah,

29:30

was sued. Oh no, sued. I don't know, that was exactly Disney,

29:36

yeah,

29:36

but it was, he was sued by maybe the people who wrote that song for like \$325 million

29:44

No, he can't be sued. Why did they? How is he gonna get 325

29:50

Because it made people think and believe it, and then that tarnished things. I don't know what their case is, but from what I understand, is it was a joke, and that's how it turned out.

30:00

So that's sad. It

30:02

is sad. Next, how

30:03

unbelievably greedy to go, and

30:07

you don't have enough money

30:08

to file a lawsuit, 325 Ukrainian dollars.

30:13

Anyways, yeah,

30:15

that's the speaking of movies, that's when you grow up and you say,

30:20

I grew up to be a loser,

30:22

that's you, yeah, had to charge 320 5 million.

30:25

Have to be a loser, a loser. Okay,

30:29

next one. Yes, cars, yeah, cars. I don't need anyone, that's the lie, that's the lie that lightning tells us. I don't need anyone, I can do it all myself. Yeah, he can't, obviously, and that's what he has to learn.

30:40

How about frozen,

30:42

frozen isolation keeps people safe, so it's, it's very, so many of these Disney and Pixar movies kind of have that same thing. Yeah,

30:51

you know what I say to that? Let it go. Yeah, just let

30:54

it go,

30:55

let it go.

30:57

Yeah, don't let it hold you back anymore.

30:59

Exactly. Why to go?

31:01

Yeah, truth never bothered me anyway. The cold.. oh, it's a cold.

31:05

Cold never bothered.

31:07

See, yeah. All right, so those are some examples, some some examples of the best lives. Now that I

31:12

had another proper page that really helped, that helped.

31:16

So, why characters resist change like anyone else? Why do you resist change?

31:20

Sucks, but

31:22

yeah, but people don't protect their flaws, right? They protect their beliefs. They think that if they change that, those beliefs will fall, that'll reveal their lie, right? It protects them from pain.

Everyone doesn't want to change the routine, because that might make things bad. If things are going okay, why risk it, right? But it's a movie. It's boring if nothing happens. It's boring if the characters don't at least try to do something big. Right, so maybe their lie has kept them safe, it's helped them survive, it's protected them from pain. But this is why change must happen in a movie in some way. And in the second part of this video, we're going to talk about the different kinds of change, because it's not like every change is the same.

32:04

No, and I don't know if they know that there's a second part, but guess what, there's a second.

32:08

Yeah, part two, two parts, part one, part two.

32:12

And if we happen to look exactly the same with the same attire, same hat, same shirt,

32:20

just magic,

32:21

it's the magic of movies again.

32:23

Yeah, we're wearing a green screen, each of us, and so we just snap these, these outfits on, and so they'll probably be the same, but we'll try that next one to do them too.

32:33

Well, it is a two-part series. Yeah,

32:34

so some questions that people asked is, or what are some things that that writers ask about change?

32:40

Well, thank you for asking, Scott. I happen to have some notes I made here ahead of time.

32:44

Some people, good, yeah,

32:45

I talked to my peeps.

32:47

Good, good serving. Okay,

32:48

which lies appear most often in amateur screenplays that you notice?

32:54

Yeah, a lot of it is, and that's, I mean, it's there's nothing wrong with it, but as, as a writer who's new, you'll pull information or inspiration from all your favorite movies, so a lot of times your character will have that same issue of isolation, because that's what you loved in the movies that inspired you to become a writer, right? So, a lot of the things that we see are just not as original as they could be, right? You want to try and find something, some lie about your character, a way they see the world that is nothing like anyone else has ever done, and it all comes down to understanding what their trauma was, what their issue was, why they became the way that they did. If that is unique and in a way that no one's ever seen, then it's it's gonna, it's gonna come across as more original, and it'll immediately make a reader think, oh, I haven't seen that before, right? So that's

33:43

the draw, that that's the jaw drop moment, where it's like, oh

33:47

yeah, exactly. When, when I mean, some movies will reveal that, and some won't, but it's that, that trauma, that that thing that makes that flaw happen will make, even if we don't learn all of it, it'll make that flaw different than other flaws that are kind of built the same way, or mean the same thing, it'll have that character really become something fresh,

34:05

right?

34:05

So,

34:06

got it. Other thing to consider is, or to ask you, is does every protagonist need a lie?

34:13

No, not everyone, not everyone needs one, but it makes them more interesting. There's nothing worse in a screenplay than a character who is just wooden, just has one level the whole time,

34:25

is that Pinocchio?

34:29

Well, I didn't mean literally,

34:30

you said wooden,

34:31

yes.

34:32

How can you use that in any, any other context,

34:34

like wooden, like just flat, and you just, just there and flat and boring?

34:39

If I had ability to use my phone right now, I would find the definition.

34:43

You don't have the ability, so nan and the boo boo,

34:48

but being so wooden,

34:49

but wooden, what one note, one level, you know, not, not they're just coming across as no

34:54

dimension to, yeah,

34:55

there you go, no layers that are dimensions, but you give them a lie they believe about themselves. Else or about the world, and you immediately have someone more interesting, so yes, not, I mean, no rule is that, yes, you must do this, but it, why not try? It's gonna, it's gonna, it's probably gonna make more interesting things happen.

35:10

Okay? Can villains have lies? Obviously, villains need to have lies, because they're the bad dudes. Yeah,

35:17

villains need more villains have even, they tell themselves even more lies, right? Like, because most villains are sociopaths or narcissists in some way, and so they just believe like their lies,

they actually believe, right? They can't overcome that, they don't see any truth to it, they because they don't believe they're lying, right? That's the difference between a hero and a villain, is a hero understands, okay, I made a mistake, I need to fix it, I shouldn't be this way. A villain is like, bring it on, man. There's nothing wrong with me, right? That's so, so, yeah. So, their lie, though. Villains don't need to change in a movie script, no? Right?

35:50

If anything, they'll change for the worse.

35:52

Yeah, yeah, that's true. Yeah, but they will force the hero to tap. Is that true, or is

35:56

that a lie?

35:57

Ooh, I don't know, but that's that's kind of that's kind of everything, so just kind of leave you with this thought before we pause for a quick promo. A great story begins when a character believes something that isn't true, and then reality starts pushing back. That is how you see a character be thrust into a situation that they have to find a way through, and usually it's about changing something about themselves to become who they need to be on that other side.

36:32

Less wooden,

36:33

less wooden. Post-it note on your laptop screen,

36:37

no, less wooden. All right, we'll be right back. You're dumb. Feel like you've taken your script

36:48

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](http://www.scriptreaderpro.com/rewrite) and use the code rewrite 15 during checkout for the rewrite proposal to get 15% off.

37:30

This is the part of the episode that you guys all look forward to, because you get to hear me talk.

37:35

Yes, please do.

37:36

Yes,

37:37

yes.

37:38

Now you can see how he says that,

37:39

yes,

37:40

yes,

37:41

and how she rolls her eyes when I say it. Yes,

37:43

I didn't roll my eyes, I just thought about rolling my eyes. Okay. Question one comes from Melissa. Wait,

37:49

if someone has questions they want to ask us, what do they do? Desiree people are gonna think our audio went out there, rude.

38:02

This is kind of fun to do the video, Scott, because I can play around.

38:09

Yes. Sorry. So, what should people do?

38:13

You can submit your questions, comments, ideas for future episodes by going to Hello, hello,

38:20

hello

38:21

at Scripps Reader pro.com

38:23

Yes, just put in the subject lines. Podcast question suggestion, something like yes, yes. So questions.

38:30

Question comes from Melissa from Nashville, Tennessee. I've received notes from three different readers. That's kind of Arkansas, where my besties from, I better not read it like that.

38:42

How about no? I might offend someone

38:45

that misappropriation or whatever. Yeah, that I always.. what is it? Cultural misappropriation. Yeah. Sorry. Okay. Now I'm gonna want to read it like that. I won't

38:56

just do it in your head,

38:59

do. It's okay,

39:05

Melissa, Nashville, Tennessee. I've received notes from three different readers, and all three suggested completely different fixes. How do you decide which notes to listen to and which ones to ignore? Yeah, that's a great question. You say that every question. Well, that's a great question, but he says that all the time. I do. So, Melissa, there's a couple different ways to look at this question. One is that they've all pointed out the same issue in your script, but all have different fixes for that issue. If that's the case, then you go with whatever one really makes sense to you, or if none of them do, you don't do any of those suggestions. We had Erin Falconer as an interview guest one time, and she said the best thing she ever heard about notes is everything that someone says in their notes is true, but the suggestions that they make are not, meaning just because they suggest it doesn't mean it's the best fix. Try and figure out something. If something sparks great, if one of their suggestions hits you, and you're like, that's perfect, then then do it, but it really just comes down to your gut. If it's the other one, where three different readers all have different reactions and suggestions for fixing everything in your script, and none of it is consistent, then I wouldn't necessarily think you have to listen to any of them. Look at the notes beneath the notes, look at what they're pointing out, right? What caused that issue, you know? And, but that's why it's great to get reads from a lot of different people, so that you can start to see consistencies, right? So, depending on on the two of those differences, it's really about, does a note make sense to you? I always ask that. I'm like, okay, I can see where they're coming from with that note, but I think I don't like what they're suggesting, or I don't see it as a problem. I'll see if someone else brings it up, and if no one else brings it up, it's.. it's probably not an issue. That's gonna probably not, yeah. So, so that's my answer, Melissa. I hope that helps. Number two,

40:54

we have Kevin from Calgary, Alberta. Hey,

40:56

Kevin, are you gonna do a cowboy accent man?

41:00

No, that's the same as my Southern.

41:01

Yeah. Well, the cowboys and cowgirls.

41:04

Oh, okay. No, I'm not, because I got his name,

41:07

Calgary Cow Gary. I don't know, cowboys and cowgirls.

41:11

You're not the

41:13

smartest character.

41:14

You're not the humor in this podcast. No, I'm not.

41:16

You are so

41:17

just.. yeah,

41:18

I'll just talk about writing and say,

41:20

okay. At what point do you stop rewriting a script and call it finished? I always feel like there's one more pass I could make. Don't we all feel that, Kevin?

41:29

Well, Kevin, the truth behind that is there is always one more pass you can make. We, as a writer, you can tinker on a script forever. I know writers who just go in and change five words and the next year they'll submit it back to a contest that they didn't even place at all in thinking

that maybe that law that small change will change things and it doesn't, so if it's at that point where you go in and you do the rewrite and and when you look at it kind of overall it's nothing different, right? You've changed maybe one line of dialog here, maybe one sentence in the description, or you shaved a couple words off. Stop. Just stop. Move on to the next script. You got to be writing the next script. You got to pump out a solid script every four to six months if you have any hope of being seen as ready to go for an industry person to think scripts are always going to change. Doesn't matter how perfect you make it. If someone reads it and they love it, and they want to get involved in it. They're going to have a whole bunch of changes they want you to make anyway. Your job is what I always tell writers, is your job is to get it to the point where you can say to yourself, this is the best version of this story that I want to tell in this way that I can tell right now, right? If you can feel that confidence that I don't think I can make it any better now until someone else comes along and tells you, oh, do this, and it would be better, right? But just be just, just be happy with, you know, your decision to say, "Kam, done. That's it.

42:51

Word.

42:52

Word

42:53

question three comes from Lauren from Seattle, Washington. Lauren says, "What's the biggest mistake you see writers make in the first 10 pages of a screenplay.

43:04

Oh, that's great. That's Lauren. Lauren, the biggest mistake writers make is they don't have anything happen. That's the biggest mistake. Also,

43:14

spelling.

43:16

Oh, yeah. Well, spelling

43:18

improper format.

43:19

Yeah, yeah. And those can, those you can let slide, because those are easy fixes, right? But if 10 pages go by and I still have no idea what this movie is, I can't tell what the genre is, I don't know what the tone is, I don't even know who I'm paying attention to, and I'm immediately wanting to hit the back button on my TV set, that tells me it, I, you lose all confidence that that is going to become anything important, and that's the thing, you have a page or two to make that reader confident that this is worth it, right? And so, if you don't feel that in the first two pages or

10 pages, then you just, that that's the biggest, that's the biggest mistake that you can make, for sure, hands down.

43:58

Good answer.

43:59

Thanks.

44:00

You're welcome.

44:00

Question number four.

44:02

Question four, Mark from Dublin,

44:04

Dublin, Ireland, from Ireland.

44:07

If you could only give one piece of advice to a writer submitting their very first script for coverage, what would it be? Don't have too high of expectations.

44:17

That's a great answer. Yeah, yeah, that's actually, that's, that's a perfect answer. Have no expectations, but there's.. I'd say there's more to it than that. To one piece of advice is hard. I mean, one would be hope that they point out everything wrong with the script. That's, I think, the biggest piece of advice. So many writers go in, just want, just think, okay, this is going to come back, they're going to love it, it's going to be glowing, they're going to want to pass it on to Steven Spielberg, because he's their neighbor, like, whatever it might be, right, that all that does is just put you in a position to be defensive when it comes back that way, when I send a script to anybody, right, whether it's a producer or my man. Or whoever, I always think to myself, okay, I want them to tell me everything that's wrong. I don't care, I care what they like, right? And I always want to hear what's working, but I want to hear what's not working, because that's the important stuff, right? That's what I need to know. I need to know what's so, if you can just be ready for that, just hope that they point out all the mistakes, so you can fix them, then you're never going to be disappointed with a set of notes. If they absolutely hate it 100% say this is the worst thing ever. Then, at least they're telling you the truth, and they're telling you what, why it didn't work, so then you can reevaluate. So that's, that's, I think, the biggest piece.

45:28

Okay,

45:29

yeah, kind of like when you can actually take a note from that. So when you come out of the bedroom in the morning,

45:34

shut up,

45:35

and you come out, and probably like everything is about 95% of probably how you, how you want, because I work hard to make sure it's as spotless as possible. 75

45:45

Oh, wow. If you could come out thinking, thinking like the worst, I'm going to come out and it's going to be just trashed, and there's going to be food everywhere, spills all over the floor. So, when you come out and it's not the worst it could possibly be. Then it's a beautiful thing. Yeah, your mood is gonna be better.

46:07

No, no,

46:09

fingers crossed, people. Anyways, that's everything. So, if someone loves our podcast, tell us about it, right? Tell us, what should you do?

46:18

Give us five-star reviews. Oh, that'd be

46:20

wonderful.

46:21

We need reviews. Share the podcast, like I said. Email us at [hello@scriptreaderpro.com](mailto:hello@scriptreaderpro.com) Also, remember, don't be wooden,

46:31

don't be wooden. Nice, getting it a shirt made with that. Hey, yeah, don't be wooden. Yeah, don't

46:38

be wooden.

46:39

No, no double entendre there. This could be very

46:42

inappropriate.

46:42

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