

Ep #73: Supporting Characters Need Support Too

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On this episode, we're talking all about supporting characters.

0:04

Yeah, the secondary characters are just as important as the leads.

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So listen in.

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

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Scott, I'm one of the team here at Script Reader Pro, but Desiree's the host, and I'm here to talk about screenwriting.

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I'm the hostess with the mostest.

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Desiree makes it entertaining because if she wasn't here, it would be probably not as exciting to hear me talk. It

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would be dry and lame.

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Well, I wouldn't say lame. That's

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you, Bry and Lame.

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Well, how do we start our podcast? Usually, they're full of compliments, Desiree. Those are

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compliments and songs and rainbows too.

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Okay, it's a Broadway musical. That one guy was in

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a musical there for a second. Yeah. Just so everybody knows, I do not like musicals.

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No, she doesn't.

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No, but we liked

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Wicked though. That was really good. Yeah, Greatest Showman. I love.

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Can I talk? Oh, sorry. You just said, don't do this. Stop. Stop now.

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Okay. Anyways, musicals. What were you gonna say?

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I was gonna say. Except I really, really liked the Greatest Showman. The Greatest Showman has been my favorite musical by far.

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Yeah, I don't like musical at all. And then I watched that one because I was like, "Oh, I'll give it a try, and it was like mind blown.

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And then Wicked, you cried in.

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Wicked was so good though.

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It was Wicked

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because was the character stuff was so great. Anyways,

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anyway, how do we normally start

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the podcast?

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Thanks for joining us today. We're talking about secondary characters.

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Yes, but

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this

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is-I was going to say-but you're the secondary character most of the time.

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No, I actually be the lead.

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You're always the lead. I'm always the secondary. I'm always the supporting character. You should

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always be four steps behind me. Oh, nice! So that I can kick up some dust in his eyeballs.

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Wow.

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Anyways, like I was gonna say, this episode is titled "Supporting Characters. They need support too.

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They do.

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I will tell you guys something. This was my idea.

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It was everything is always Desiree's idea.

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Yeah, c4 here. She even writes up

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all the notes.

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I don't, even though she

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doesn't read them before, but she types them. If I did type, there would be no typos. So we normally start our episodes talking about something we've seen over the week, and seeing you do nothing. We got a couple things because Desiree started a new show on her own called Madison. So good! I watched only a couple episodes. Oh, it's such a heartfelt show. Shall fight for stars, right? Yeah. Okay, guys, she looks too good for her age, which tells me she's had to have worked down because she like she disappeared for a long time. I

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wonder why.

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So she probably got work done, disappeared for a while, came back. Yeah, she does look good for what almost 70.

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Is she almost 70?

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She's got to be. Got to be in her 60s because I'm 50 and she was already an adult when I was a teenager. So

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I would highly recommend checking it out. It's one of those heartfelt like family stories. It's a beautiful story so far, from what I've seen.

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Our daughter, she and I went to Obsession in the theater. It's not really Desiree's kind of movie. She doesn't like those kind of movies, but she would have liked it. It was actually really well done. Fantastic movie. I can see why it's making so much money because it's surprising and it's effective and great storytelling, great direction, really good scripts, creatives, original, everything you need. So, can't recommend it enough. Great, great movie.

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He goes for the popcorn.

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I do. Yeah, I do. And and movies.

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We kind of work the system a little bit because we bring a big. Well, we don't work the system, but we bring an extra large size Ziploc. We pour the popcorn in, layer it up really good with butter because you need butter, and then before the movie, like so, Scott does start to leave the theater.

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Yeah, we get a really popcorn before the movie

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starts.

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I don't like to leave the theater and miss anything. So

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yeah, except that you go to pee like four times if I have

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to pee. Yeah. So anyway, thanks for passing that on

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about that information.

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Yeah,

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we're talking about it not being the antagonist. We're talking about supporting characters. Yes, we had not the antagonist.

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I know. See, see how Desir doesn't read the notes ahead of time, so she just starts reading stuff, thinking that she knows what it is. So support character needs support too. The reason it says not the antagonist, right, is because I'm going to start by making a point that the antagonist is not a supporting character or a secondary character.

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You should agree that

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they are just as important as the leading character, right? With without no antagonist, protagonist isn't fighting anything. You know, if if you were to like go on and Google like best supporting characters in in movie history or whatever, you'll see a lot of people pick like Darth

Vader and the Joker, Heath Ledger's Joker, or you know Hannibal Lecter. It's like these are the villains of the story. They're not the supporting characters. They're not the second. They might be like if they were up for an award, they might be, you know, you know, awarded as best supporting actor or actress. But don't mix up your antagonist. Your antagonist. This is about supporting characters, characters around your protagonist, or and the antagonist, right? Like the antagonist thugs, or you know, people. So they're not

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the antagonists,

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right? That is the antagonist is modest. That's what not the antagonist means, hun. I call her Hun. If you don't know, she's my wife.

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I never know. Also, with your fingers, if it's a cut you have on your finger or if it's just ink from your writing, because I don't think we've told the viewers, listeners, if or that you have an obsession with pens. I like

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fountain pens.

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And so he fills up ink, and he thought it'd be fine to go one day outside to clean out the ink in our flower pot, which is beautiful. What

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you make me sound like an idiot! I wasn't cleaning out my ink in a flower pot. We

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were shaking the ink out. Right, there

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just wasn't enough. There wasn't ink coming, so I just went like this

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in our flower, and then

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the ink went on the flower box within it,

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which is not painted wood. It's been aged for years, yes, and so now there's a nice chunk. Exactly. So,

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so basically, the point of that is that I need a supporting character around me to help defend me all the time, so I'm not always defending myself. That's a great example to have a supporting character. So we're going to talk about the different things that you want to keep in mind when it comes to those secondary characters that are in your school.

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I got one.

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Yes.

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Did you know that secondary characters can sometimes make the entire movie,

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aka matter? They can. It's true. Sometimes when I read a script, that whole I'll remember the whole script because of that one secondary character over top or funny or had great dialog. A lot of movies that we see. A perfect example of a secondary character who steals a movie and you remember the movie is when you think of the movie Pitch Perfect. What do you think about? Who do you picture when you think about that movie? Let me think about what the movie is first. It's the movie with the acapella in college, and the girls all get together to sing, and they go on tour. Who do you think of?

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Oh, what's her What's her name? Fat Amy.

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Yes, Fat Amy. Right. I hate that. I know it's a bad name, but it's it's who you think of when you think of that movie. So that's that's an example: is those secondary characters that really steal the show. That can sometimes make an entire script, right? It helps the reading experience be lighter, more effective. I always say, no matter the genre, you want to make sure that the reader is having a lot of fun. It's a fun experience to read the script, and a lot of times that secondary character can provide that great fun.

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But I find too a lot of times their secondary characters are so memorable. Like you think, what's what would you say because you're a writer? Who's the secondary character, for example, in Dirty Dancing?

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That would be I don't know his name, but the annoying guy who has a crush on the baby

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in the cheesy one. Cheesy guy that

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talks about we have Durkins, we have okay

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then for pretty woman would you say it's her friend?

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No, I'd say it's concierge because he becomes that mentor to her. He's really sweet to her.

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There could be can't there be more than one second. Yeah, but

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that's the one. When I think about a movie, that's I don't think of her friend. Her friend's hardly in it. I think of

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well, but I can't think of her lines. Of

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course, it's because it's one of your favorite movies. But when I think of the secondary characters that stand out, they make you think of when you think about the movie. You think about oh, I love when that character. I loved how he said goodbye. Liked how he called her Miss Whatever, right? So that's that's kind of yeah. But you know

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what you just said too. You said I loved when he said this. Blah blah blah blah blah. It's because you remember the quotes.

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Yeah, and so

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secondary characters probably have. Would you say lines to remember.

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Yeah, that that's a lot of times. Nobody

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puts baby in the corner, though. That's not a secondary character. No,

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a lot of yes, the sweet gherkins, or you know, yeah. Like it's it's all about making sure that when you have secondary characters in your script, you can do a little extra to give them really great lines. So it's not just the protagonist that always has the quotable words, right? That the secondary characters-they're the ones that stand out in that way. So giving a lot of those characters that you know that additional kind of oomph to who they are, right? So you'll see a lot of that happen. Yeah. This important to remember is that everyone in your sprinkler should have their own story, right? So a lot of times the background story, you mean? Yeah, not that it has to become part of the movie, but but if you think when you think of each character, you should think, hey, this character isn't just here just to be there for this, you know, just to provide that information. You want to make sure that you know that they have a story. You know their reason for being there. You know what is missing if they are removed. A lot of times, you know you'll have characters with like entourages around them, and they provide absolutely nothing to the story, so they shouldn't really be there, right? You want to make sure that if they are there, if your secondary characters are there, if they're supporting characters, they're there. They're there to actually support the story, right? They're not just there to be there. They have a reason for being. Right.

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Is that a good thing? Would be to see if you remove the character, if it changes the story at all.

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Yeah, that's always the.

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If you remove that secondary character, does it alter the story at all? If it alters the story, probably good that you keep them in. If it does absolutely nothing, remove that person out,

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or make sure there's something about them that does make make them need to be there.

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Yes, right. Set your boundaries with those characters.

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Set your boundaries. Yes. So everyone, I mean, everyone in a movie. If you look at them, everyone in a movie believes that they're the star of that movie. This is they're the hero of their own movie, right? Everyone in life thinks that they are the main character in their story, but sometimes they're not. But if they, if you do make sure that each of them have that mentality, well, I'm I'm the most important person in this room. Then that's going to come across to the viewer, and that's going to make that the the reader understand. Okay, this is why they're in the story. This is what they're providing. This is what would be removed. So a lot of time it all goes together.

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He said another point away from all of it. I got an email today, like my motivational stuff that I get in the morning, and it was really interesting. Kind of on the same kind of line. It was when someone asks you, "Who do you love? You should list yourself first.

12:03

Oh, that's really smart, actually. I bet you no one does that.

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No, I don't. But I thought it kind of went along with the whole thing about being the person. Like, don't forget yourself in the story, right? You're important.

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You're the most important person in your story, for sure. Yeah, yeah, and and and you know it's all about making sure that just everything has a point, right? Because because you're going to be questioned along the way. So if someone reads your script, they love your script, they wanna they wanna get involved with it, they wanna make it. They're gonna ask those questions. They're gonna say, okay, so this character here, they only have like seven lines in the script, and that's gonna cost a lot of money because we got to pay a voice actor or like a you know a SAG actor to do this. So Screen Actors Guild. So we can't just have an actor come on and just pass the beer across the bar. Why are we giving that bartender seven lights? Can we give that to someone who's already speaking? Like you, you're going to have to defend a lot of those choices. So you should know. The worst thing that you can do is not have an answer if someone's going to ask you a question. And if you're the writer of the script, you should know every reason for everything in the script. Can't even tell you how many times I'll ask a writer. Okay, so if a producer said to you, "Why is this character so worried about this thing here? Why is that? and the writer's like, "Hmm,

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I don't know.

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I don't know. I didn't think about it. Okay, well you should, right? You don't want to be that writer's like, oh well, there's really no reason I thought it was cool. It's not going to fly, right? So that's the thing. Is this is the kind of thought you put it to everything, but especially those supporting characters.

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Okay. So then, like, what about the dialog? Because I think some people go have a character, right? And if it's secondary, maybe they won't have as much dialog because they're secondary character, or should they have? Should they be on a balance like secondary and primary characters?

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Yeah. So, so secondary characters they don't. So secondary characters, their dialog is important because it should be providing something very specific. A great way to understand what's internally going on with the leading character, learn information about them, is through that secondary character. They're the ones that can say, "Oh, I just you know don't worry about Desiree. That's just how she is. She talks all the time because of da da da da. Right? Like that's what a secondary character can say. So the protagonist doesn't say, "Oh, don't mind me. I just talk about all the time, right? Like it's a way to avoid that on the nose dialog. But what I see a lot in screenplays is conversation, just to have conversation. Too long and no point. No point. Yeah, everything should have a point. Every limited dialog, but especially with those supporting characters, that can be this defines the reason they're there. This character is here to help the new employee navigate that workspace, but they're they're going to suddenly become fast friends, and then they're going to learn everything they need to know about that about about where they are and people that are there through that character who suddenly they're fast friend, right? So everything you're saying has a reason.

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Okay, I. Can relate to this in terms of cleaning, because as the listeners know from all of the last 70 some podcasts,

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yeah,

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I'm a bit of a clean freak.

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Yep,

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I didn't comment on cat food down here.

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The one on stuff on level four down there.

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You're going to vacuum as soon as we're done. As soon

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as you're done, second we're done. Yeah, Tom, my top my priorities today.

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Is that? Yep, it

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is. Yes, it is. happy wife, happy

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life. Anyway, what I would say is, just like things that are left out on the counter, just like a mess in the bedroom, pile of laundry that doesn't need to be there.

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Yeah,

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secondary character should be important enough to not add clutter.

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That was a great segue, honey. That was awesome. Yes, they shouldn't add clutter. I don't

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like clutter, so I don't want to see clutter in characters either. I want to see characters that have a point, that have meaning, that brings something to the story. None of this, you know.

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Yeah, yeah. That's that's waste of

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space. It's a

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waste of space, but yeah, you'll see that it's too many characters, right? Too many people like that. Don't give every single character words. They don't all need lines. You can have a few characters who are standing around that don't say anything, right? Yeah, that's a great. It's a great because sorry, go ahead.

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No, you go.

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I was gonna say the the average reader. You can only remember six or seven characters specifically, like who they are and stuff about them. Any more, you start to lose track. Okay, so that has something to do with what we've talked about previous

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names and characters.

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Yes.

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Awful too. When you if you're saying you said six to seven characters, are you saying six to seven characters, including the protagonist and protagonist?

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Yeah,

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total roughly. Yeah, I mean, there's going to be other people, but important, important enough with lines, important characters, not just background, right? Okay, so, so that what I want to just take a note of, even though you've talked about it before, is people who use more than six or seven characters who fill the story up with like 2030, characters, which you know you've read, and have names for these characters-big, elaborate names-not only first and second names,

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yeah,

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yeah. Not only do you remember, not only do you not remember the character, but then you have to then throw in all these random names, which do not add to the story. Yeah,

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they don't need full crazy names. They don't

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and names that are different.

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Yeah, and and like really long, like oh, let's have this last name is seven syllables that that character is never going to be seen again.

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Right.

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Why don't they put stuff in the reader's head they don't need?

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Right. Good point. Yeah.

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So those are the the kind of key things to keep in mind. I'll just kind of give some examples of you know in different genres what good uses of supporting characters are.

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Okay. Good news, like who a character is, or like

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or like what they provide, right? Like what kind of person works while in that supporting character. So if you want to read the genre, I'll then explain what that would be for that character. Okay. Yeah.

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Uh huh. So first,

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yes,

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comedy.

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Comedy. So comedy, it's usually the sidekick character, right? The person's best, you know. If it's if it's like a wrong converter, it's it's their singular, you know, their single friend or their best friend or their gay friend or something that can provide that kind of like comedy relief, can have something quirky.

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You're talking about secondary characters, yeah.

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Like who that supporting character? So it's usually a sidekick character or someone related to the character. If I say to you, one of the great supporting characters in a comedy is Cousin Eddie. What does that make you see in your head?

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Personification. I see him standing with the thing, getting the poop, like putting the poop into

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the dinner's bowl, Clark. Yeah. I see him in his see-through shirt with his dicky. You can see his dicky. So he's got the moose. The moose had eggnog, and he's sipping in. And I

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also see him at the grocery

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store, Clark. Yeah, and

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he goes and he's throwing the dog food into the cart.

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Yeah, but he's he's he's such a fantastic secondary character because he's an idiot. Do I

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know something, girl? I remember him more than I do Clark.

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Yeah, that's and that's a perfect example. Like I said at the start, sometimes that's all you remember when you think about him. I mean,

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Clark is great too. Yeah, he's got great scenes and great lines, but like he's Eddie's memorable.

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He is, yeah, and he's so memorable that he's one of those characters that once I've seen him in that, I cannot see him as anything else forever, right? Yes, I remember when he was in Independence Day, and I was like, no, all I see is cousin Cousin Eddie. Just same with

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what's mr. Bean?

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Oh yeah, you can only see mr. Bean

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as mr. Beanie. Yeah,

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it's not possible. Okay, cool.

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Drama,

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drama. In drama, you will usually have a mentor character, right? That's who stands out-the person who is teaching that that leading character the things they need to know. Forrest

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Gump, the person with Forrest Gump.

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Forrest Gump is the protagonist.

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Yeah, who's the one beside Forrest

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Gump? Lieutenant Dan.

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Right,

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Lieutenant Dan's perfect example. You think of Lieutenant Dan and dragging him off the field, and he wants to die on the field, and then he's got no legs, and he's on the boat, and yeah, it's a perfect example. Right. Yeah.

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So okay, that one. Do we have rom coms?

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Yeah, which kind of kind of just went over that. You know, it's usually the best friend or the wife of the of the guy's best friend, you know, teach him things, you know, really just quirky people, right? Just a rom com that supporting character is going to stand out is is funny. So so make them make them the funniest person in the story, right? Yeah, you think of the movie Bridesmaids, for example.

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I do know this one.

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Yeah, the the scene you think of the

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poop scene is

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the poop scene, right?

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In the dress shop.

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Yeah, but the character who makes that movie funny is Melissa McCarthy's character.

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Yes, I mean it was anybody else but Melissa McCarthy. McCarthy. Yeah, I don't think it would be as good.

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No, it's the thing. It's certain characters, and sometimes it is the actor or actress that makes it work, but in the script you can see why it's going to be funny.

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So true. Next we have horror.

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Yeah. So the horror, the the the supporting characters who usually stand out in horror are what I refer to as the explainer or the helper. They're the one who's there to kind of like fill in. Oh, so what actually happened in this house? Is there was this murder? Da da da da. Right. That they're there to kind of explain the rules, but they do it in a way that makes their character stand out. Not

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on the nose,

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right? For sure.

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Okay, what about animated?

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Animated is always going to be the goofiest character, right? Think of like you know, it's always going to be that ridiculous character. Think of Little Mermaid, Sebastian. He's you know he's yeah, and and what's the seagull's name? Scully, is it Scully? Sully, Scully. I don't know, but anyways, it's it's always additional character. You're

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also game.

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I know. Finding Nemo, Dory, right? Or Bruce the Shark. Like, there's certain characters that come in in anime. It's always an over the top character. What about

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family?

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Family is usually the one. Like, if it's like a family story, like like a for everyone to enjoy, not animated. It's usually the the one character who just doesn't fit in. There's always someone who's just not quite the same as everyone else, right? They're usually the one that stands out. They got two two mismatched socks, and they're they're kind of a nerd, and they say ridiculous things, or they don't get jokes. Good question. Yeah,

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would would that be the guy who loves chocolate Goonies,

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sloth.

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No, no sloth.

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Oh, oh, chunk. Yeah, chunk, chunk. Yeah, it's that's an ensemble one too. But that's the character everyone thinks of Chunk, right? And that's not wonderful. Yeah, because that's because he's

22:53

a family-ish.

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Yeah, yeah, because he's not like everyone else in there is kind of like they're all cool and they're all like little group and stuff, and then junk just comes in and he messes things up and all he cares about is food and yeah, so it's always that one that stands a little bit differently from the rest.

23:07

Gotcha. Then we have sci-fi.

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Yeah, so sci-fi a lot of time is the expositional character. So it's the one that is designed to give us all the information we talked about in the last episode. Why you don't like sci-fi? Is you really have to pay attention. You'll see a character comes along that is there to provide that you know, hey audience, just so you know this and this and this connects. Jurassic Park movies, all of them are are a great example of this. Samuel Jackson's character in the first one, right? He has the great line, "Hold on your butts, and and he is there to like say, "Look, see what's on this monitor here, and see what's happening over here. And these things are dangerous, and don't touch this. It's it's that that's that character, but they're fun and they have great lines, so they stand out. Okay, or Ian Malcolm in Jurassic Park too. He's not a main. He's not the main

character. He's the character that stands out because he's different from everyone. But he's giving us here's all the science stuff that we need to

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know. Gotcha. And then last bit Western.

24:02

Yeah, Westerns. It's always

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it's that's an iffy one that I'm like

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because you don't really like Westerns.

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No, but I can't think of like what what a secondary character.

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So it's usually that like that gritty old character who's seen everything everywhere has

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experience.

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Yeah, and he can, and it's usually a very show how to

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shoot fast

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gun. Like you better not play cards with that guy last time. So played cards with him and they lost a thumb or something stupid, you know. But it's usually that that older character who who has some seasoning. Yeah, exactly.

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Okay, awesome. So that's a list.

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Yeah. So those are we're gonna go through. I just went and grabbed a bunch of random movies off of my movie shelf, and some are newer, some are older. I grew up on '80s movies, so a lot of them are kind of like older. But I've got some examples of some new movies too.

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Okay, so first one I'm gonna grab. I'm just gonna grab

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one. Just grab one. We'll see how many you don't.

25:00

Well, I think

25:01

just grab the top one and hold

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it up. No, I'll grab the one that I want to grab. Aussie, he's so bossy. All

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right,

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true romance.

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True romance. There's so many great supporting characters in this

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one.

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It has great ones. My favorite is Boyd, Brad Pitt's character, who's just some stoner on a couch, but he has beautiful little moments, really great little lines of dialog. Fantastic! It's filled with with like every single supporting character in this stands out on their own, which is how they should. Django Unchained. You've even seen it. No, it's so good. Ask if

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I'm going to see it for Chris. It is,

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but it it's Chris Christoph Waltz.

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Ah, Quentin Tarantino.

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Yeah,

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no.

25:45

But Christoph Waltz's character is he stands out as as just everything he says, every story he tells, the way he talks. He makes the whole movie. He's so good, and I mean, it's there's the protagonist and antagonist is Leo and Jamie Foxx, but yeah, Django is just so good.

26:04

The Lost Boys,

26:05

Lost Boys. For me, it's the Frog Brothers, right? The you know Corey Feldman and his his brother, and it's the secondary characters. They act as that expositional character who explains this is what vampires really are, and this is what they're about. This is what we're going to do to them. They need to be in the story, but they stand out. They're very memorable.

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Laughs like a box of chalk. He talks

26:27

about that. Yeah, Forrest Gump, Lieutenant Dan, Back to the Future. Talking Back to the Future. I don't know if anyone's seen this or not.

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Really, but when we had when we were at Star, no, Tim Hortons Starbucks the other day. The other day, Scott sees this guy going in with his wife, and he's like, "Hey, Ned, I love your shirt.

26:48

He had like the Back to the Future dashboard on his shirt. I'm like, "My wife, I I would wear that, but my wife wouldn't go out in public with me. No, it was a beautiful moment.

26:59

Beautiful

27:00

Back to the Future. It was George McFly to me is the best character in the whole movie, and people don't talk about George McFly. You have all the action figures. There's never a George McFly, but he-if there's no George, there's no movie because he's Marty's dad and he has to make him fall in love with his mom. But he's just so clever and unique and different, and has get your damn hands off her. He just has really great, really great moments. Next time,

27:22

I'm going to pick some of these because these are old and

27:24

well. These ones here. Okay, these are these ones here. You can just turn the spines if you don't want to pick them all up, but I'll just pick them up. True lies. Oop, true lies. Tom Arnold's character in this story again stands out. No one really kind of. Everyone knew Tom Arnold was Roseanne's husband, and that's what all they knew of him. And then he did this movie, and he was so clever and funny. And they're like, okay, I can see there's some charisma, and that's one of the biggest things to keep in mind when you have a great supporting character. They're charismatic, right? You want, and when someone is charismatic, Desiree-that's the perfect word for Desiree-charisma, because when someone is charismatic, when they talk, you just want to listen. You want to pay attention. You don't want to look away and miss anything. That's what charisma is. And so make your characters. I always say, you know, have your characters all be like Desiree. But yeah, giving customers

28:12

such a good point. Charisma.

28:13

Charisma.

28:14

You said

28:14

customers. I know. I meant characters. Napoleon Dynamite, one of the greatest movies ever made. It's awesome, and the secondary character here who really stands out is Pedro, right? Save vote for Pedro when Emery cut off all his hair because he's hot. Yeah, it's so good. Pretty Woman, classic we talked about. Encino Man, Incino Man is about Sean Astley's leading character finds this Encino Man in his backyard in swimming pool. In a swimming pool, but who stands out in this movie is who you think of when you think of Insino Manor. Yeah, Paulie Shore. You know, weasons and witches, whatever he says, right? Nodding Hill, one of the greatest supporting characters that anyone has ever seen in any movie,

29:00

okay, we get

29:02

it. Who is it? Supporting character.

29:05

What's his face?

29:06

Spike wears the whiteies all the time, the goggles. He smokes in the. He just he makes that eyes. He makes that whole movie. He does really great, really great character. So that's the thing to keep in mind. Some of the newer people, newer characters in the newer movies, that's now in Barbie, who for me this character made the entire movie of Barbie.

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Can

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no weird Barbie. Do you remember? I don't

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remember. I don't do well with.

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Oh, she was the weird Barbie. Like everyone has a weird Barbie. She has like green hair, crazy hair. Yeah, weird Barbie.

29:41

Because I think it's because everybody resonates with the whole marker on the face. Because what person did not mark her on their Barbie and cut their Barbie's hair? I even cut my Barbie's toes. I was cutting my Barbie's toenails.

29:55

Yeah, but she stands out because she's so unique and funny and different. She's not what we expect.

30:00

Forgot about

30:00

that. Yeah, so good. In Jerry Maguire, it's Cuba Gooding Jr. character, right? Show me the money character. He made me want an Oscar for it. It was just such a standout supporting role. Movie isn't about him, but without him, there's no movie as well, right? Mark Hanna in Wolf of Wall Street. I know this. Matthew McConaughey's character. Oh, very small role. Remember, he's like doing a thing. Remember, he's that scene. It's like one scene. He's hardly any movie, but he's you remember him because he makes such an impact. And then, and then Korg in Thor Ragnarok. You haven't seen

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it. I haven't seen it, but really, but these are new

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movies. Why did you always say? You always reference old movies, but you know those under your movies. Anyways, so supporting characters need support too. They're support tube. Yeah, they

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have feelings too.

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Yeah, but you should always be able to say that about any movie. You take this character out, and the movie's not the same, right? You take that character out of your script. That script was not the same. That should be what you put into your supporting characters.

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Makes sense.

31:00

So, so yeah. So soak that in. Think about that. Think of all the supporting characters in your movie script and life, and life. Yeah, and put them in your movie script. And think about that while we take a quick break.

31:14

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31:57

Okay, we're back. We're back. Thanks for still sticking with us and listening to this guy. He's a little dry, a little bald,

32:07

thanks, and

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a little old.

32:09

Oh wow! Do you see how many compliments this woman is giving me today? My heart is warm.

32:15

Good. We are coming to this part of the episode where we get questions from listeners and viewers like you, we would love for you to submit your questions to hello@scriptreaderpro.com We also would love for them to tell us what they want for ideas for future episodes.

32:34

Yeah, love to talk about. I mean, 73 episodes now. We talked about a lot. So if there's something we haven't talked about that you want to hear? Yeah, let

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us know. First question today comes from Jim from Houston. Jim says, "How do I know if my dialog comes across as mere conversation? Ah, you know what I would say?

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What

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have someone read it with you and see if it sounds like conversation?

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Yeah, that's a good tool. I think removing removing one of the lines and seeing if anything is missing is a good way to do it because you'll find that a lot. Like dialog, movie dialog isn't just about characters talking about whatever. Everything characters say should be important, right? That's why you always want to start a scene as late as possible. You don't start a scene with the two, you know, the one person coming home to the room and they're like, "Oh, you know, I thought that you're in the air earlier. I don't know, you know, I got stuck. I was on the bus, and this thing happened. Oh, okay. Well, what are you doing tonight? Oh, crap! I got to go. I'm meeting this person. You then start the scene with that one character bolting out of the bedroom with two outfits and saying, "Well, I don't know. What am I going to wear to to meet them? That's where you start. You don't start with the senseless conversation. That's not needed. So that's a good way to do it. Cut, you know, go to the opening of a scene and cut a line out and see if it still starts well, and keep doing that until you don't need you that you absolutely must have that that point start there. That's a good way to tell if it's just that conversation that's not important. Okay. Next

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question comes from Maria from Puerto Rico.

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Puerto Rico. What are

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some tips for making a good transition from scene to scene?

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Well, that's a tough one. I mean, a good way to create kind of pacing and momentum is getting out of a scene when you understand you don't need to be in it anymore. If you do that, and you do what I just said about starting the next scene as elite into a conversation as possible, you're ending with a bang and starting into something. So it just creates a really great flow. So that's a great way to transition through things. Sometimes it feels really stark as to why we're starting in a different place. Every scene to kind of build off of the next one. As a writer, you'll know this scene ends here and this one starts here. But here's the 17 things that'll happen between. You have to ask if any of those 17 things are the most important next moment to show. If that numbers 18 is the most important next moment that these. These ones don't matter anymore. That we don't need it because we get everything in this scene. That's the one you want to. So a lot of times it's that asking: Does this build off the last one, or now are we taking a step back? Is the momentum stalling because we went somewhere we didn't need to? That kind.

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And remember, everything in the scene isn't necessarily spoken.

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Very

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true, right? Like when you're saying that, it's the unspoken because you can get a lot of information that you can then wipe out on the next couple things just by the unspoken.

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Yeah, like ending a scene, just going close on a character as they're asked a question and their face tells everything, but they're trying not to, and that you cut to the next scene. That's a great transition. Yeah, you don't have

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to then go and show further into that enough. Yeah,

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or or they say exactly what the audience needs to know. Yeah, you create intense kind of like suspense and trust.

35:53

Okay, next question comes from Elena from San from San Paulo. How how do I know if my stakes are high enough.

36:01

Ooh, most aren't. Most people as I read, I'm like, if okay. So here's here's what I do when I'm writing or when I'm reading something. I think, okay, if this character doesn't get this thing, what happens to them? If the answer is

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they just move on like nothing happened,

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then that's not high enough. Yeah, that's a great way to do that. That's how you can find out if your character has high stakes. If

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you say, if the stakes are going to make them think that or see that their whole world is going to crumble and fall apart, probably high enough stakes.

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Probably like you're on a bus and it's going 50 miles an hour, and if it slows down, like it explodes

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forever.

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Then those are pretty high. Those are pretty clear high stakes. What happens if the hero doesn't do this? Right. That's easy. It's the other genres. It's the the rom coms or the the drama or the thrillers. It's like what happens if this person doesn't do this? Right. You should have a very clear answer because then that provide an understanding of what is motivating, what is motivating them, and that's not just the goal to stop that bad thing from happening, but there's a deeper goal in that. All of those combined allow the reader to understand what is what is at risk here, what is hanging in the balance. So asking that just that simple questions is a good way to check. Okay, and

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then last question, Richard from Reno, Reno, Nevada. How do I showcase internal conflict in a script if it is supposed to be visual?

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Just give up because it's impossible. Not impossible, but that's probably the hardest thing to do in screenwriting, and that's probably what what makes most screenplays unsuccessful, is that they explain everything that a character is thinking, or the character tells everyone exactly what they're thinking. There's this really bad movie, and you you haven't seen it, but it's a famous movie. It's called The Room, or just Room, and it's by Tommy Wiseau, and he's this horrible actor who got some money to get her to make this movie, and it's the worst movie ever. James Franco went and made a movie about that movie years back and won awards. Anyways, you can watch any clip of that movie, and it's the exact example of what not to do, right? Like he goes to this rooftop and he opens this door and he's like, "Oh, I didn't hit her. I would never hit her. Why would she say that I hit her? I can't imagine myself hitting someone. Oh, hi, Ronnie. What are you doing up here? And this is some guy across sitting there on the roof and he says,

just doing some thinking, and then it cuts back to the guy, and he's like, "Oh, sorry about saying that. Just this girl said that I hit her. Like, okay,

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but is that supposed to be a spoof?

38:53

No, it's a drama. It's really that's why it's so bad. But that's like you you can't have your character talking about what they are thinking. That's just not how. That's that. That's the worst thing to do. Yeah. Right. Internal conflict. Try and do it without. Like it's the classic show, don't tell. You want you want an audience to understand that this character is so nervous that they know if they say one wrong thing, that bullet is going to go through their head, or whatever. They're not going to say to themselves. They're going to. They're not going to say out loud. Oh my gosh, I have the highest anxiety I've had in my life. I don't know how I'm going to do this. They're going to. You're going to show them peeing their pants. Done. We now know what's going on inside, right? It's about using the visuals. A movie script is a you know a script is a blueprint for a movie, right? It's not a literary document. To it is because someone has to read it, but it's designed to become something else. It's the start. So using visuals as much as possible, that's that's what can show someone what. You're dealing with. We had an example. Go back and look from last last episode. We talked about the the blank space. We read off a scene of a woman and a suitcase at the door. Not a word was spoken, but internally, it gave us so much of what she was dealing with. So visually, try and do it without a single word spoken. That's that's the art of screenwriting. That that's makes a director read your script and think, I have to make this tomorrow. I can see exactly how this is going to happen. That's probably the best thing you can do.

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Great advice.

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Good advice. Thanks.

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I think I'm going to go and write a script now.

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You know what advice though I really love that you did today was that that metaphor of clutter of cleaning and don't make your script cluttered with typo? I really like that.

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Yeah,

40:48

that was really smart. Thank you. See, I can't exist. She gives me all I need, so all the good stuff, including

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the idea of this, including the

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notes. She wrote these notes. Look, you know how I know she wrote on this? No typo. If it was mine, there'd be 17. She

41:03

didn't write all of this, but sorry, guys. I know I kind of.

41:07

That's it. That's the episode. So be good to your supporting characters. Give those secondary characters a reason for being there. Make them stand out. Yes, and that's what sticks with people a lot.

41:18

And someone says, "Who do you love the most? Love yourself first.

41:24

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41:44

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41:46

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