

Ep #80: Dramatic Irony and How To Use It

0:00

On this episode, we're talking all about dramatic irony.

0:04

Yes, and how you can use it and how you should not use it.

0:07

So listen in.

0:11

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

0:24

Hi, everybody. This is Desiree, and this is my host Scott.

0:30

Scott hoster.

0:32

Hoster guest. I don't know. Are you my guest today? I guess I'm your guest today. Hi. Very

0:37

nice to meet you.

0:38

Nice to meet you. Shake, shake,

0:40

shake. Shake, shake, shake, shake. This is the Script Reader Pro Podcast. I am your host.

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Yes, and I am the guy who talks about screenwriting.

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He's the one that doesn't shut up.

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Yep, talk and talk and talk.

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Talk, talk, talk, talk.

0:52

Yes.

0:53

Hi, Scott.

0:53

Hey, how you doing?

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Good. Today we are talking about dramatic irony. Isn't that ironic? Don't you think? Yeah, I really do think it's like rain.

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Yes, on your wedding day, it is

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like a free ride.

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You've already paid.

1:08

Yeah,

1:08

yeah, some good advice. Just

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can't take.

1:11

Just didn't take.

1:12

Yeah,

1:13

who would have thought? It figured. Anyways, we're talking about dramatic irony today in screenwriting.

1:18

For those of you from the '90s, you would know what that is.

1:22

Yes, if you don't, then you're you suck too. Yeah,

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if you don't know what that is, you suck.

1:27

Yes, but we're talking about dramatic irony in movies, TV shows. Got lots of examples to kind of help you to understand what great tool it is to use in your writing. So that's what we're talking about today.

1:39

Your outfit is very interesting today.

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Why is that? I have blue jeans on. Yeah, I have a gray shirt and I have a blue hat.

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And you have a orangish colored shirt.

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Where the

1:51

hat with the with? I don't have

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an orange colored shirt on.

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It doesn't go, dude.

1:57

Why?

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As your sister would say, the fit is just not good.

2:02

Fit, it

2:03

ain't good.

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It ain't good. Okay, I thought it was good, but that's fine. You look like nobody can look as good as you all the time.

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True story. Let's just be real. But listen, you look like a quilt.

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Thanks. I look like a quilt. Wow, full of compliments today. She is. Hey, listen! I

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was just out for lunch, as you know.

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Yes,

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I think we have to share this little clip here with Chandra.

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Oh, sure.

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I think she'll love this.

2:29

Okay,

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I love this for

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us.

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So cute.

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Period! Exclamation.

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Anyway, we're so glad that you guys have joined us today. Yeah,

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we're gonna. If you haven't been here before, we are talking about screenwriting. I'm gonna give you some tips and tricks on a certain specific subject. We talk about kind of everything that comes up. Desiree's always got some great examples. She is here to make fun of me, make sure I stay on point. Yeah, like his shirt, you guys. Let's podcast look good.

2:56

Listen, make him look good because obviously I didn't pre-approve this outfit. This outfit has not been

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pre-approved for TV. Oh gosh, it would be one of these episodes. It sure

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is going to be one of these episodes.

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Well, how do we usually start an episode?

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We usually start an episode by talking about what we've seen lately. Listen,

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yes, yes,

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I remember what this one is.

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You saw the title and you know it.

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I do actually for once in my lifetime,

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probably because we watched it like three days ago.

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Maybe I just actually talked to my dad because he likes watching movies too. But he said I haven't been really into watching movies lately. I recommended this movie. It's a gooder.

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Yep, it is real gooder. It's called Tuner, and we caught it on Netflix. Was it on Netflix or Prime? It was on Netflix, starring Leo Goodall. Amazing. Yes, Leo. Do

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you know him? I know him well. You know

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him from The White Lotus and from One Day. And anyways, he's in it. He's great. He's always great. Just so natural. And Dustin Hoffman puts a little part. It's about a piano tuner who has a basically he's allergic to sound. He has this condition where he everything is just hyper hyper sensitive in his ears, and he turns into safe cracking. And it was just really good show, really great character work. You know, everything worked well in the writing, in the character, in the overall story. Lots of surprises, things you didn't see coming. Although I saw the main big detail coming, I knew what it was going to be, which sucked for me because then I I could see it come the whole way. So

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you usually know what

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a little too in my face.

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Usually know what's coming.

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Not always that one though. I was like, okay, well I know where that's going to turn out, and then it did. Kind of

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wrecked it for you a little. Yeah,

4:34

yeah. Plus, yeah, I won't give anything away. But anyways, it was really good. Recommend it for sure. So

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I would also recommend that as well.

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Good. All right. That's two double recommends.

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Two thumbs up.

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Two thumbs up. Check it

4:47

out. Who used to do the thumbs

4:48

up? Siskel and Ebert.

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Where are they?

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Well, Siskel died.

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Oh, sorry, Siskel.

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I think Ebert's still alive. He still does reviews. I think. Huh. Anyways,

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haven't heard those. Though they were being. In the 90s,

5:00

they were yeah. It's going to be the theme today: the end all and be all. Yeah, whatever they said was good or not good, it was usually made a difference.

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Speaking of the 90s,

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yes,

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I went shopping today for some kids' toys.

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Purchases in the 90s is that's why.

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No, but I well, kind of brought me back to the 90s. My favorite, one of my favorite things in the 90s was Cap was not Cabbage Patch Kids. Yes, I like Cabbage Patch Kids too. Was Care Bears?

5:31

Oh yeah,

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and they had these little Care Bears.

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Aw, I love the Care Bears. Every day, like every day at lunch, I go home, and the Care Bears was always on. Care Bears and friends.

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Care Bear Countdown 54321

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Lionheart he was my favorite yeah Braveheart the Lion yeah

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this one was Sunshine Bear and then the other one was the lucky the lucky

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one oh yeah

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I I was Shamrock Bear I don't remember but I was hoping for Grumpy Bear

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Oh

5:56

no such luck such luck anyway that was that was a side note that had nothing to do with

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it. Hey, 90s. Hey, the nine. Yeah, it had to do with the 90s. Bring back the 90s. Yeah. Are we going to be

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talking about any of the 90s today?

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There, I think there's a couple examples of movies or TV shows from the 90s, so you never know. So let's get

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in.

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Let's get in. So today we're talking about dramatic irony. Desiree, do you know what dramatic irony Means,

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isn't it ironic?

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No. Do you know what dramatic irony? I'm like, do you want to read over the notes before the show? She's like, she's like, no, I don't want to. Dramatic irony. You're not going to find it on there. So you know, is that a no? That's a no. So dramatic irony is essentially meaning that the audience has something more than the than the characters do. So the characters know there's a guy in the closet, and the character doesn't. So it's ironic because we know don't go in the closet. There's danger. You know before the character. That's the essential, easy way of explaining dramatic irony. Or there's something the audience knows that the two characters don't, or one character knows something, the other doesn't, but we know it too. Things like that, right?

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Did you know that that's basically dramatic irony? Then isn't every single? Why are you laughing?

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I thought you were gonna say so. Basically, that's the definition of dramatic irony because you didn't know the definition. So I thought that's what you're gonna say.

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Not that predictable. So

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dramatic irony is hello what every what

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it's every single true crime show that I basically watch

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all your documentaries oh yeah because they're telling you what what happened right

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it's dramatic and it's irony

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so so the the kind of the the idea that you want to think about what you're kind of using as you as you're if you're writing something and you want to make use of dramatic irony, knowing a secret can sometimes make a story more interesting. Okay, true story. If you see our cat walking around behind me, she's trying to get on the podcast, so don't mind her. I don't think

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she wants to be interviewed today. She's kind of a bag.

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I don't think she does. Yeah. So, so suspense. A lot of people think that suspense is killed if you use dramatic ironing, right? Because suspense is usually it's all about keeping information from the audience, right? They hang on, they wait, they want to know what's going going on because they don't have the information. Like in a a knives out kind of movie, right? Where it's like the the audience doesn't get let in on stuff, so it keeps the suspense high. But when you're using dramatic irony, it still keeps it suspenseful because you get to play along, right? We talked about audience participation in the previous podcast. It allows you to play along. It allows the audience to really get involved to be like, no, don't open that door.

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You know what I think it is? I think it allows the audience to feel a sense of control and power.

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That's true. You

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know they have a, they almost have a sense of control. Like I, I know what control is all about.

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Do you?

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I do. I like to control things, but I, I think that that then allows them to feel like they're participating more in the actual.

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Yeah, and they're

8:59

movie

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exactly, and they're waiting for the characters to catch up, right? Because you want to, you want them to figure it out. You want them to know it, but you have to be careful about it. You can't just blatantly throw it out there. What it does is it changes the question that an audience is wondering what is going to happen. It changes it to when will they find out what's going to happen, right? It's all about making sure your characters are smart enough to get there. So a lot of times I'll read a script and there's the dramatic irony, so the audience gets to know who the killer is, right? But the the the the cop doesn't, and then the cop can't figure it out when when they should, right? So so sometimes it's like, okay, well, I can't even believe in this character because they should have figured it out. They should have, yeah, right. Or they figured out without any work. It's just given to them. Yeah, it's convenient, and it's like, okay, well, I knew that it was a killer, so that was no fun because you just guessed it, right? So you have to be very careful with it. And so there's a bunch of different kind of like mechanisms you can use. A bunch of different tools, yeah, tools depending on the genre or the medium that you're using. So we're just going to go through a bunch of examples to better illustrate exactly how it can be executed. Okay. Okay. So first of all, so does have you ever watched a movie or TV show when you wanted to just like yell at the character because you you know what's coming because we've been showing what's what's coming?

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I want to yell at you all the time.

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Well, that wasn't my question.

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But yes,

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yes,

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I do. There's some some. I obviously I can't list any because I suck at remembering anything. But there are so many times when I'm like, oh, come on already! And we've had to pause. I can't think of anything offhand. Can you think of any?

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No, not really. Where you're just like,

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ah, it's more so. I think to me, get to the point already.

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Yeah, is

10:48

what

10:48

it is. Yeah, yeah. That that that that and that that is sometimes it, right? And that's the part of is keeping. It's hard to keep the suspense when we're just like, okay, enough already. You should have figured out. Yeah, like as we did, right? Or like, let's get to this.

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Let's get to the scare where the person jumps out from behind the door, kind of thing. Yeah, like you've you've given us the little bit of scares and excitement, and now let's get to the point. Like, carry on. Yeah, yeah.

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Yeah, exactly. Um, and and that's I mean that's that audience participation thing, right? But it all comes back to so Alfred Hitchcock, way way back in the 30s or 40s, not the 90s.

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No,

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he he he basically illustrated what a MacGuffin is, and and MacGuffin is basically just something that a tool, something that's used in the story that really doesn't have anything to do with the story, but it's there just to kind of be like a placeholder or a marker, not to

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like draw attention to that instead of what the actual thing is.

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Yeah, like it has nothing to do with the scene. So, like his example is, you have a couple sitting at a table and they're having a conversation and they're out for dinner. And there's a suitcase under the table, and the audience knows that that suitcase has a bomb in it.

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Money.

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What?

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I want it to have money.

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No, but the audience knows there's a bomb in this.

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Okay, I guess that would be more exciting. The scene

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isn't about the bomb. The scene is about the people at the table. But this, the fact that we know there's a bomb under the table,

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it adds suspense,

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right? It

12:04

tricks you to think, oh, what is the bomb going to have to do with this,

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right?

12:08

But then the bomb ends up not having anything to do with it.

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No, that that. Well, then

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what's the point?

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That's the whole thing. It's there. It's an it's a mechanism to add something to the scene, but it's not about the thing, right? And so that that was something that Alfred Hitchcock always put in his movies. So the difference between suspense and surprise is is what you want to keep in mind with dramatic irony. So you got two people sitting at a table, right? So the first version would be that a bomb suddenly explodes. So you don't see the suitcase. You never know what's there. You see a couple sit down at the table. They're having a conversation, and then boom, bomb goes off, right? You're surprised,

12:42

yeah,

12:42

for a moment. Once it's over, it's over, and you move on. Okay. The other version is you have the audience see that there is a bomb in that suitcase, and the people come up to the table. Maybe it was put there, and someone else was supposed to sit at the table. Suddenly, they're at the table.

12:56

It doesn't go off,

12:57

right? And but it doesn't go off. But we are then pulled into that, but we're

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pulled into in either sense.

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Yes, but but but it lasts longer. The second example of the second

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option would sit with the viewer longer than it would be because it's so quick, right? It's a bomb done. Now there's the aftermath of the bomb.

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Yeah, so that's just an illustration to show that letting the audience in on something a little bit allows them to have more dread, have more worry, have more fear, have more interest. Right. A lot of the time, it can help the audience attach more to what's going on.

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Right.

13:33

Right.

13:33

Yeah.

13:34

So, so that's the difference between suspense and surprise. The first one creates surprise. The second one get a little bit more info. It gives us that that sense of suspense, right? So same outcome, right? And then the and then the bomb goes off two and a half minutes later. It goes off

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anyway.

13:47

Yeah, but but but it but the whole time we're in that scene, we're completely enthralled because we we don't we keep

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looking at the people and then at the bomb. Yeah, are they going to realize when is that going to go off? At what point? Yeah,

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exactly. So so the audience needs enough to understand what's at stake in the scene, right? But showing the danger ahead of time doesn't actually spoil. A lot of people are like, "Well, that'll just spoil it. That'll give it away. What's the point?" Well, no, that's the point. Is it adds tension? It adds adds conflict. But

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I think I think a nice mix of both is good.

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Definitely, you don't want to give every single thing away, and you also don't

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want to have every single thing being suspenseful because then it just gets to be like too repetitive,

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right? And if it's like a romantic comedy, well, then you're not looking for suspense, right? You're looking for something else. So it's not always suspense. Hey, when I

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was shopping today, Maurice's has a Hallmark movie shirt,

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and what does it say on it?

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I it came up in my thoughts because romantic comedy. This is my hallmark Christmas sweater. Oh,

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nice! I can't wait. Those are out soon. I always love those.

14:48

Anyway, that made me think of okay romantic romantic comedy. Okay, not much, but there isn't much surprise in a romantic comedy.

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No, but there

14:56

suspense.

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I mean, no, it's not. No, but it's. Dramatic iron, a dramatic irony, and I have some examples, but it's basically like, um, it's basically like you know, so the audience gets to know that this person actually has a partner. This person, this guy has a girlfriend, but the girl doesn't know that he has a girlfriend, right? So then we're just like, well, when is he going to break up with his girlfriend, and when is she going to find out that he has a girlfriend? That creates that intention, right? It gets us intrigued. It's not about the fear, the worry. It's about oh gosh, like what complications are going to arise, right?

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So, are we wanting? We are wanting like the the the reason we're going over all of this

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is

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for the writers out there to know how to put a dramatic irony in, or when, or what?

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Yeah, how and when. So the big tip, the kind of big thing to keep in mind is it's not, it's not only about what the audience knows. It's when the writer wants to let them know it, right? So it's always given a little bit of a breadcrumb, a little bit of a breadcrumb. So you don't want to give it all away. And sometimes you you have you give the audience something only for that to really kind of be misdirection because you want them to think a certain thing. So then when the reveal comes, they're just as blindsided as everyone else. Right. We're gonna go through some examples. So we're gonna start with some movie examples and then some TV examples. Sure. So first you have yes, you read the example and I will talk about it.

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Well, that's what I was trying to do, but once again, you interrupt and you don't like me to talk, and I like to be in control. That might have been very dramatic or surprising for you guys to understand, but suspenseful,

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no,

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or surprising that I like to be the boss.

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Sure,

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okay, good answer. First one is from 1975, the year Scott was born.

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Oh, right! Wow, that means very, very old. Yes,

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and it's the movie Jaws.

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Yes, so a lot of dramatic irony in this one, right? Because the audience knows that there's a shark in the water because we see it. The person swimming doesn't, right? We know that the shark is killing people. The people in the water don't right. They enter the water. They don't know there's danger. There's a lot of underwater sharks, shots, sharks. Swallow your tea. Don't spit it out. There would be a lot of underwater sharks in it, and if a shark was in the water, though, that that has to stay in. Of course, it'll stay in sharks. Oh, that was good. Now that's all you're gonna think of the whole rest of the time. You're talking about Jaws, right? So because we know the shark is there, we know how dangerous it is. All the meetings, all the side scenes, all of the you know the the the characters kind of going out getting the boat knowing what not knowing what they're up against the audience knows so that whole movie is about

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yes you want to know what the takeaway is

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yes

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establishing a danger early on makes ordinary behavior suspenseful

17:57

yeah exactly that's exactly it so I'm so

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smart

18:00

opening shot of that is the shark and the music in the water. It is same with the Jurassic Park. The original Jurassic Park, they're moving these cages. We don't know what's in them. There's something big. Thing door flies open. Guy gets sucked and eaten.

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Get

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it immediately. We're like, we understand. So we are seeing that there's something. We

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get it, but we're tired of hearing about Jurassic Park. So

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next

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one, Jurassic Park really needs to be rested for the next. This is episode 80. Jurassic

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period is over. No,

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I would like until episode 100. Okay. No more mention of the Lost Boys. Jurassic Park. I rarely talk about the Lost Boys. Back to the Future. The Goonies. Braveheart. What else? I don't know. Next movie. Anyways, guys, I'm trying to help you out here because I'm kind of getting tired of hearing the same same stories about the same movies. So that's you're on. I always have news stories about the until the episode 100. Please hold him to that. Next one is the Departed. Yeah. Do you remember the Departed from 2006?

19:02

You don't remember it?

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No, I do not. So, what is it about?

19:04

It's a it's about two undercover guys who are infiltrating the mob. Okay, so the audience knows that they're both undercover officers, but no, neither the the two guys don't. Nobody in the situation knows. So we always know as one guy, we know what the one guy's trying to do. We know what the other guy's trying to do. They don't both know what's going on. It just really becomes compelling, right? So sounds

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compelling. Characters

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are on two opposing sides, and they have to figure out who they can trust and who they can't. Sounds like my

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life.

19:33

Okay, everything gets a lot more tense and a lot more the the stakes are higher, the drama is higher because the the deeper they go, the more dangerous it is. Because you never know which guy's going to to be the one to win. So really great. And then the yeah, really great way of he's

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really selling it right now, isn't he?

19:52

Sorry, it's just a great movie. It's hard to explain because it's complicated, but it's a great movie.

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Just so you know, it's great. Yeah, it is. Okay, so. Key takeaway on that one, you guys, is dramatic irony becomes especially effective when multiple characters hold secrets, also known as shards.

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But it adds the extra level of dramatic irony because we have two different pieces of information that nobody has. So it's a great example of that. Next one.

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Next one. Parasite from 2019.

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You remember this movie?

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Negatory.

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What? It's a foreign film, and it's about a rich family. Yes, I

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do. Family

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moves in, and yeah, the the people are the guys living in the basement.

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In a different spot, though, not the basement. Basement in a hidden

20:36

yeah

20:37

basement basement. Yeah.

20:38

So great. This was really good. One best picture that you're so great. Such a great show. You can just see the window.

20:44

You can see. You can just picture the window and the shot of people walking by that window.

20:49

And I always picture the the scene where they show the guy coming up the stairs, and the kid sees him, and he looks like a like a ghost. Like it's so good. Anyways, the audience discovers the hidden basement, and we know what this poor family is doing. We don't get all of it. They do a really good job of just giving us little tidbits at a time, right? But we, the whole play on it is that this wealthy family who thinks their whole life is controlled and secure has a family living in their basement. So you know, this all those ordinary household scenes, like of the people walking through the window, they just gain an additional layer of danger.

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Right, danger, danger. So,

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what's the takeaway from that one?

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Takeaway is the location and proximity can amplify dramatic irony.

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Yeah. So, I mean, just like any other show that has like people living in attic or living in the walls or something like that, the closer.

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Yeah, the closer the people, because you're like, oh, they're right there. How would you not know that they're there?

21:42

Yeah, yeah. You know, but we

21:44

see it, and then we're just like, come on, just find them already.

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Yeah, it's just like when anyone, like, if a protagonist is like on the run or something, and they're like hiding somewhere, and the bad guys are right there, you're just like, you know, come on, come on, like don't, don't give yourself away. We know you're there. Yeah,

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which was maybe we saw not too long ago with that guy who we thought it was the wife that was crazy, but it was actually the husband that was crazy, and then locked her upstairs. Oh yeah, the

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housemaid. Holy

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cow, that was

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that was a twisty one.

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That was a twisty one, and that kind of falls under the dramatic irony. Yeah, but they played with

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it because they made us think it was one way. To us was was the way we said, but it was

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a different way.

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Yeah, really good, kind

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of brilliant.

22:23

Yeah, I

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hope I didn't ruin that for someone.

22:25

Doesn't matter.

22:26

Okay, I want to skip this one because I hate the show. The

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Truman Show,

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I hate it.

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But it's a perfect example because he's living in a TV show and he doesn't know it. So every single thing he does, the audience knows it's a TV show. The audience is wanting him to figure it out. The audience is understanding his frustration. That's a character I always wanted to be like. You need, you know, like reach out and grab him. Be like, wake up. You need control your life. But the takeaway on that one is that dramatic irony can create empathy. Like you had said, well, it's not always suspense. It can create that empathy because we start to really, really feel for him as a character.

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Yeah, you're invested, except

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for you because you hated it. I didn't like it. You're the anomaly in that

23:01

one. No, right now you

23:02

had zero empathy. Now, if you watched it, you probably would have it because you're very empathetic now.

23:06

No, because I'm reading a book right now, and it's one of those books where she's going back a day at a time, and I just returned it to the library

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because it's too confusing.

23:19

No,

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you finished it?

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No, it's not confusing at all.

23:22

Oh, why'd you return it?

23:23

Because that cannot happen. Oh, you cannot have something bad happen and then go back a day before and then realize, oh, maybe I can fix things and then go back two days and then go back three days and let's go back four days.

23:37

Fair enough. But the Truman Show wasn't this Truman Show was could happen?

23:41

No, he can't.

23:41

He grew up as a kid believing he was in his TV world. There's nothing that could tell him he wasn't. It wasn't sci-fi. It was just an experiment. It

23:48

was a stupid, stupid.

23:51

Okay, that was our second argument ever was about that movie.

23:54

Yeah, and Glenn Gary, Glenn Ross. That was

23:56

our first.

23:56

Hated

23:57

it. All right, next one is The

23:59

Lion King from 1994. Holy cow, that dates

24:02

us. Yeah, that's

24:03

32 years ago.

24:04

That's crazy.

24:04

So, what about that one?

24:07

Something about scar.

24:09

It's only 22, 28. Oh yeah, 30. Yeah.

24:13

What are you doing?

24:14

22 years ago, not 30.

24:16

No, Scott, it's. Oh yeah,

24:17

wow, that's crazy. Scott can't do math. No, it just doesn't seem that long ago.

24:21

Why are you still focused on that? Let's,

24:23

anyways. Come on, we're

24:24

trying to do a podcast here. The audience is listening. Okay,

24:27

so the dramatic irony here is that the audience knows Scar is bad. Killed Mufasa. He's a jerk. What's the guys? What's what's the kid's name? I don't know. Simba and Simba believes that it was his fault. That's the whole thing. So we know, no, Simba wasn't you. Stop blaming yourself, right? So what's the takeaway on that? Because we get to know who the killer is and what that guilt is really about.

24:50

Okay, watching a character suffer because of a lie can create powerful emotional investment.

24:56

Yeah, we're always we're all the whole movie. You're like like Simba, you got to get back home. Got to learn the truth. You got to take over the pride, right? That's why it works so well because everyone is rooting for him because we know how bad Scar is, right? Next one,

25:07

mrs. Doubtfire. Yeah, 93. Anyone

25:10

doesn't see mrs. Doubtfire? It's about a guy who wants to be close to his kids, so he puts on a disguise as this old nanny so he can be around his kids.

25:17

By the way, he was really ugly.

25:18

Yeah, yeah. Wow, he's an old woman. Is Robin Williams is an old woman, but the audience we know right off the start that. But

25:24

no, now that you look back at it, you're like, hey, come on, like that. It goes back again to the time when you're like, hey, in the '90s that was believable and really cool, and now it's just like, come on, how do the kids not know that that's their dad?

25:38

Yeah, I know.

25:39

You know,

25:39

I know, I know, but he did a good job. But the the whole thing is that the audience knows that he is dressing as his nanny to be with his kids.

25:45

Gotcha, Kate. The takeaway is that the knowledge of disguise creates very funny situations. Yeah, it does. It does

25:53

because we get the insight of the fact that he's telling his kids to do something because they're his kids, and then the kids are like, "That's a really weird thing," and so it, and then he has to fix it up. So really funny.

26:02

Do we want to go onto TV?

26:03

Yeah. So those are all the examples of television or of movies. So yeah. So each. So that's an example to show how dramatic irony can create different situations, different emotion sets, different mechanisms. Right. Not just suspense and fear, but but empathy and and you know, in excitement and all those kind of things, and comedy. So it's always about just letting the audience play along. So television examples:

26:29

we have a show that Scott has never mentioned before, ever on this podcast. That he mentions never ever.

26:40

I've mentioned it a few times.

26:41

Yeah, a few times. Breaking Bad

26:43

because it's one of the greatest examples of characters. It's one of the best television. Are you are you done yet?

26:54

Okay, so the audience knows that Walter White is making meth right from the go. So the the whole thing is he's

27:00

making what? Meth. You didn't say that. I

27:03

said he's making meth right from the go.

27:04

Your words all came into one syllable, one word,

27:08

one word. Okay. Well, I'll listen to that back after and see if that's true. But he's making meth from the first episode. We know this. His wife doesn't know. His kid doesn't know. His brother-in-law is from the DEA or FBI, and he's hunting him. He doesn't know, so that that's the fun of the whole show. He's waiting for him to be found out. When is it going to be that he's found out? So it it goes and goes and goes because there's he just gets deeper and deeper and deeper. So what's the takeaway on something like that?

27:36

The takeaway is that a secret can provide tension across multiple seasons. Yeah,

27:42

the only reason that show works is because no one knows that he

27:46

is a dealer.

27:46

Yeah, that he I can't remember his name.

27:49

Walter.

27:50

No, he had a

27:51

Jesse

27:51

moniker. No, he was known as

27:54

James Paul. Anyways, no

27:57

one knows it's him. And so, if if anyone knew off the start, then there'd be no point for the show. His family doesn't know. We're waiting and waiting and waiting. Right? It it just keeps keeps us coming back every week. Is he going to get found out this week? Is he going to get found out that week? So it's a bit really deep secret. Well, that's also can really span a long time.

28:13

And also within the episode, like just later on in the episodes, in the seasons, it gets to be more suspenseful. Each episode is just like more suspense, more you know, like it's not yeah, like it was where it kind of flowed earlier on.

28:29

Yeah, because he had one secret at the start, but then he had then he becomes a bigger lie. Every single thing, every episode, something more was added that he had to keep

28:36

exactly

28:37

control.

28:38

Same thing. It was the exact same thing with this next TV show, Dexter. Dexter is very similar. I sent you a Facebook thing yesterday.

28:48

Yeah.

28:48

Did you see it?

28:49

Yeah.

28:50

With the Lego.

28:51

Yeah, yeah.

28:51

There was some kind of Lego. It was some kind of box with the slides of all

28:55

the yeah blood. Yeah, the blood box. Yeah. Thought that was brilliant. Cute out of

28:59

Lego.

29:00

Yeah. Um. But yeah, it's it's essentially the same formula, right? We know Dexter is a serial killer from the first episode. That series is all about watching. It's more about you know who's the who's the the victim of the week, right? Who's he going to kill this week? How's he going to do it? Is he going to get found out? So it's more of like a formula, like like more of like a procedural. Here's the case he's doing every week.

29:20

That one was so interesting for me because I don't know about you guys, but for me personally, I rooted for Dexter the whole time. Everybody

29:28

does, right? Because he had a code; he was only killing bad. He

29:31

was killing, yeah. And it's like you're if he's killing bad people, you're okay with it. But if he's killing other people, then oh no, I have a problem with that.

29:39

Yeah.

29:39

But if you're going to kill the bad people of the population. Yeah, and there is okay,

29:43

and it's the same formula, but but in Dexter, you know, compared to Breaking Bad, Dexter's part of the cops. Like he's not a cop, but he's he's like there at every investigation, and they have no idea that he's collecting what he needs to do his kill. So that's what makes it fun. Can we just talk

29:59

to you about how amazing? His sister in the show is oh

30:02

Deb! Holy she's she's so great, and

30:05

I haven't seen her recently, but she is such an amazing actress. So

30:08

filthy mouth in that show, she was so good. So

30:10

the takeaway of that one is that dramatic irony can make audience complicit in the protagonist's deception.

30:18

It's true.

30:19

It's true. It's true. What's

30:20

the next one? I guess we

30:21

have the Americans. I never saw this. Yeah, did I ever

30:24

seen this? No, it's it's like a spy. It's like a spy movie. But basically, the audience knows that the two main characters right at the start they're Soviet spies, and so they are acting as Americans. They're Soviet spies. We know the neighbor works for the FBI. So all these friendly friendly conversations are really tense because we know that they are collecting secrets. They have secret identities, so that's kind of like puts you deeper in. You know, the whole reason for the show is the overall secret that these these are these are spies. So the takeaway in a show like that:

30:56

danger can exist beneath completely ordinary social situations.

31:00

Yes, you have like a barbecue in the backyard, and all the families are there, and the kids from the block, and you know in the audience that this guy's at the FBI, and these guys are Soviet spies, and all their basic little conversations they have, they're so loaded in the dialog because there's such rich subtext. Only because we know who everybody really is. If we didn't, it wouldn't be that interesting.

31:20

Yeah, makes sense.

31:21

Yeah,

31:22

this one he was a iffy for me. Was you

31:25

watched the first episode? You're like, no, thanks, soccer.

31:27

No, I watched the whole season. I watched the whole season, and what we're talking about is Ted Lasso.

31:32

I don't think you did.

31:33

I sure did. His family came over.

31:35

Yeah,

31:36

yeah, I got to that part. Yeah,

31:38

but then you bowed out.

31:39

But that was almost the end of season one. Maybe it's starting. Wasn't your? I don't know. It it gets a lot of

31:47

beauty.

31:48

Yes, and lots of shards. No, but it does get a lot of publicity. What a stupid plubility word

31:56

stupid when you say it. No, but

31:57

publicity. Anyways,

32:00

no one says it like that.

32:04

Lots of people love this. Shut up! Trying to get through this. Yes, but the reason,

32:09

so the dramatic irony in that one is that is that Ted Lasso. He's just such a happy-go-lucky fun guy. He thinks he's been hired to turn this football team around. But the truth is, and we learn it

right off the start, is that Rebecca, the the owner of the team, new owner, she's hired him specifically because she thinks he will fail and the team will lose because she wants to stick it to her ex husband.

32:28

And we also learn that he's a very good maker of toffee.

32:32

No cookies, biscuits,

32:35

biscuits. Yes.

32:36

See.

32:37

Yes.

32:38

I actually watched it. I might not have gotten the baked goods correct, but I did watch it.

32:43

Yeah. Um. So next one. Just wait. the The takeaway in that one.

32:47

Yes.

32:48

Right. Because the the whole point of it is that because he's so nice and he's so kind that she starts to feel bad about what she's doing. So the takeaway there.

32:55

Yes.

32:55

Is that the dramatic irony can support character transformations, right, and make viewers anticipate it and hope you hope that she decides she decides to want him to be successful and and put things in place to be successful because and then that's fun for the audience because we know that he just wants to be successful because of his own personal stuff with his family and all these kind of things so just adds extra layers in a really great way that again keeps the audience involved.

33:22

Yeah, same thing with that guy that was in the locker room. I can just picture that really jock guy, the one that is just a jerk. Yeah, and he tries he tries to change change his outlook on life and stuff. Did I? Am I correct? Yep, I watched it. Yeah. Next

33:43

one. Uh, yeah. Next one. You. You. Me.

33:46

Did we finish this one?

33:48

We saw. We watched the first three seasons.

33:50

More than three. I could have. No, we there was.

33:52

We didn't see the fourth one because I know you know why we didn't see the fourth one because we got to the end of the third. Well, it

33:59

was the one where he was locked in.

34:01

No. Yeah, we went through that one, which

34:03

was what is that third? That was the

34:04

third, and then it ended. And then he was like living in a new house, and he looked through his fence, and there was another girl there, and and was like, "Oh, this will now be his new love interest." And now we're looking, and you were like, "Okay, that's it, I'm out." Like first once, okay, twice, fine. First time, okay, fourth time, no, I don't believe it. Do you guys agree with me?

34:22

Do you guys agree with me or not, Scott? Well, we

34:24

didn't watch it.

34:24

No, but what he was like,

34:26

how like how

34:27

many times can he kind of does the same

34:29

thing each time? Right, it's good, but it's like if he's just gonna like do the same thing, how is that interesting again? Yeah,

34:35

let us know if it's good because I, anyways,

34:37

the dramatic irony there, right? Um, it's a voiceover. It's got a voiceover. So Joe plays himself as a certain kind of person. Yeah, and in his head, he's basically talking about all the ways he wants to kill this person. So the audience knows that he's a killer. He's going to kill them, and then how is he going to get away with it? Right.

34:54

And the takeaway is that character perspective can transform the meeting of familiar romantic scenes. Yeah,

34:59

because. Again, we're like no, we turn around, get away from him, get away from him. But at the same time, it's fun because he's trying to be good. He's trying not to be bad. He's trying not to kill this person, but it just ends up happening. Yeah, yeah. So, last one, Game of Thrones. I know you haven't watched it, but the audience is always learning important information about different characters before the different characters, the other characters know. So we learn, like, oh my gosh, this person is actually is is really this is who they're related to, and this is who they are. And we always learn that, but we learn it before the character, like Jon Snow. The audience gets to know who his, you know, who his bloodline connects to before he ever does. Right. So he makes specific decisions, not understanding who he really is. So there, the dramatic irony can reshape how audiences understand power dynamics and relationships. You know, legacy for those kind of shows that are really kind of built about kind of family hierarchies, shows like Succession, things like that, and those big shows like Game of Thrones, Lord of the Rings, the the bigger type of stories, they don't need it as much. But when you put small ones in, again, it pulls the audience in, gets them excited because they learn something that the other characters don't know. So it's all about bringing the bring the audience in and letting them have some fun too. Okay, so sounds good. Okay, so one last example here to allow you to see, and this is something you should do: do an exercise with your with your scene. So here's here's a romantic comedy situation. You have a a man and a woman who are together, and this man is going to propose to her, and she is about to tell him that she took a job across the country. Okay, so that's the situation, and they're coming to a dinner together where he's going to

propose. She's going to tell him about the trip. Three options here. Well, four. No dramatic irony. No one knows anything. But three options for dramatic irony. You can have the audience know that he's going to propose to her, but we don't know about the fact that she took this job. Okay, so we know one thing that she doesn't. So that's exciting,

37:00

right? The

37:01

other way is we don't know he's going to propose. We know that she's coming to the dinner to tell him that they're going to have to break up. She's moving away. So again, that puts us on her side. The other option is

37:11

we know everything that we

37:11

know everything. So with so we know that he's going to propose. She's going to go away. It's going to be a mess. What's the most interesting? That's what you want to ask yourself for you what's the most interesting in that scenario?

37:23

That neither know what the other is going to say.

37:27

Well, neither knows.

37:29

No, I'm saying the

37:30

audience, like neither of them. Sorry,

37:31

the audience itself

37:33

doesn't know what either is going to say. What doesn't know he's proposing and doesn't know she's going away.

37:37

No, no, not that. I'm saying that we know as the audience that he's going to propose and she's going to be going away. Both.

37:46

You find that's the most intriguing.

37:47

I sure do.

37:48

See, for me, I would only want to know one. If I know that he's proposing and she's going away, I already know it's going to end.

37:54

No, you don't. You don't know what's going to happen. Maybe he's going to propose and then he's going to move away with her.

37:58

I know, but I'm saying like that takes all the surprise out of that for me. So I know he's proposing. Yeah, it creates like, oh my gosh, this is gonna suck. Yeah. But if I know if I don't know she's taking a job and he's gonna propose, I'm excited about him proposing. Then when she says I actually can't because I have to move to Australia or whatever, then it's like it's devastating for me, right? If I knew already, it's not. No, yeah, for me it is anyway.

38:20

For me, then I'm like trying to figure out in my brain. Okay, how's this going to work? I'm already thinking of it before it even happens. How's this going to work? Because he's going to be proposing and she's going to be moving away. Is he going to go with her? Is she going to say no to the proposal? Is he going to be devastated? Is she going to decide not to move? What's going to happen? That to me is more exciting. So I guess it's

38:41

is there a rule? There's no right or wrong. It's whatever what you want your audience to be feeling. How do you want

38:47

your audience to feel? Yeah, and I guess it's dependent on each person.

38:51

Yeah, and it's it's it yeah exactly. As long as as long as you give us what we need to get us in the position you want us in, it's gonna work. Like we talked about a few episodes ago, the voicemail for Isabel.

39:01

Yes,

39:02

pure dramatic irony because we know she's leaving voicemails and this guy's listening to them. Right, so we're waiting for the moment that he find that she finds out.

39:09

But we also know that he, we also know the part about him too. We see both sides.

39:16

No, I yeah, we see the

39:17

perspective from both. But

39:18

we don't. But but the dramatic irony is she doesn't know that he's hearing her voicemails.

39:23

Correct.

39:24

That's that's the whole point of it all. But

39:25

I'm saying it's very similar to the scenario you just gave, where we are getting to see both sides of the the

39:32

yep you know yep,

39:34

and then it comes together

39:35

yeah.

39:35

So for me that that's more exciting

39:38

yeah

39:38

and that follows the same kind of format idea of that. Yeah, I mean that movie

39:42

wouldn't make sense. Like you would, you have to have both sides, or it doesn't make sense. No, it's a different kind of scenario.

39:49

Well, would be more linear for sure.

39:51

Yeah,

39:51

you wouldn't see his.

39:52

There'd be no movie.

39:53

No, you'd see him the point of that he's

39:55

listening to them and that she doesn't know. Yeah. So, anyways, that's the that's dramatic irony. That's the stuff to keep in. So ponder that while we take a quick break and talk about one of our services.

40:05

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40:48

Okay, we have come to this part of the podcast where we answer questions from you and you and you. Yes, that have previously been submitted, and you can submit any questions that you have to hello@scriptreaderpro.com.

41:09

That's me typing.

41:11

You don't type that way. That's so stupid. You should you should see how this guy types. It is kind of dwarfs. I use like this

41:23

type home row.

41:24

He brings his hands really close.

41:26

No, I use my index and my ring and my middle finger and then my thumb on my one hand and my middle finger on the other. That's weird. Yeah,

41:34

and you know what it kind of looks like?

41:35

T Rex

41:36

Jurassic Park.

41:37

Hey, we're not mentioning Jurassic Park again. Exactly.

41:39

I said you can't. I never said I. All right.

41:42

Question number one

41:43

comes from Melissa in Moose Jaw, Canada. Moose Jaw. What kind of name is Moose Jaw? Okay, I've written a screenplay that's loosely based on something that happened in my family, and I've changed the names and quite a few details. Do writers ever worry about upsetting people they know, or do you just have to accept that it's part of telling personal stories?

42:05

I don't care. It depends on who your

42:07

family is. Do you really care about your family? Because if you don't, who cares?

42:11

And if you sell your screenplay and it turns into a movie, and deal

42:15

with it

42:16

then. And do you want millions? Or do you want to disappoint your family? Family gonna be mad if you've made a movie. Your great

42:22

uncle, maybe if it's a

42:23

really really bad story, twice married to your aunt. I don't know bad story.

42:27

I don't know

42:28

about the people, like a bad event or something. Yeah, I don't, I don't know. I mean, you've changed the names unless they're gonna say based on real people and real events. Then I don't think. Yeah, then list the small. It's not like a book where everyone reads it. It's a movie. No one will only know unless it becomes a movie.

42:44

Or, or give yourself a different name as a writer.

42:47

Yeah, it's hard to do that as a screenwriter.

42:49

Why?

42:50

Because you have to like meet people and have a persona and be like listed legally, and it's just it's not as easy to have like a a pen name. Maybe you should find

42:58

something else to do if you're concerned about that.

43:00

Read another story. Maybe

43:02

sorry, Melissa, but that's true. Like you know, yeah. Okay,

43:06

what you want,

43:07

Trevor from Cornwall, England writes in, I've written a thriller that takes place almost entirely in one house with only four characters to make it more attractive to producers. That's what he's done,

43:22

right?

43:23

Oh, because it would be a contained script.

43:25

Likely, what he meant. Yeah,

43:26

someone read it and said it felt more like a stage play than a movie. How do you make a story with such a limited setting feel cinematic?

43:35

Great question. First of all, though, you know what's hilarious?

43:38

What

43:38

is I could tell you were fighting and fighting and fighting yourself to not say it in an accent. I can tell your face. I'm like, she is fighting that so hard right now.

43:49

There were so many, so many words that I was like,

43:52

I know, because then you're pausing. You're like, oh, this one, no, no, this one, no, yeah. Anyways, um, yeah, I yeah, I've read a lot of scripts like that where yeah, it contains two or three people in in a certain place, and and yeah, the reason they probably said that it feels more like a stage play is what we call talking head scenes, right? Where most of the scenes are two or three characters sitting there or standing there, just talking

44:17

back and forth. Nothing happens.

44:18

No

44:19

movement.

44:19

But even if there isn't any movement, like you gotta keep, you gotta keep, you gotta give us something to look at. Interesting. What are they doing with their hands? What are you doing with the body line? Something happening under the table? Is something in the corner? Some you're like, are we doing something? Right. Right. You want to the the ways to make it cinematic is is don't forget there's a camera and that the camera has to have something to see. Have a cus, have a have a have a character get up, walk around, move to another room.

44:44

Were you going to say customer? I

44:46

was going to say customer, yeah. But have have they have something moving, have something visual, have something like play with sound, play with lighting, make us see it, make us feel the the atmosphere. Great example is do you remember the movie Heretic about. The two Mormon girls are going to this guy's house.

45:01

Blueberry pie.

45:02

Blueberry pie. Yeah. So they sat there in that living room for probably like 20 minutes, I'd say. But it kept us before they did anything.

45:09

It kept us though.

45:10

But they just were sitting there. They were sitting there, and he was sitting across from them. But he kept getting up, grabbing something, using visual aids. They had the blueberry, the smell, and the lighting. Right. But you know what else? Very cinematic.

45:21

You know what else added to that?

45:22

What the

45:22

music?

45:24

Yeah, yeah.

45:25

That's a big part of it. Once it comes to be produced, it's that music component because it keeps you like focused.

45:33

But didn't he play music on a record?

45:35

Yeah, it was the whole. It was the whole. And then just that scenario

45:38

thing. Like, like so. So just blueberry

45:41

candle. Wasn't it a yeah? Because he. said just

45:43

make a blueberry pie, and it was a blueberry candle. Yeah, blueberry pie candle. But that's a great example if you want to watch that and just watch that scene alone to see all the things they do to keep it moving, even though they're not.

45:53

Sounds good.

45:54

Yeah.

45:55

Okay. This next one comes from I have to do it.

45:59

Why? Where's this one from?

46:00

Nelly from Texarkana, Arkansas.

46:03

Oh, Texarkana, Texarkana,

46:06

Arkansas, y'all. There's a particular song that I've always imagined playing over the final scene of my screenplay, and I've written the whole ending around it. A friend told me I shouldn't mention specific songs because getting the right could cost a fortune. Is that really something I should be worrying about out the writing stage, or am I overthinking it, y'all?

46:31

Natalie, I apologize for the really bad Arkansas accent. Our best friends are from Arkansas. In Arkansas, my heart with that accent. They've told that it's Desert many times. That that's my heart is in

46:41

Arkansas, and I've been told that it is from a particular area in Arkansas.

46:46

Yes.

46:47

Do you remember?

46:48

No. Do you?

46:49

No. Where is it again?

46:51

Or someone say, "Oh no, you sound you sound like a hillbilly place." No, it's like you sound like you're from this small, this specific. Yes, and they

46:58

at this area, and they said that's where all the hillbillies live.

47:02

That is what they. That is

47:04

what they told me. I am not, you know.

47:07

Okay. Back to Natalie's question.

47:08

Natalie, thank you for asking the question. I think

47:11

your answer. You know, are you? You know, are you overthinking it? Yes. It doesn't matter right now. I mean, the thing is, if it, if it, if it sets the tone, if it has the atmosphere, if if a specific song that character is doing something or dancing or whatever it is. If that song, the energy of that song fits, then put it in there because it'll get in your reader's head and they'll hear it. As long as it's not a really obscure song, sometimes they'll read a script, be like, "This song is playing," and then they start seeing the lyrics. I'm like, "I've never heard of the song. I'm not going to go and waste time to look it up." So as long as it's like a popular song that most people are gonna kind of like understand, you know, you're not gonna have any issues. But yeah, if they want to make it and they want to put that song in, they will. Don't worry about it right now.

47:52

Like Cotton Eye Joe.

47:54

Yeah, exactly. I was thinking like Mariah Carey, All I Want for Christmas. Right? It's just that one. That one. You know, you know, expensive that would be to put in your movie. Um, maybe nothing because she makes like 5 million a year just for playing on the radio. I don't know,

48:06

but you know what? That song deserves to be murdered.

48:09

It's so good though. As soon as you hear those bells, no, you're just like, oh no,

48:14

no, it's overplayed.

48:16

I love

48:17

it. Okay, whatever. Okay, next one comes not because all I

48:22

want for Christmas is you.

48:24

What do you want? Just

48:25

you.

48:26

Nice. Okay. She's my wife, by the way. I don't know if anyone knows that. I'm not hitting on the host. I'm hitting on my wife. I am the host with the most. Caleb, that didn't go well. Okay, Leslie. Question four comes from. Why do you have to do the four? And I have double jointed hands too, so it looks even creepier. Question four comes from Eric in Michigan. Eric says a fairly well known television actor read my screenplay through a mutual friend and told me he'd be interested in playing the lead if it ever got made, is it worth mentioning when I'm approaching the producers? Yeah, ish.

49:06

No, really.

49:08

It

49:08

says a fairly well-known actor. So to me, that says it's not like a movie star actor. So the question is, will does that actor have enough clout or enough like you know big big focus to move the needle on a project, right? To get someone excited, because if a producer is looking to make a show, they already have in mind who they want to work with, right? Or they work with certain people only. You know, I wouldn't say, oh, this person's interested, right? If you have like a signed letter of letter of intent, intent or something from him saying that yes, I will, because like what happens if they go to make it and then he's locked into a schedule for five years? Then he can't be on it. Or what

49:45

if he doesn't remember and he's like, I never said that.

49:48

Or what if the producer thinks I hate that actor? Like you don't want it to hurt. Like you can, you know, really, someone's only gonna be interested if they love the concept. Doesn't matter what else you have on it. If they love the concept, they're like, holy crap, I gotta make this. Then you can say, "Oh, great! I also have this person interested in playing the part." Right? It it's kind of like you know, it really comes down to who

50:07

it is. Okay, sounds good.

50:09

That's it.

50:10

That's it. That's all. What should people

50:12

do if they enjoyed our podcast, Desiree?

50:15

Call me.

50:15

No, don't call my wife. Do not call my wife.

50:21

You can follow

50:23

us. Yes,

50:24

you can give us five star reviews. We love five stars. Please, we

50:29

deserve it. If you were entertained and entertained, of course, we deserve it. You give us some stars.

50:33

Please share our podcast with your friends and other writers.

50:37

Yeah, yeah. If you thought it was good and you learned something, say hey. Listen to this podcast. Yeah.

50:41

Make sure you check out scriptreaderpro.com as well because there's a vast amount of services that are offered,

50:46

and we've got some new services. Yeah, if you haven't been at our site in a while, check it out. We have everything a writer could want, anything basically you want, even if you we don't have it, and you tell us this is what I want, we'll probably be able to put something together for you.

50:56

Unless it's diamonds,

50:57

yeah. If you want diamonds, um, I don't know. Go somewhere else. Yeah, but anyways, we are Script Reader Pro, and we are all about helping writers craft wonder one page at a time.