

BK RESPONSES TO SCENE ANALYSES:

What are the **GENERAL CIRCUMSTANCES**? (“Fuck those NY Publishers”)

STUDENT: They are on a vacation together, but Jack has left Miles hanging the last few nights because he met a woman. Jack wants Miles to get laid. –

BK:

I’m not in love with your choice of the word “vacation” --it’s not wrong but you can refine it ...you want to make the words you choose – even when talking to yourself – as specific and “imperative” as possible. By “imperative” I mean that they command you, directing behavior in a certain trajectory...

What kind of “vacation”? Does the kid of “vacation” it is carry any specific expectations with it?

What are the **IMMEDIATE CIRCUMSTANCES**? (“What should I wear?”)

STUDENT: Miles is deciding what to wear, as he gets ready for a double date Jack has set up. Jack enters from the hotel Jacuzzi.

BK:

“Miles is deciding what to wear” I think you might be taking the first line too literally and thereby closing down the scope of your inquiry too soon. By highlighted the notion that Miles is actively working on his wardrobe you are suggesting to yourself that he is FULLY COMMITTED to the date. IS HE?

Imagine the **MOMENT BEFORE** the scene (“You need to Get Laid”)

STUDENT: The two of them (probably hungover), got into Miles' car and drove to the restaurant.

BK:

No – By the moment before I mean the moment before – not the half hour before....

What were they doing (props?) before the waitress delivered the food? Sitting staring into space? Probably not. Think about it – invent something that will help give life to the moment (30 seconds?) before dialogue starts. Hint: start by asking yourself what was Miles doing?)

Imagine the **MOMENT BEFORE** the scene (“Victoria’s getting married”)

STUDENT: They were driving sharing a bottle of wine. Miles gave it a the last gulp before he stopped.

BK:

It is certainly possible...but how does this help? Add? You want to enliven the actors' experience of the FIRST MOMENT by positing a prior moment that, perhaps, will make the FIRST MOMENT more specific and particular.

For Example: if you imagine that they have driven up a narrow dusty (or muddy?) scrubby dirt road – not very promising.....maybe it's been an unpleasant, bouncy ride...Jack has no idea where they're going. He's indulging Miles but has no expectation that the end result will be worth the uncomfortable ride i.e. negative expectations...and now they get out of the car and “voila!” it's gorgeous...YAY

By imagining a BOO – it will make the Yay we see more specific...not just a line

Imagine the **MOMENT BEFORE** the scene “Might have to put the wedding on hold”

STUDENT: Jack showered after sex with Stephanie, has gotten dressed, and is rendezvousing with Miles. Miles accidentally walked in on them en flagrante dilecto

and came downstairs to the bar.

BK:

look carefully at your words above -- "rendezvous" implies an agreed upon meeting. Is that what this is?

The "Moment Before" -- would have to do with what happen to/with each of them just before the first words...

things you might consider:

Did Miles just get his wine topped off?

Was Jack looking around the parking lot for miles' car - before settling on the bar...was he afraid Miles left for good?

FACTS:

What are the **REAL FACTS** governing the scene? ("You need to Get Laid")

STUDENT:

As mentioned in the script:

- Jack and Miles are in a diner.
- Jack is getting married.
- They are being served breakfast by a waitress.
- Jack and Miles are disheveled and unshaven.
- Miles is single. Jack promises Miles he'll get him laid as a "best man gift." Miles says no.
- Miles sees a shrink, takes xanax and lexapro for depression.

BK:

Everything you say is true....but most of it merely states the things that are in front of our eyes in the scene. You want to remind yourself of facts not stated in the scene -- and even PARSE them to get to their UNDERLYING IMPLICATIONS. For Example you state two true and useful facts:

- Jack is getting married.
- Miles is single.

You might have said – THEY ARE BOTH SINGLE; JACK IS ENGAGED; THE WEDDING IS IN 6 DAYS; MILES IS THE BEST MAN –

To my mind this kind of statement of facts leads to ideas that are not right on the surface of the dialogue...

What are the **USEFUL IMAGINARY FACTS?** (“Victoria’s getting married”)

STUDENT: As if Miles was in a cloud day dreaming about Victoria
As if miles is hit with a brick on his head

As if Jack burst the bubble
As if Jack pulled the rug under Miles feet

BK:

“As if Miles was in a cloud day dreaming about Victoria” – THIS SOUNDS DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO A RESULT DIRECTION

Ok – with the As If – but THESE ARE NOT IMAGINARY FACTS –

“Jack just got a text from Christine saying ‘Did you tell him?’” would be an example of an imaginary fact

OCCASION or PRETEXT

What is the **OCCASION or PRETEXT** for the scene? (“Fuck those NY Publishers”)

STUDENT: Jack spent another night with Stephanie while Miles was alone. This morning Stephanie is busy so he finally has time for Miles.

BK:

Those are correct fact. Let's try to LABEL THE OCCASION - the purpose of doing this is to create EVOCATIVE, INCITING INSTRUCTIONS (MARCHING ORDERS) for yourself and your actors

If I say "MAKE-UP GOLF" instead of "Make-up Sex" - it will be accurate, specific, and probably tickle the actors

What is the **OCCASION or PRETEXT** for the scene? ("You need to Get Laid")

STUDENT: The occasion of starting the trip.

The occasion of Jack getting married.

BK:

IT IS NOT: "The occasion of Jack getting married." That will occur another time. Remember you can't tell the whole story at once

IT IS: "The occasion of starting the trip." I would look for more active exciting language (remember GIGO and its reverse GIGO meaning GOLD IN GOLD OUT) like The occasion of LAUNCHING the trip. Thoughts like that might even give you some idea of what Miles is doing "The Moment Before"

What is the **OCCASION or PRETEXT** for the scene? ("What should I wear?")

STUDENT: Miles and Jack, best friends, have gone on a bachelor vacation to cut loose before Jack's marriage. Miles is divorced and is lonely. Jack asked out a wine barista they met earlier that afternoon who knows the waitress Miles is secretly infatuated with. Miles is excited to go on the date. Jack wants to sow his last oats before marriage. Miles is a wine connoisseur and Jack knows very little about wine.

BK:

All of the above might come under the heading GENERAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The OCCASION should be SIMPLE AND SHORT like

“ROOMMATES DRESSING FOR A DOUBLE DATE”

OBLIGATIONS: (“Who’s Your Daddy?”)

What are the **GOVERNING SOCIAL OBLIGATIONS** that rule the scene?

STUDENT: Hotel room - Jack is free to hug, kiss, and wrestle with Miles with no one watching. Miles feels less inclined to wrestle and share.

BK:

Think about it for a second....in this situation the OBLIGATION is not an inhibition like “restaurant etiquette” it’s the opposite - FRAT BOY ETIQUETTE – ROOMMATE RULES

WANTS:

When the scene begins **WHAT DOES CHARACTER A WANT?** (“Fuck those NY Publishers”)

STUDENT: He wants to blame Jack for screwing him over.

BK:

I don't like this answer because it just leads you back to the dialogue. I'm looking for ACTION not psychology underlying the dialogue.

How about MILES WANTS TO (FINALLY) PLAY GOLF?

When the scene begins **WHAT DOES CHARACTER A WANT?** ("You need to Get Laid")

STUDENT: Miles wants Jack to stop ogling the waitress.

BK:

NO that is what happens in the scene – and it is not a PERSONAL WANT (GOAL) of Miles' – just something that arises in the moment

The question is (getting over his hangover aside) what does Miles want THIS MORNING? What does he want out of Today????

When the scene begins **WHAT DOES CHARACTER A WANT?** ("Victoria's getting married")

STUDENT: He wants Victoria back
To pretend that he is over Victoria
To leave / To get Drunk when he finds out the news

BK:

“To leave / To get Drunk when he finds out the news” -NO: THE QUESTION WAS WHAT DOES HE WANT GOING INTO THE SCENE

“He wants Victoria back” - NO: This is true but it is not an ACTIVE/ACTABLE GOAL – IT IS NOT SOMETHING HE COULD POSSIBLY ACHIEVE IN THE SCENE

On the other hand, if you say

MILES TO INTRODUCE JACK TO HIS FAVORITE PLACE IN THE WORLD AND MAKE IT JACK’S FAVORITE PLACE...

This is a goal that could have been achieved – but OBSTACLES and stuff in the scene made it fail

When the scene begins **WHAT DOES CHARACTER B WANT?** (“You need to Get Laid”)

STUDENT: Jack wants Miles to chill out.

BK:

No - Again this is a passive REACTIVE thing – a WANT should be ACTIVE

For example: Jack may be sitting in an iHop, but he Wants and ADVENTURE

When the scene begins **WHAT DOES CHARACTER B WANT?** (“I might work for Christine’s dad”)

STUDENT: To open up and discuss his future.

BK:

It's a trap to say that what someone wants is to talk about the dialogue in the scene...it leads you in a circle and you don't teach yourself anything new.

Forget the dialogue – anything else Jack might want?

OBSTACLES: (“What should I wear?”)

What **OBSTACLES STAND IN CHARACTER A's WAY?**

Miles wants to go on the date because he likes the waitress.

He wants to be a great best man who doesn't let his best friend down.

Miles is nervous about his social and sexual performance.

BK:

OK HERE'S A BIG ONE: - You are making all of MILES' OBSTACLES INTERNAL TO MILES....As if Miles could play this scene with himself. What would that look like? I'll tell you: INDICATING AMBIVALENCE - BAD ACTING.

YOU CAN'T CHASE TWO RABBITS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

You will catch neither.

In this scene Miles either WANTS to GO or DOESN'T WANT TO GO – you have to PICK ONE

If he doesn't want to go his OBSTACLES MUST COME FROM JACK and elsewhere OUTSIDE HIMSELF

AGENDAS:

What is **CHARACTER A's HIDDEN AGENDA?** (“Fuck those NY Publishers”)

STUDENT: What does he/she want that the words don't or can't say, but that must be achieved through behavior or other means. What does **CHARACTER A HOPE** will come out of the encounter?

Miles wants to scold Jack and knock some sense into him. He wants Jack to realize he is being immature and stupid.

BK:

Try to KEEP YOUR CHARACTERS' INTERESTS PERSONAL – Make their motivations SELFISH. I would say Miles' hidden Agenda would be to punish Jack for ABANDONMENT. For leaving him alone for days on on trip that was supposed to be about the two of them!!!!

What is **CHARACTER A's HIDDEN AGENDA?** What does he/she want that the words don't/can't actually say but must be achieved through behavior and other means? (“Victoria's getting married”)

STUDENT: He is crying for help and support from his best friend. He feels lonely and a failure
He wants Victoria back

BK:

Well close: get rid of the touchy feely language and translate it into the language of action

For example: TO MAKE JACK SEE WHAT HE HAD WITH VICTORIA – TO MAKE JACK SHARE WHAT HE LOST WHEN HE LOST VICTORIA

HIDDEN AGENDAS & HOPES: : (“What should I wear?”)

What is **CHARACTER A’s HIDDEN AGENDA**? What does he/she want that the words don’t or can’t say, but that must be achieved through behavior or other means. What does **CHARACTER A HOPE** will come out of the encounter?

STUDENT: To get over his divorce.

To be accepted and loved by himself.

To be accepted and loved by another.

BK:

THESE ARE ALL INTERNAL, INACTIVE, UNACHIEVABLE, UNACTABLE Think about it.....

When the scene begins **WHAT DOES CHARACTER B HOPE will come out of the encounter?** Might have to put the wedding on hold”

Everything will go back to normal-- Miles will reclaim his mantle as the expert.
Stephanie will go away and leave the boys to their boys weekend.
Jack will put aside his crazy ideas.
Jack will listen to him mope.

BK:

People do not hope for things like: “Jack will listen to him mope.”

A HOPE is like a WISH - it is like a Blue Sky Scenario – it is the opposite of a FEAR which is like a WORST-CASE SCENARIO . Neither has to be based on rational calculation or a plan.

Therefore Miles' Hope could be that Jack has just had his fill of Stephanie and says, "Let's get out of this town before I get in too deep. Thanks for letting me get that out of my system! Now, Take me somewhere I can have some great food, great wine a terrific round of golf and a fantastic massage by an ugly Russian man. Then "Get me to the Church on Time"

DENIABILITY:

What is **CHARACTER A's PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY**? If he/she were called on having a hidden agenda, how could they deny it? What is their "cover"? ("What should I wear?")

STUDENT: I'm doing fine alone. I've been able to get along fine and she doesn't care about me anyway

BK:

NO - NOT AT ALL.

If Miles is getting dressed slowly and making the process very difficult because (perhaps) he's wanting Jack to say "Listen, forget about it, You're an asshole....you're going to ruin my night: I'll tell the girls you're sick. Stephanie and I will go out with Maya. I won't get laid. Thanks a lot. You're not a Best Man, you're an asshole"

Miles' deniability might be - "That's not true...I'm just worried I don't have the right clothes."

FEARS - WORST CASE SCENARIO: ? ("You need to Get Laid")

When the scene begins **WHAT DOES CHARACTER A FEAR might happen in the meeting?**

STUDENT: Miles fears Jack will cause a scene with the waitress. Miles fears he'll have to deal with Jack's philandering the entire trip.

BK:

I want to know what Miles "Fears" – BEFORE the scene starts i.e. coming into the scene.

The FEAR you are looking for is the opposite of the HOPE

When the scene begins **WHAT DOES CHARACTER B FEAR might happen in the meeting?** ? ("Victoria's getting married")

STUDENT: That Miles might lose it when he tell him the news

BK:

I hope you realize that your answer PRESUPPOSES that Jack already plans to tell him...

That would be a CHOICE and not necessarily a good one in that it leads to ANTICIPATION

When the scene begins **WHAT DOES CHARACTER A FEAR might happen in the meeting?** : ("What should I wear?")

STUDENT: He fears supporting Jack and going along with the best man guy code he is doing his friend a disservice because Jack could be ruining his relationship before it truly starts.

He fears Jack is marrying the wrong woman or at lease isn't ready.

BK:

COMEDY – I would actually argue LIFE – is ruled by SELFISHNESS (aka SELF – INTEREST) rethink your answer in terms of what miles is afraid of for himself - not jack

CHANGE:

WHAT CHANGE occurs between the beginning of the scene and the end? (“Who’s your daddy?”)

STUDENT: Miles goes from expecting trouble to expecting trouble and wanting to run away from all of it.

BK:

You are just repeating the surface of the scene....where is miles emotionally at the end of the scene?

Where was he at the beginning? That’s how you will determine the Change

TARGET EVENT:

EVENT: (“Victoria’s getting married”)

What is the **EVENT OF THE SCENE?** What “happens emotionally” to your POV Character?

STUDENT: Is not that Victoria is getting married but it’s that Miles feels betrayed because Jack, “His best friend”, has been talking to Victoria behind his back

BK:

In other words MILES IS ASHAMED THAT THE WORLD IS PITYING HIM

What is the **EVENT OF THE SCENE**? What do you want to make “happen emotionally” to your POV Character?(“What should I wear?”)

Miles is convinced the date is a good idea and that he will support his buddy who he thinks is making a poor choice.

BK:

EMOTIONAL CHANGE IS WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR – NOT INTELLECTUAL CHANGE. To be convinced is an intellectual change

KEEP SEARCHING