



GET YOURSELF OUT OF THE WAY OF THE SCENE
Test yourself before writing the scene.

- 1) Establish the Purpose then the Components/Elements contained within the Scene
- 2) Determine the Content and match the Components

KIND OF SCENE

DOES IT:

- UNFOLD VISUALLY, LIKE AN ACTION SCENE?
- UNFOLD AS DIALOGUE?
- A COMBINATION OF BOTH?
- MOVE THE STORY FORWARD?

THE PURPOSE

DOES IT:

- REVEAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHARACTER?
- BOTH?

THE SCENE

THE NEED TO KNOW
(Who, What, Where, When)

THE CONTEXT

The idea behind the scene

WHO IS IN THE SCENE?

WHAT DO THEY WANT?

THE CONTENT

The series of events

WHO IS GOING TO GET WHAT THEY WANT?

THE SERIES OF EVENTS THAT UNFOLDS AS A RESULT: IN A PLACE AND AT A TIME (Where and When)

These are **components & elements** to create inner or outer conflict to generate drama.

KEY IDEAS TO BE INTERROGATED INTENSIVELY IN EVERY SCENE

THE COMPONENTS/ELEMENTS OF CHARACTER

- What aspect of the character's professional life, personal life, and/or private life are going to be dramatised?
- Who wins and who loses? What are the knock on consequences for both characters down the line?
- If the outcome is flipped, does the story change? if not, then is the scene necessary to the character/s? Change it if needed.

WHERE DOES THE SCENE TAKE PLACE? (PLACE & TIME)

- Always attend to the more visual approach. actors often play "against the grain" of a scene using the unobvious approach.
- They'll play an angry scene with a soft smile, hiding their rage or anger beneath a facade of niceness (Brando as Marc Antony).
- This means looking for a way to approach the scene that dramatises the scene against the grain!
- Find a setting or a manner of interacting with the setting that dramatises the scene or makes it visually interesting (tells the story) regarding the location.
- Think Hitchcock and the bomb in the dining room chest. The audience knows there's a ticking bomb in the chest, the two people sitting at the chest don't know. It's about to go off. We're hooked, what will happen to them?
- Dramatic irony playing out as part of the setting is Tension for the audience (something highly dramatic and consequential is unknown to the characters that the audience has pieced together ahead of them). Effective writing leverages this.

WHAT FOLLOWS
(Extremely important)

Plot happens either by chance or because of **consequences**.
The former is arbitrary whereas the latter builds on what came before it, enriching the story with consequence.

Always remember that plot contrivance (things happening just because they need to, irrespective of purpose of consistency) are **FATAL** for a film.

What follows your scene and even the very beats in your scene are **ALWAYS** make or break for your film.

"And then"
Johnny ran to catch the bus. He was late for class and worried his professor would be angry. Then a clown car hurtled across the street and ran him over. (Chance = ineffective, boring)

"But, Because, Therefore"
Johnny ran to catch the bus. Thinking only of his professor's anger when he arrived late to class, he didn't see the clown car hurtling at him until it was too late. (Consequences = effective)