

Screenplay 5th week

I.

Sequence: a series of scenes connected by one single idea with a definite beginning, middle, and end.

Focus on action and character

Great action sequence: intense + visual

II. Time and Memory: Flashback

III.

Beginning: establish the main character, the dramatic premise, and situation

Middle: more about the main character

End: define the problem

↑

Often true

(Act I)

IV.

I. *American Beauty* (showing the house sequence: 00:10:19)

II. *Collateral* (action sequence; page 6-)

III. *The Bourne Supremacy*

IV. *The Shawshank Redemption*

V. *Cinderella Man* (Plot Point I: Braddock breaks his hand, and loses his license to fight)

VI. Suppose we want to write a scene establishing the disintegrating emotional connections in a family.

1. Purpose 2. Where 3. When

Also, the elements contained in the scene + the content

(apparent conflicts among characters, or everything looks great on the outside, but what's going on inside?)

(be sure to look for ingredients you might use that can generate some form of conflict either inside the characters or within the place)

Bourne holds a gun to Nicky's head, "*about to pull the trigger—
SUDDENLY—Flashback! A moment—a shard—A WOMAN'S FACE—
Backing away—begging—begging us—begging the camera—PLEADING
FOR HER LIFE IN RUSSIAN—this awful blue of desperation and
panic—fear—too fast—too panicked*"

A scene from *Jurassic Park*

Tim pulls off the goggles and looks at two clear plastic cups of water that sit in recessed holes on the dashboard. As he watches, the water in the glasses vibrates, making concentric circles—then it stops—and then it vibrates again. Rhythmically. Like from footsteps.
BOOM. BOOM. BOOM.

Gennaro's eyes snap open as he feels it too. He looks up at the rearview mirror.

There is a security pass hanging from it that is bouncing slightly, swaying from side to side.

As Gennaro watches, his image bounces too, vibrating in the rearview mirror.

BOOM. BOOM. BOOM.

GENNARO

(not entirely convinced)

M-Maybe it's the power trying to come back on.

Tim jumps into the backseat and puts the night goggles on again. He turns and looks out the side window. He can see the area where the goat is tethered. Or was tethered. The chair is still there, but the goat is gone.

BANG!

They all jump, and Lex SCREAMS as something hits the Plexiglas sunroof of the Explorer, hard. They look up.

It's a disembodied goat leg.

GENNARO

Oh, Jesus. Jesus.

When Tim whips around to look out the side window again his mouth opens wide but no sound comes out. Through the goggles he sees an animal claw, a huge one, gripping the cables of the “electrified” fence. He whips off his goggles and presses forward, against the window. He looks up, up, then cranes his head back farther, to look out the sunroof. Past the goat’s leg, he can see—

Tyrannosaurus rex. It stands maybe twenty-five feet high, forty feet long from nose to tail, with an enormous, boxlike head that must be five feet long by itself. The remains of the goat are hanging out of the rex’s mouth. It tilts its head back and swallows the animal in one big gulp.

An action-charged scene from *Collateral*
What about the dialogue here?

EXT. AEIAL SHOT: LOS ANGELES CITYSCAPE-NIGHT

STRAIGHT DOWN from above. Acid-mint streetlight in pools on Olympic Blvd. The yellow cab is the only vehicle heading east. Everything else streams west. Emergency vehicles. Flashers.

INT. Max's cab-max

In shock. Back in purgatory. . . eternally in his cab's front seat. As the lone yellow cab drives east. . .

VINCENT

What a clusterfuck. Only thing didn't show was the Polish cavalry.

Max's life, controlled by Vincent, is a nightmare, perpetual and eternal. Now Vincent realizes he's getting the silent treatment.

(Continued)

VINCENT

You're alive. I saved you. We're BREATHING. Do I get any thanks? No. All you can do is clam up. You don't wanna talk, tell me to fuck off. . .

MAX

(inaudible)

. . . fuck off.

Vincent's attention goes to the window, out which are streams of emergency vehicles. . . looks to the airspace, filled with LAPD and news helicopters.

EXT. STREET-THE ANONYMOUS YELLOW CAB

heads east. All other traffic races to the debacle left behind. . .

VINCENT (O.S.)

Okay.

(beat)

. . . blood, bodily fluid and death get
to you?

Try deep breathing. Or remember, we
all die anyway. .

MAX (O.S.)

You had to kill Fanning?

Vincent (O.S)

Who the fuck is Fanning?

INT. CAB

MAX

That cop!

(beat)

Why'd you have to do that? You coulda
Wounded him. Maybe he had a family,
parents, kids who gotta grow up without
a dad, he believed me, he was a good
guy. . .

VINCENT

I shoulda saved him 'cause he believed you. . .?

MAX

No, not just that.

VINCENT

Yeah, that. . .

MAX

Yeah, so, what's wrong with that?

VINCENT

It's what I do for a living. . .

MAX

Some living.

VINCENT

Head downtown.

MAX

What's downtown?

VINCENT

How are you at math? I was hired for five hits. I did four.

MAX
(grim)

One more.

VINCENT

There you go. . . !

MAX

Whyn't you kill me and find another Cab?

VINCENT

'Cause you're good. And we're in this together. You know. . .

(beat)

. . . fates intertwined. Cosmic coincidence. All that crap. . .

MAX

You're full of shit.

VINCENT

I'm full of shit?

(beat)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

You're a monument of it. You even
bullshitted yourself, all I am is
taking out the garbage. Killing bad
people. . .

(Continued)

MAX

'Cause you believed me. . . ?

VINCENT

And you believed me. . . ?

MAX

What'd they do?

VINCENT

How do I know?

(beat)

But, they all got that "witness
for the prosecution" look to me.
It's probably some major federal
indictment against somebody who
majorly does not want to get in—
dicted. . . I dunno.

VINCENT

Look in the mirror

(on the attack)

. . . with your paper towels. . . a clean
cab. . . your own limo company someday.
How much you got saved?

MAX

None of your business.

VINCENT

Someday? “Someday my dream will
come. . . ?”

(beat)

But one night you will wake up and
discover it all turned around on
you. Suddenly you are old. And it
didn't happen. It never will. 'Cause
you were never going to do it, anyway.
The dream became yesterday and got
lost. Then you'll bullshit yourself,
It could never have been. And you'll
push it into memory. . . and zone out
in a Barcalounger with daytime TV on
for the rest of your life. . .

(beat)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Don't talk to me about murder. You're
killing yourself in this cab. Bit by
bit. Every day.

Max is soaking up every word.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

All it ever took was a down payment.
On the Lincoln Town Car. What the hell
are you still doing in a cab? Or that

girl. You can't even call that girl
[referring to Annie-Jada Pinkett
Smith—whom Max met in the beginning of the story].

The needle on the speedometer is creeping past
Forty. . .

MAX

'Cause I never straightened up and
looked at it, you know. . .?

VINCENT

Slow down

MAX

(ignoring him)

. . . myself, I should have. My
brothers did. . .

(beat)

Tried to gamble my way out from under.
Another born-to-lose deal! Then,
"It's gotta be perfect to!" You
know? Risk all torqued-down. I coulda
done it anytime. . .

Needle pushing sixty. . .

VINCENT

Red light.

MAX

But you know what? It doesn't matter. What's it matter, anyway?
'Cause we are . . . insignificant out here in this big-ass nowhere.
Twilight Zone shit. Says the badass sociopath in my backseat. So
that's one thing I got to thank you for, bro. . . Until now, I never saw
it that way. . .

The cab goes blasting through an intersection on a red light. A LOS ANGELES TIMES DELIVERY TRUCK SLAMS ON ITS BREAKS as Mas swerves, barely avoiding a collision.

VINCENT

That was a red light!

Max glances in the rearview.

MAX

. . . not until now. So what's it all matter? It don't. So, fuck it. Fix it. Nothing to lose. Right?

Vincent's H+K's aimed at Max's head. Max almost laughs.

VINCENT

Slow the hell down!

MAX

Why? What are you gonna do? Pull the trigger? Kill us? Go ahead, man! Shoot. . . my ass.

VINCENT

Slow down!

MAX

Vincent?

There eyes meet in the rearview mirror. Vincent is arrested by a look in Max that he's not seen before. It's the even, confrontational look of a man with nothing to lose.

MAX (CONT'D)

Go fuck yourself.

Max slams on the brakes and cranks the steering wheel hard right. . .

EXT. STREET—RIGHT WHEEL

hits a low divider. . . rear end comes unstuck, rotating over the front right and flipping the cab into a violent roll onto its roof, spinning down the street, SMASHING off other cars, pieces falling off, spewing glass. . . and then settling upside down, revolving slowly to a creaking stop, anti-freeze spilling across the pavement.

And then everything goes silent, motionless, still.