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Reading scripts. It is absolutely important to learn the craft of screenwriters. The focus of this weekly series is a deep structural and thematic analysis of each scenario we read. Our Daily Schedule:Monday: Scene-by-Scene BreakdownTuesday: HighlightsWednesday: Sequences Of The Future: ThemesFriday: TakeawaysToday: Scene-by-Scene Breakdown. Here's my view on this exercise from the previous series of posts - How to read the script: After the first pass, it's time to crack the script for more in-depth analysis, and you can do it by creating a scene-by-scene breakdown. This is exactly what it sounds like: a list of all the scenes in the script is accompanied by a brief description of the events that are taking place. For the purposes of this exercise, I have a slightly different take on stage. Here I am looking for not only individual scenes per se, but a scene or set of scenes that make up one event or a continuous piece of action. Admittedly, this is subjective and there is no right or wrong, the point is simply to break the script into a number of parts, which can then be used to dig into the structure of the script and the topic. The value of this exercise: We will wash the story down to its most composite parts: Scenes. This week: Nightcrawler. You can download the PDF script - for free and legally - here. Written by Dan Gilroy. IMDb Plot Summary: When Louis Bloom, a driven man desperate for work, muscled into the crime scene of Los Angeles journalism, he blurs the line between observer and participant to become the star of his own story. NightcrawlerScene on the stage BreakdownBy Maria NielsenGoIntoTheStory.comit the script is a little different from the norm in the sense that there are no bullets, no scene numbers. The end result is a story that keeps moving forward, moving you from one place to another, without reminding you of it and not losing you. Day, night, Int. or Ext. expertly woven into the descriptions, highlights the fact that it's all about the protag, Lou Bloom. So Gilroy takes us on a tour of the twisted world of his main character, showing us everything from his point of view just what makes this a very interesting scenario for study.P. 1-2: We meet LU BLOOM, our protagonist, cutting through a fence in an industrial area. Faced with a night guard, he deftly diverts attention from his apparent penetration, asking the person questions about his work and being overly polite. And just as we wonder who exactly Lou is, he brutally attacks the guard over... his wristwatch. Bam. What an intro, what a disturbing character.P. 3-4: Lou expertly negotiates with the landfill owner in order to sell him copper wire, chain and hatch covers. This isn't their first transaction. We still get the feeling that this is definitely not what Lou does for a living. Who's this guy? Why would he want the money? And how can he get everyone to do what he wants?P. 5-6: Lou is in his car, scrolling down a sex-connecting website on his phone, picking up a nurse. They meet at the diner and once again, Lou reveals that the overly polite side of him, who is so anxious, is now turning off our alarm bells. He asks questions in a way that seems like he's trying to get into another person's head and also seems to know everything you need to know about the economy and the labor market. It's so impersonal that we wonder if Lou is even completely human.P. 7-9: We cut out of Lou's diner alone in his car. As he approaches the scene of the crash on the freeway, he stops, engaging in horrific activity. The news van makes up, the men inside pop out and start shooting with what they perceive as the best possible angles. Lou's transfixed. He approaches one of the guys and asks a few questions about what they're doing and who to sell it too.P. 9-12: Lou and I are in his one-room apartment. It's tiny but overly neat. Under full control, as is Lou himself. He's flipping through news channels until finally... on KSMML Morning News... Horrific footage of last night's crash fills the screen. CUT to another horrible crime scene. CUT to advertising. CUT for people having a great time in the sun-drenched Venice, Lou look..... 13:... and expectations. A man gets off an expensive bike, locks it up, enters the store. Lou immediately takes the lock and brings the bike to the pawnshop. Dissatisfied with the price offered by the owner, he instead asks for credit in the store for a video camera and police scanner.P. 14-15: Night. Lou is in his car, listening to the piled codes and call signs on the police scanner. Finally, a fight is nearby. He takes off. arrives at the scene. A bloodied black man sits handcuffed on the sidewalk while a bloodied teenager talks to police officers. Lou starts filming without knowing what he's doing. When the cops tell him to back off, he obeys. 16-17: But Lou is not one to give up. He persistently pursues the accident after the accident, quickly learn to get the best shots, staying away from the police and paramedics. Then, finally, a mini-breakthrough as he eavesdrops on one side of a phone conversation between what is clearly an experienced cameraman and news channel 17-22: Lou arrives at the KSMML television station. He walks in, walks, arrives at the editing compartment. And here he meets NINA ROMINA, a hard-bitten beauty with 30 years of experience in bloody sports, which is local television news. Lou watches her work until she notices it, mistaking him for a fill-in operator. He corrects her, tells her he can but Nina is not so easy to shake as the other characters we we Still. She agrees to watch his footage though, remaining unimpressed until we get to a really shocking close-up of a gaping gunshot wound to the head. What she wants. 23: Lou and Nina in their office. She hands him his first check. Gives him advice on equipment and how to work at the scene. Tells him that he wants to be his first call and what she likes: crime, accidents, bloody and violent. Lou gets it loud and clear.P. 24: Lou in his apartment, watching his own footage on KSMML Morning News. He records it on a DVD player, uploads it to his laptop in a new file.P. 25-28: Lou y Denny, interviewed by Rick as a possible future assistant. Young Rick seemingly fit the bill and was quickly hired, not knowing exactly what he was in for. Lou is clearly a master at the art of lying and manipulating people, making him just as fascinating and disgusting. Once they're on to something, they go. But this is Rick's first time, and he gives bad directions. We expect Lou to flip over, but he stays on top of the situation, cool and in complete control. This guy is really scared!p. 30: Lou and Rick arrive late at the crash site. Other freelance crews are already packing and leaving. As they drive away, Lou set things straight with Rick, ending the conversation by explaining how important it is to communicate. A bit of cooling comes from someone as non-person as Lou.P. 31-32: CUT Lou and other crews filming a dead biker stuck under a car. CUT Lou and Rick at the diner. CUT to another crash site - this time, it's a crime scene.P. 33-34: Lou and Rick are greeted by gawking a neighbor with an ironic f---ing, vulture motherf. Ok... Lou is trying to get information, but no one knows much. On the way back to the car, he notices police talking to a couple in the garden of a nearby house riddled with bullet holes. He comes up and enters an empty house, still rents. Stealing a letter lying on the kitchen table.P. 34-36: Lou returned to KSMML with Nina and FRANK, the editor. They loved the footage from the house until they found out that Lou entered without permission. Nina wants to run it, Frank doesn't. Nina gets the last word. CUT Lou and Nina on the news set. Lou pays Nina a compliment on how she handled Frank, apparently trying to manipulate her into liking him, but she doesn't bite. Lou tells her about a business course he studied online that allegedly led him to find out exactly what he's good at. It's ugly and exploitative and probably attracts a lot of viewers. Lou records it then uploads it to another new file on his computer. There's a timelapse and the computer screen fills up with the files of every crime or accident you can to imagine, closing on the words that get bigger until BLOOD AND BRAINS SCREAM OUT AT US.P. 40-42: Lou fills a gas cylinder on his new red Dodge Challenger, compliments Rick about his progress while scolding him for spilling a little gas on the machine. They drive and talk, listen to the police scanner - work as usual. Another crash site. Corpses. No police, no paramedics. He's starting to take pictures. The familiar van pulls up - joe LODER.P. 42-43: CUT to KSMML station, where Nina congratulates Lou on his third lead this week, indicating that he has blood on his sleeve. Lou is predictably unflappable, asks Nina on a date. She refuses. An experienced stringer gives him tips on how to get his shots faster by uploading it to the FTP website. He then offers Lou a job driving another van, which he plans to buy. Lou refuses. he wants to work alone. It would seem that Lou gets everything he wants. The conversation goes from personal to work. Lou basically threatens to stop selling his footage of Nina if she doesn't meet his requirements. It's fascinating how Lou turns things around, putting the other person completely at ease before bouncing around and showing off his true identity. Always calm, never too dangerous. P. 50-52: Another time lapse and then we returned to Challenger roaring through the streets of Los Angeles with Lou and Rick chasing down another horror site for the movie. They argue about Rick's salary - he wants more, but Lou counters each of his arguments with the best. In addition to the situation, as always.P. 52-53: A police scanner spitting out information about a light plane crash and they are off. They park outside the police perimeter and begin to shoot. As other stringers arrive, so does Joe Loder. The operator of the duck under the police tape right in front of Lou and splashes some salt into the wound, telling him that his second van is at the scene of the suicide, the one he wanted Lou drive.P. 53-54: Lou returned to KSMML with footage that night: one car accident, one stab wound. Nina wants a plane crash - he has nothing. She takes control of the situation by pushing Lou to do better than that, because right now, it's worthless for her. Ouch.P. 54-54: Editing by Lou inside Challenger. He parks next to a line of open garages, pulls out a wrench, and then slides under one of the vans. He says: Mayhem Video is on the side, it belongs to Joe Loder.P. 54-56: Challenger rattles down canyon road. Lou on Rick's case once again about the directions a young man gives him. Freak control from head to head. They're taking a sharp turn - Bam. The crash site. This is a Mayhem Video minivan wrapped around the phone Lou comes out, begins to shoot a bloodied Joe Lauder, carried away by paramedics. Another sale.P. 57-59: Lou and Rick race into the mountains in the direction of the fire. When they arrive, it's over. There's nothing else to see. He's back down the road - Lou is the one who's on fire, determined to get something really good. Finally, a police scanner spitting out information about the house: They arrive in front of the police or anyone else. Two shots from the house - the crooks are still there. They stay put. Two guys in ski masks run out, jump into the car, run away. It's all taken down by Loop. 61-63: Lou comes out of Challenger, enters the house, the camera works. Blood. Disturbing crying. The body of an elderly Latino. Lou gets it on video, moves on forward. Inside the kitchen lies the body of an elderly white man. Lou shoots it all, doesn't affect. Suddenly, the man's hand closes around Lou's ankle. Lou leans over for a close-up, starts asking questions. A man manages to get out one word - the name Costilla - then dies. Lou leaves the kitchen, walks up the stairs, removes the dead body of a white woman, then a shotgun shredded crib. There's no baby inside. He gets every detail on camera before making a quick exit!P. 64: Lou and Rick race

through the steles in the KSMML studio. Lou asks Rick to go outside as he uploads the footage to his laptop. He edits out the fleeing assailants, as well as his brief exchange with the dying man.P. 65: Lou enters the television station, sent straight to the newsroom. Nina scolds hello for evading her calls, he counters with footage of triple murder. News just breaking.P. 66-70: Nina watches the footage with Frank and a young female producer. Another woman enters. Nina asks her if they can legally air it. Frank is unsurprisingly against it. Then there is Lou's fee, and Nina asks everyone else to leave. Lou wants a cool million. Are you joking. There's rough negotiations. Lou knows it costs a lot, but Nina doesn't have a budget. He will not settle for less than 25,000.P. 71-76: Bingo. Breaking News: House of Horrors. Graphic footage of Lou spills on screens, accompanied by a clear voice-over presenter. CUT for KSMML reporter on site. Shortly before going live, he tells them that the police are in a noise and want to know who filmed the footage.P. 77-79: Lou returned to his apartment, watching the news. Knocking on the door is Detective Frontidi and her partner. They need answers to last night's footage. Lou delivers an edited copy of Frontieri.P. 80: Lou emerges from his computer, watching unconfirmed footage of the two fleeing attackers. One of the features of men is visible and so is the license plate. He called the number and the name Costilla in the computer.P. 81 search bar: Lou and Challenger. Lou shows the young man that he has the name and address of one of the attackers. And he's promoting it to an assistant, complete with a pay rise. Rick wants to agree on a percentage of the possible reward. He gets tougher without bowing to Lou anymore. But it's just a facade - even a seasoned businesswoman like Nina has difficulty standing up to Lou.P. 86-90: Time lapse. It's past midnight. Lou wakes up the sleeping Rick when the assailant leaves the house and gets into his van. They follow the guy into the apartment building. The big man gets out, gets in the car. Apparently, this is the second attacker. They tail two guys to a fast food restaurant and then call 911. Lou goes to wait for the police, video camera at hand.P. 91-92: Police arrive, silent, discreet. Three cops are in fast food. Two scammers clock them, start shooting. One policeman was wounded, as was one of the attackers, as well as several patrons. Another crook flees, gets into his car. The high-speed chase ends with accidents and explosions. Lou sees the injured assailant at the wheel of his wrecked car. They stop, go out, run in this direction, both shoot. Lou hides his attacker from Rick. The guy sees them, picks up the gun. Lou virs aside - blum, blum, blum. Rick makes three point shots to the chest. Lou continues to shoot, closing on Rick. Dying realizes that Lou did it on purpose. Lou tells him that he cannot jeopardize his company's success over an unreliable employee. It's over. Lou picks up Rick's video camera, leaves scene.P. 98-99: Lou heads to KSMML. Anchors. Joins Nina in the editing compartment. She's ecstatic. And Lou now sets his own fees.P. 100-103: Lou's frames fill the screens. Detective Frontieri her partner entered the station, demanding that all the footage be pulled out and handed over as evidence due to dead or seriously injured police officers. Nina refuses - defending Lou. The partner notices Lou, notifies Frontieri. Handcuff him, pick him up. Frank tells Nina that drugs were found in the victim's house. Nina doesn't care - she wants footage of Lou. Frank objects that she sounds like Lou. Nina replies that he inspires all of them. Footage from 103-106: Lou and Detective Frontieri are sitting in the interrogation room. Lou politely tell her what happened. She doesn't buy his version, but she doesn't have counter-evidence. It merges with the crowd. Fade to white.P. 106-108: Fade back from white on two side-by-side news vans in the parking lot. For his part, he says: Video Nows Productions. a young woman and a young woman stand next to vans wearing identical T-shirts. Lou arrives, addressing his new employees. End of the credit roll. Writing Exercise: I encourage you to read the script, but other than that, if you've seen the movie, go through this scene-by-scene breakdown. What stands out for you about it from a structural point of view? The main glory of Maria Nielsen for this week's scene is the stage breakdown. To download the PDF breakdown, go here. Tomorrow: We're zero on the main plot points in Nightcrawler.REQUEST: We have incredible scripts in the GITIS library that we still haven't analyzed including Saving Mr. Banks, 12 Years a Slave and more. I am looking for volunteers to read the script and provide a scene-by-scene breakdown in order to be used as part of our weekly series. What do you get? Aside from your name being celebrated here, my thanks and some creative juju, hope you learn something about the structure of history and develop another set of skills that is super useful in learning and practicing crafts. Latest Volunteers: Birdman - Doc KaneDallas Buyers Club - Devin DingleFrozen - Doc KaneGone Girl - AshleyLooper - Michael PerkinsNebraska - David Joyner Nightcrawler - Maria NielsenThe Wolf of Wall Street - Paul GraunkeThanks, all! To see examples of breakout scenes backstage, click here. Part of the goal is to create a breakdown library for writers to have at their disposal for research and learning. You can see the scenarios that we can use for the series - for free and legally - by going here. To date, we have analyzed 47 movie scripts, a great resource for screenwriters. To see these tests, go here. Thanks to any of you who will climb on occasion and take to the stage behind the stage breakdown. And for those of you who volunteered, please send me your scene-by-scene breakdown as soon as possible! Going back to the beginning of script reading is very important. Analyzing them all the more so. If you want to work in Hollywood as a writer, you have to develop your critical analytical skills. That's one way to do it. So join in this opportunity and join the conversation! I hope to see you in the comments about this week's script: Nightcrawler.Comment Archive Archive nightcrawler screenplay pdf download

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