

THE WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR WORKSHOP
MAIN SCENE PREP NOTES

DIRECTOR:	Katrina Beatty
MAIN SCENE TITLE:	Moments Between
AS OF DATE:	12-November-2012
SCENE DESCRIPTION:	
<p>Family Dinner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mom, Dad and Dylan sit around the table in silence. No one speaking. • Joanne stares down at her plate. She is deep in thought a million miles away from the seemingly picturesque dinner taking place in front of her. • Robin is aware of the distance between himself and Joanne, but uncertain of how to close the gap. • Dylan's looks to her father for her cues on how to behave. She accepts the silence and eats her dinner, but she is keenly observing the actions of her parents, taking everything in. • The Welles family don't discuss Noah being missing at dinner. There's just a tension hanging in the air. • The essence of the scene lies is Dylan's awareness that nobody is talking about the obvious thing it seems they should be talking about – that Noah is missing • The stakes have gone up for Joanne and Robin in this scene. Worry has turned to fear. Dylan is aware of more than Mom and Dad think and want her to be aware of. 	
LOCATION WITHIN THE NARRATIVE: (what happens just before and just after this scene)	
<p>Before: Noah's alarm clock goes off and nobody responds to it, so Dylan wanders in to his room to turn it off.</p> <p>Dylan goes down for breakfast and reveals that Noah didn't come home last night. Mom (Joanne) and Dad (Robin) don't know where he is. Joanne is the over protective parent and Robin is the rational one who doesn't believe there is anything to worry about. Robin takes in the news and goes back to doing what he was doing – he assumes Noah just stayed at a friends place and then went straight in to school. Joanne dwells a bit more and peppers dad with questions about Noah's possible whereabouts. Robin brushes her off a bit and she steps aside and she decides to call Noah's cell.</p> <p>Joanne is at work hours later and Noah's phone still goes to voicemail. We learn that mom's instincts have her worried even though her rational (and Robin's rational) is telling her not to be. Joanne has taken a moment and hid in a corner (pulled the cloth partition at the treatment centre) to try and have some privacy while she checks her voicemail. A colleague comes and interrupts her, and notices the concern registered on her face. Her colleague asks what's up. She explains that she can't get a hold of Noah. The colleague repeats mom's rational of "everything is probably fine" back to her and Joanne realizes she doesn't find it all that comforting. Her colleague pulls her back to work saying they have patients waiting. Joanne gets back to work, but continues to be distracted.</p> <p>She calls Robin from work. This reveals the dynamic between mom and dad. Mom is looking for Dad to take action. Dad is mowing the lawn. Joanne is worried about Noah and wants Robin's help to find him. Robin says not to worry, that he probably just went straight to school and his cell probably died.</p> <p>Dylan is sitting on the couch reading a book. She stops Dad as he walks by and tells him some mathematical equation that she mispronounces and so Robin stops to check out the book she's reading.</p>	

Realizing that Noah should have that book with him at school, the first notion that everything might not be all right crosses Robin's mind.

After: When dinner is done, Robin and Joanne get up and go into the living room. Dylan is at the table doing homework and overhears them putting all the information together. Joanne tells Robin that Noah's friend Ben received a text the night before that said that Noah was on his way to meet them, and then never showed. They decide to call the police.

CHARACTER BIOS

<p>Character #1 Name: Joanne Welles (Mom)</p>	<p>Female – age 45-55 – Middle class, but slightly stylish with a hippy edge. She is a nurse in a Cancer treatment center. She is a professional, but her kids are the center of her world. She feels deeply, and is overly sensitive to her instincts as they pertain to her children.</p> <p>She processes things by talking about them, sometimes with many different people and she's incredibly passionate about making people understand her point of view. Noah gets his emotional side from her, but doesn't respect it in her as he doesn't like it in himself. She is intuitive, loving, elegant, and graceful.</p>
<p>Character #2 Name: Robin Welles (Dad)</p>	<p>Male – age 45-55 – in many ways the opposite of Mom, but they recognize these differences and respect them in each other. The patriarch of the family, he is calm, rational and always collected. His advice is well respected and heeded by Noah. He always needs to be doing something, inactivity doesn't work on him, and relaxing requires some sort of physical exertion. His coping mechanism becomes to keep himself busy.</p>
<p>Character #3 Name: Dylan Welles</p>	<p>Female – age 12-14 – she is starting to come into her own, but young enough to still possess a certain amount of innocence. She looks up to Noah more than anything and wants to be just like him. He'd do just about anything for her and she knows it, but she doesn't take it for granted. She alone has the capacity to cheer Noah up in many situations, and because she's young she hears and takes in everything without many people being aware. She can bring out the best in people, especially Noah.</p> <p>She's bold and strong. She acts when she thinks she has something to contribute. She's brazen and honest – she's the first to suggest out loud that something bad may have happened to her brother.</p>

MOOD and TONE:

Melancholy/Loneliness.

In the film in general, there are often a lot of people around, but none are taking the time to stop and see each other. Some characters are hiding, but some just don't have their eyes open to the people around them.

"I wonder how many people I've looked at all my life and never seen." –John Steinbeck

This scene is the start of the disconnect between the immediate family members. Joanne (Mom) and Robin (Dad) are both processing the news that their son Noah hasn't come home and can't be reached very differently, but both are trying to shield Dylan from it. However Dylan is sharp, and possesses more understanding than perhaps any other person in Noah's immediate circle, but being so young her parents feel the need to protect her rather than include her or share in her insights.

Dad is practical. He needs to fix a problem methodically and rationally; unfortunately Mom is about three steps ahead of him in terms of concern and has played out all the steps he would have tried, before he felt there was reason to try them.

Mom responds from instinct where her children are concerned. She is the most feeling of any of her family, and is driven to make people understand the intensity with which she feels/believes.

LOCATION /SETTING:

Welles Family Dining Room – it is comfortable and familiar. There are 4 settings at a dining table for 6, as Noah is expected home for dinner. They are a middle class family living in a smaller older home in a good neighborhood. The house has been well cared for and well kept, but it has the character that age brings.

SEASON / WEATHER / TIME OF DAY:

Season - Fall in Edmonton – the leaves are changing color outside the windows. We're in sweater season and we're turning the heat on in our houses (just barely).

Weather - It is a clear fall day, brisk, but with gorgeous hues in the sky outside as the sun is just beginning to set.

Time of Day – Dusk. Dinner time.

VISUAL STYLES / IMAGES:

Mystic River meets Frozen River – structure turns to chaos throughout the course of the film as the characters and the story unravel.

When we require structure (as we do in this scene) everything will be locked off and very still. Almost eerily perfect. Frames should be balanced and symmetrical.

The family environment should feel warm and inviting, and subtly shift as each of the characters retreat into themselves. Tungsten turns daylight. This scene should feel warm; this should be an environment we want to be in.

SOUND / MUSIC INSPIRATIONS:

These are inspirations for the entire piece, not just this scene.

Hawksley Workman (pre 2008) – Between the Beautifuls, For Him and the Girls, The Delicious Wolves

Jeremy Fisher – Lay Down, Fall for Anything, Left Behind
Joshua Radin – No Envy No Fear
Counting Crows – Anna Begins
Noah and the Whale – The First Days of Spring, Peaceful the World Lays Me Down

As far as sound design goes, I'd rather enhance diegetic elements rather than use too much score. Ideally I'd like to create the melancholic feeling of loneliness the way that "Drive" created tension using sound. I'd like to pull inspiration from Michael Haneke – no score.
As well, inspiration from 2001: A Space Odyssey - with simple sounds that are natural to a space being emphasized for effect. For example, the sound of the family chewing, and the sound of silverware hitting the plates.

OTHER NOTES (props, wardrobe, special effects, etc.):

Props – well balanced home cooked meal, place settings (4), serving dishes with food.
Plates are balanced with breaded chicken, potatoes, and salad.

Wardrobe – Mom – contemporary attire. Middle class, but slightly stylish with a hippy edge.
Dad – contemporary attire, functional middle class. Casual, Khakis.
Dylan – contemporary attire for a 12-year-old girl. Slight tomboy edge to it. Functional, but clearly put together herself. She takes more after Dad's style than Mom's.