I've spent a good portion of the past month or so talking about what not to do while you're at a pitchfest. But what do you do afterwards?

So you understand how this works, pitchfests are pretty brutal for us. Not only do we have to listen to some pretty crazy ideas, but like speed dating, we have to reject you at the end of the day. We have to break up with someone every 5 minutes for 8 hours.

Think that's easy? You try it.

We have to find unique ways to get you away from the table without leading you on.

I'm not sure how everyone does it, but I'll tell you my different techniques of rejecting someone. That way, you might have some idea what to expect when you get up from the table.

I have different levels depending on the project. We'll start at the best case scenario and work our way down the list:

THE BEST CASE SCENARIO:

I like your idea. I don't think you're a total fucking moron and I'm interested.

The result?

I hand you my card and ask you to send me your script.

This is clearly a positive thing.

THE SECOND BEST CASE SCENARIO

You have an interesting idea. I don't think you're totally fucking moronic and I'm interested.

The result?

I give you my email address and tell you to send me the first 15-20 pages of your script.

This can go either way. I need to know if you can write and 10 times out of 10, you can't. As I've clearly established that I can't work with someone who can't write. I get my answer right off the bat.

Now, the truly positive thing about this result is that you will usually get a pretty detailed email from me explaining what you need to do right away. I partially do this because I haven't felt very invested in you. It took me a few minutes to hear your pitch, a few minutes to read your pages and a few minutes to respond. This compared to hours pushing myself through your script?

This is the best scenario for you to learn.

THE FIRST WORSE CASE SCENARIO

You don't have an interesting idea. I'm pretty sure you're a little fucked up and I'm not interested.

The result?

I smile. Say "well, thank you for that. Do you have a one sheet?"

When I say, "Do you have a one sheet?" It means, "You will never hear from me, but you weren't too scary and I want to break your heart as easy as I can."

THAT is ALL it means. I just heard the pitch, why would I read the one sheet and think, "You know? On second thought?"

And I know it's rough but it's the harsh reality. Look at it this way, you don't get this:

<u>THE ABSOLUTE WORSE CASE SCENARIO</u>

I have completely NO interest in your idea. I think you're a COMPLETE fucking moron and, in a way, you kind of scare me a little bit.

The result?

I nod. I smile. I say, "Alright, well thanks for coming in."

This is as much of a dick as I get. I've heard worse. I think I do pretty good.

But what about after?

There's a thing in the industry called a "soft pass."

The soft pass is the "no, I'll call you," of Hollywood.

Guess what? Just like dating, means the same thing.

We're not going to call. Ever.

A lot of the screenwriting gurus will tell you that it's okay to check in after a couple of months. I can agree with that.

The safer way to do things? Just move on. Because you know what that call is? It sounds a little like this:

"Hey. It's Gary. I know it's been a couple of months and I haven't heard from you, but I was just thinking about you and we had a good time right? (insert awkward forced laugh) I mean, we could be good together, right? Let's at least give it a shot. I'm only asking for a shot."

Growing up an insecure fat kid, I left that message a lot.

Guess what? It never worked out.

Think it will for you?

Good luck. I hope it works out.

Always be respectful and realize that you got something that many haven't gotten: An industry professional to read your script.

But, under no circumstances, never be confused how you got there.

You paid for it.

And you got your hour just like the 8 before you.

I'm not going to date you, I'm not going to marry you and you're not going to "save me so I don't have to do this anymore."

Till next week…