

This week I'm solely going to talk about what you should do after you submit your script to a company.

So let's retrace...

You went to the pitchfest.

They asked to see your script at the table.

You submitted it.

Then what?

First off, and this is really important, you have to remember two things. One: we don't work for you. We don't owe you ANYTHING. Even if we asked for your script, we don't HAVE to read it. We don't owe you an email saying that we got it. We don't owe you an email saying that we're passing. Nothing.

But, and this is the key...

You have to have faith that we are doing our jobs.

See, it's in our best interest to find new writers and new material. That's what we do. Not exactly sure you understand that. I know this might come to a shock to you, but we actually get into trouble if we don't do our jobs. And our job? IS TO FIND NEW MATERIAL AND NEW WRITERS!!!

That's what we get paid to do!

And just like any other fucking job... if we don't do our job, then we're worthless and in danger of getting fired.

With that said... Don't bug us. We'll get to you when we get to you and remember, we don't owe you anything. We don't work for you.

With that being said, one of the questions I get asked the most is: when is an acceptable amount of time before you can follow-up?

I tell everyone the same thing: never. Just let it go. Put it out there.

Look, if we're doing our jobs right, then we a) have a stack a mile high of scripts on our desks and b) if we REALLY like your script, then you don't have to call us, we'll be calling you.

I get it. I'm a writer too. I know what how much time, effort and love gets put into a script. It sucks not knowing. But what happens is you end up burning bridges by being annoying. I mean the goal is to get your script read, right?

So why fuck that up?

Don't email me pages and then email me "did ya get it?"

Motherfucker, you JUST sent it to me five minutes ago! What? You just assume I'm sitting around with nothing better to do than to respond to email? Maybe I got a phone call. Maybe I decided to pick up a script and start reading. Maybe I got a case of massive explosive diarrhea and instead of taking two minutes to respond to your email, I'm running down the hall at full speed while clinching my cheeks.

You don't know.

So why assume I'm ignoring you?

You know what's so awesome about email? You don't have to answer it. Yet we live in an era where everyone has email all the time. iPhones. iPads. Just because I have that shit, doesn't mean I'm going to just immediately respond to you. I had this girlfriend once that if I didn't respond to a text message within a couple of minutes, I'd get a "hello?" message. Jesus, give a motherfucker a hot minute!

There's no hurry. So just relax. Calm down.

Also, don't put all of your eggs in one basket. I hope you're not sitting at home thinking, this script is ONLY for Warner Bros. NO ONE ELSE!! So you're sitting there rocking back and forth mumbling to yourself instead of doing what you should be doing. Sending it out. Keep working it. Don't rely on one company. BLANKET THE TOWN!!

And when you do, keep this in mind...

No means no.

A pass is a pass. You're not going to change our minds.

And no doesn't mean we want some other shitty script of yours that you think we'd like. If we passed on the script, we probably passed on your writing as well. So not only are we passing on your script, we're passing on you.

Now, if we just thought the script wasn't for us, but we liked your writing, we're probably going to tell you "feel free to send me something else of yours in the future."

Key phrase here is: in the future.

Don't turn around and send something else right away. You've burned that person for at LEAST six months. They are not going to turn around and immediately read you again. They need a break from you, so give it to them.

But if it's a no. It's a no. Accept it and move on.

Don't be like Nick.

Nick wrote me with a problem. It seemed he had written a sequel to the Friday the 13th franchise and wanted ME to help him get the script into the hands of New Line. I basically told him that we weren't interested. He also wrote me through the column and as a columnist, I tried to help him out. He was repped by an agent that I know. So I asked Nick what his agent was doing about it. He replied and emails went back and forth for a couple of days having a discussion about his options.

I gave him an honest dose of reality. He doesn't have the rights and New Line is going to give some random guy who decided to write a script the golden ticket into Hollywood.

Quick tangent here: Fanboys...stop it with the fucking sequels. It's never going to happen. Agents have told me in the past week that they get query letters from people who have written Star Wars sequels or another Jurassic Park. I once heard that some fanboy had written a Top Gun sequel. Hell, at one pitchfest, some guy pitched me a reboot of Smokey and the Bandit.

It's NEVER going to happen. So just forget about it. The only way and I mean the ONLY way that it might even, sorta be possible...is if you write something so grand, get really famous and have lots of respect and then, when your agent asks you what you want to do next...you bust out the "I want to make a Friday the 13th sequel."

At best, that would probably only get you a meeting with New Line to hear your pitch. And they would only do that out of respect.

Anyway, back to Nick.

I was truthful. I wanted to help the guy. So I told him that chances are it wasn't going to happen, that I couldn't help and that he should write something big, become famous yadda yadda.

He gets REALLY frustrated. Starts spouting off about how fucked Hollywood is and they don't know good material from a llama's asshole... blah blah blah. (more like boo-fucking-hoo.)

I responded with the truth: The business is tough. It is what it is. Don't let this ruin your life and move on. Work on the next one and let this marinate around town.

Then I get this:

“Don't get me wrong Manny, I appreciate the conversation but I am tired of things always turning out so weird regarding my situation and producers becoming pussies about F13. It's F13 for crying out loud and some of the most horrible sequels and remakes in history have already been part of this franchise. At least I'm trying to offer something good based on my original screenplay.

I guess there really is no one at New Line, Paramount or Warners concerned about this franchise and anything other than something good that's offered by previous writers or Platinum Dunes will be looked at. Looked at by whom I wonder? No one seems to really know. Too bad for me and the entire dwindling movie ticket buying world.

The usual thing to do at this point is to ignore this email although I was originally hoping something better would happen with you.”

Well, I didn't run for the hills, but I did tell him that he was going from frustrated writer to creepy person and maybe THAT'S why people don't respond to him. That maybe he should cut that shit out and he'd get a little further.

After a couple of point-counterpoint emails, I called his agent. Hey, I know the guy. I'm allowed. Asked his agent what was up with the dude.

His agent responded with: “That fucking guy. He just won't take no for an answer. He's running all over town with this Friday the 13th script and no one wants it because he doesn't have the rights.”

Then Nick sends me this:

Again, I appreciate your advice and I realize you are only trying to help. Again Manny, I thank you for it. What is so frustrating is that I know what a great idea this is and it kills me that the studios would shield themselves so much that it is nearly impossible to get it in front of them.

In no way does my 4 minute video presentation leak my story as it only hints to where it takes off from by showing previous history. I would love for you to at least watch it if you are familiar at all with the F13 franchise. It's an 8 meg email-able QuickTime file (small thumbnail sized video) of the edited together storyline from an earlier sequel that was originally spread out in pieces amongst many stupid sub plots in its release.

This is my last attempt to try to get you excited about it but I understand if you don't care at this point. Dave is right, I don't take no for answer regarding this but until New Line directly tells me that they've read it and NO - that is when the answer "no" would be satisfactory to me. Will you allow me to email just the video to you?

That's when I got fucking PISSED. I'm trying to help the guy and he goes back and tries to sell me on his fucking script after I passed on it. Not only did I pass on it, but I fucking passed on it multiple times AND told him that no one is going to want it.

Not only that, but he's not giving up! The only no he'll accept is a no from New Line? Who the fuck does this guy think he is?

What a dick. Don't fucking do that shit!

Till next week...