**Thursday Night – Mike Teaching – 7/15/2021**

**1. Step Mom**

Michael:We had some sound issues there. Thank you ladies for being the first ones up today. Okay let’s talk quickly, and then go again if you ladies are up for it.

Katie Recall: I did feel good and present. Sam brought me up faster than I was expecting to which was good because it didn't allow me to get in my head and while Genny looks beautiful always, it was hard seeing her so sick. I truly felt good about it until the last song came on. The alarm didn’t even pull me out, it wasn’t until the broke ass pussies that I got thrown a little but I was connected to Genny, myself, and the kids and Luke, but also her, she’s this great person and I kept asking what I did to deserve this. She’s this amazing person and now she has cancer.

Critique: Ok we’re getting a little into story there, how did it go? How did that take feel? Tell me this what are you expecting*? I’m expecting her to not be this. Maybe to have her tell me off or something. I’m not expecting her to want me to have her kids, to give me the kids.* That she actually wants you to have them. That she lost them once. You’re not expecting her to start off talking about how she’s not perfect. Okay so here’s my note, I want you to take a minute to recognize that this isn’t the scene you were expecting. She’s puling you in and telling you look I’m not perfect, and you’ll be fine. It's not like the other scenes. It starts with expectations and this isn’t a fight. It’s not a confrontation like on zoom.

Genny Recall:  *How are you?* Good under the circumstances. *Anything you want to say?* Not right now.

Critique: Two questions, why now? ….(no answer) ok – I get that. Stay there and physical state… you’re close right? Look I want to make sure that this is coming from a place where she has no other option she’s considered. You look great yes but I want you to dig in how you’re feeling right now, you're not well. This is the end of the chapter. Go there. Everything is heavier. Getting here was hard. That’s all.

Katie 2nd Recall: I did feel more present because I wasn't so focused on the cancer, I was focused on what was happening in front of me. It changed everything.

Critique: It changed everything, from the top. Are you guys cool to go again? I’m just thinking about where you are at and want to offer another point of view/shift. I think your attention was downward and the last note shifted you, it shifted your eyes, I love that you come in for a gun fight at some point you realize that this relationship is going in a different direction, I want you to now explore pulling her in as a friend, because I think they’re becoming family. I think they’re falling in love in a way. This is a love scene. I just want to see how far you can travel with that in the scene.[Something for the group: We’re not here (references head) anymore people. I want you to remember to cheat out a little and find a way to elevate it for the room so even David who’s at the end of the room can feel it.] Right now it’s a little small ladies. Open yourselves up a little more.

Genny 2nd Recall: *Miss how are you?* I’m okay.

Critique: I want every move to be heavy to hurt. Elevate that to the maximum and then hide it all. But here's the real note, what if you intend to say I’m not perfect, I lost Ben yes, but what if the rest of the scene isn’t planned? What if you discover this in the moment and in the doing of it. I want it to be a discovery.

Katie 3rd Recall: That was good, I don't remember it. *You were in pain, in agony.* Now I remember it, the friend thing changed it too. I couldn't take my eyes off of Genny. As a friend, and then I felt embarrassed at what I said about the wedding, when she said, I’m afraid of the same thing. There was camaraderie there. I also felt good about the beginning.

Critique: Ok I’m going to say this pro to pro, you have a bit of reverence in this scene. Reverence for it, and for Genny but don't be afraid to laugh, to have freedom. Look you were beautiful, and I think it wasn't that every moment was precious but the reverence was great. Maybe too great. I think by telling you to look at her as a friend it brought your view down a little. It wasn't a direction, but more of a process note, and you were able to look at her vs looking down at the scene beautifully after the note. *I did do the work on the happy stuff.* Yeah I saw that and it was beautiful.

Genny 3nd Recall:It felt good. I learned so many things from this scene and we played so much even in our rehearsals, we even did the comedy version of it, *I want to see that!* so I feel like we did explore a lot within the framework we had. For me, the first and last take, I was really in. *I agree.* I almost had a mini panic attack for prep because the truth is that I don't want to give her my kids. I had those moments where I just knew I had to do the best for my kids, but I didn’t want too. I don’t want too. Everything required so much more weight and was so heavy. Katie getting somewhere to go was also great, and me telling her that I’m not perfect, meant that I was trying to mother her and give her a tool. *But she try’s* *and she’s fun.* And you know how when you watch a movie you don't know what’s going on internally for them? I was feeling that. I was feeling that internal struggle so much.

Critique: The only reason I gave that note was because you’re dying and I loved the way you took it. The only reason I gave you the last note was because I wanted you to also be involved in what was happening, not just the Jesus moment, I just wanted you to have some discovery, and maybe the discovery was that she isn’t terrible. She’s fun. That the kids will be okay. This has been such an extraordinary journey for you two, from zoom to here, and even christening this place as our first scene. It was beautiful ladies. Great work.

**2. The Pelican Brief**

Reyneen Recall: I’m okay. I don't know. Sweaty and frantic. I guess…. I just don't know. I don’t know anything. *You know so much*. I guess I just don't know if it plays.

Critique: Forget if it plays. So you’ve made him do all this clandestine shit. I love the pacing, what if you’re pacing because you want to puke. Do you need to puke? Have you slept? I just don’t want you to pace for no reason. Maybe the pacing is to prevent you from puking all over the place. Okay once he’s in the room, I want two things to be in your head, 1. can I trust him and 2. thank God someone is here. *He also was trusted by my boyfriend, and is an amazing reporter.* Okay go do your prep.

Greg Recall/critique: I feel pretty good. I don't fully trust her and I think I’m hesitating on that because of the script because I think the script says he does trust her by this point. *So what are his sources?* I just found out that the person was dead 8 hours. *Does that change things?* Yes, and it’s definitely authentic. *So what does that mean?* Exactly that’s where I’m struggling. What does it mean.? *Let me ask you this. What if her reaction to this news is a test? Does that make sense?* Yeah that makes sense.  *What about the rest? How’s the prep?* I mean it’s good, she’s made me do a million little fucking things and run a god damn marathon.

Reyneen 2nd recall: I don't know – *Reyneen what’s going on? You’re present.* I think I’m just watching myself. *Reyneen, we all watch ourselves, but you're doing the work, it’s that or you’re either faking it well or maybe it’s that your just struggling now during recall but you’re doing the work and you are in it.* I guess I don't know, the circumstances aren’t playing on me, specifically escaping death.

Critique: Ok let’s talk frankly, do you need to go back and brush up on what’s happening in this script? Because you were there when we did this over zoom. *No I did the work.* Look I think what’s happening now is that you’re in distress right now, when is the last time you dodged death? 4 hour ago, I’ve been running, I have cash in my hand, I’m living out of a grocery bag and then I called him, made him go through all these hoops, *but did you escape death, wasn't there a car bomb?* No I was New Orleans and Verheik was holding my hand and then he was about to get me into protective custody but then he got killed, he was shot, and then I just ran, and got in a plane and came to New York. *Ok do you want to prep on that?* I did but it was yesterday. *I think it still plays today, it's the gravity that’s playing here and I don't think you’re not not taking that seriously but it needs to still be affecting you right now. Ok let’s go back to where you let him in.*  I think you’re thinking as an actor there, getting him to his light etc., but I think what if you’re wondering if you should let him in. I’m giving you the permission today fuck the audience, do it for yourself, and this has come up before, it’s after you get that permission that you let go. Okay so he gives you some news, what is it? *That the guy I was with is an imposter.* Okay I need you to freeze. Take that moment. Hold it. What does it mean?

Greg 2nd recall/critique: *How was that?* Good. *Ok here’s my only note, don't give her anything she expects. Fucking blow it up.*

Reyneen 3rd recall: It was fun. *How was the take?* It was all over the place. I feel like I didn't trust him when in reality he’s my only hope. *Did you watch yourself?* I think my arm was on my hip for a really long time. *God I was waiting to see when the arm was going to come off. Ok, Let’s talk.*

Critique: Listen to me woman, it was beautiful, you were present, you dealt with him, you straight up told him - no can I trust you!!! That was huge. Look the truth is that there is vey little that feels real in acting, everything we do feels like pretend sometimes. We have to look at a bunch of cameras and grips and its easy to say we’re full of shit. The truth is that it **is** pretend, it isn’t real, but all the work we do, here, is to at least make it feel real. Sometimes it will feel real and transformative but most of the time it’s hard and it won’t, 90 % of the time it won’t actually, but you can’t let that unravel the amazing work you’re doing on this stage. You cant let it unravel these riveting 3 minutes we just saw, because if we go down the rabbit hole and start calling our bluff, we get screwed. You just need to recommit to the circumstances and just show up. It’s always the time I also tell you to stop being careful and let go, that you go there. Is that helpful for you? *It is. I just have to play*. Look a while ago we established that you like to get the A, we all do, all actors, but the only thing to do is just to dig in. Re-trigger yourself, catch yourself, call your shit, and re-dig. Find your circumstances and deal with what’s in front of you. I mean I’ve faked it too, and we all do sometimes but you have to trust yourself and you did that towards the end, you dealt with it, just give yourself that freedom to play. I think you take yourself a little too seriously sometimes but free yourself, and as your peers have said, you did it just now. Ok last note, the last line, Matisse, carve that beat because it’s the last sentence of this scene and because by saying his name, Matisse now has a target on his back. Own that beat.

Greg 3rd recall/critique: *Hey you. How did that go? How did it feel to blow it up?* It was good. I was trying to straddle that thing of fucking it up while also not overdoing the note. *Was she in trouble?* Yeah she was, almost by what she didn’t say. *Do they end up together?* I think we do, Kevin knows more about it. I liked it though, it’s a part of my career concepts. Even the comedy of this last take. *I agree. I recommend you to watch State of Play. Read it.* [Kevin: you also have private investigator vibes]. *But I loved that take, I also loved that you blew it up.* Yeah and I was working with it, you know how some people take it too far? I was trying to find that balance. *You found it.*

**3. Philadelphia**

Michael: It’s really beautiful to see this scene up in person. Very different from Zoom. How was that for you gentlemen? How did that transition feel?

Brad Recall: Mostly good. Over zoom, I was wrapped in the song, it was very different in person, even in rehearsal it was different but I felt mostly good, except at the end where I felt the vulnerability and maybe a tad bit of embarrassment, but also sad that he left maybe….maybe. I don't know, it’s not romantic. But it was a nice surprise to feel that, I think it actually came from being in the same space.

Critique: I saw it too. It was so exposed and vulnerable and open, and that all happened because you took us on a ride, and you were even embarrassed for him too noy just yourself. I thought you were connected on zoom, even to the music, and I thought that was great but tonight was different, you made this about the music and the pleasure it brought to you, and I think that’s were the embarrassment came from. With that being said, open that up a little. Bring the opera singer closer. I think there’s an opportunity for you to get even more caught up in it, which is why it ends the way it ends. *I think I caught myself managing myself a little.* Well I think you also have a clunky prop. It even fell earlier right? *Yeah.* Ok here’s your note, I think you understand the deepness of this guy and of this scene, but I want to take the reverie farther, *the reverie?* you getting lost in it. This is all for you, I want you to take further than you did, and I also want you to take the beginning in the opposite direction. How close are you to the end? *Close, we’re at the beginning of it but he just fainted at the court.* Okay here’s the note, it’s all he could do to get through this party. Incontinence, everything that happens when you’re at the end is happening. I want you to be weaker in the beginning so that the music actually lifts up and gives you some life.

David Recall: It’s different obviously than staring into a screen, I mean you can connect but the dynamic was different here, you can take in the environment, the person,  *you can smell the aids.* I think my launch was good, all I wanted to do was work, and it was all that was on my mind. I think the only thing that was different was the props, because we didn't have those last time. It was fine though, it was definitely awkward at the end. *It was toe curling. What was that? It was too uncomfortable?* Yeah it’s just too much. I think he’s uncomfortable with how much he cares and I think he’s still working his way around all of it, his opinion, especially from the beginning of this movie, starting from not shaking his hand and now being here. A gay party. He also says that at the beginning of this scene, even his childhood, but now he’s learned so much. He’s had too. *And he’s put a face to him.* The song was interesting, it was fine.

Critique: Listen you put up a lot of work during COVID and you did it, and you got the confidence, and it translated here, **it was all here.** The confidence, you were locked in, no dance, you just brought it. David you are growing as an actor, and this character is growing as well. You feel like a pro, and I’ve seen you spin and sweat in the past but tonight you were a pro, and it’s a direct result of all the work you’ve done over this time. All the work you’ve put in. Amazing work. Okay let’s give you some notes. Did he drink at this party? *No.* Yep let’s give him some drinks so he can loosen up. He’s been to a gay party. It’s an experience; I think you needed something to loosen up. Ok the other thing the song, it’s also an experience – I want you to go along with him, which means come up from your seat. One more thing, when you tell him how you grew up, it’s an admission; it’s not something light. Beautiful David. You’re a fucking pro.

David 2nd Recall: I think I felt better on the first one. I guess it’s so small. I was trying to think of an organic time to move. *It fucked you up. I should have told you were to go. Did you get back in?*  I did, I just had a lot of David thoughts, the room became noticeable, this shirt is too fucking tight. *Fair enough, what else did I give you?* The monologue, it went well. I think had I not stopped myself, it would have been better. I think it definitely brought me out. Even when I sat down, it came back again. *Got it, next time, and this goes for everyone don’t self-eject – even if you you’re your line ok, what about the end?* I liked the end. *I did too. I wanted some love on him, and it was there and yet you so abruptly got up and you were so ashamed, and you played it beautifully and that last beat, oof where he goes Jesus. It was just too good..*

Critique: Look I just want to say to you guys, stopping a take is a bad habit. On set they get pissed when you eject, first of all, on the other side of that moment sometimes there’s genius. When you fuck up, or you forget your lines, just stay there. I know it’s excruciating for the actor but it’s fascinating for the audience so stick with it. Look part of what we do is prep and it becomes hard to find spontaneity, but when it happens, the whole room is looking. Hold on to that moment. Ok – actor thoughts, so your on the sofa thinking about that line you dropped, but once I look over all I see is that your immersed in thought. Little bolts of electricity that I’m projecting on to you and oftentimes, that the cut they will choose. Look this is beautiful work David, you have two plays coming up. You’re confident, you have work coming up, reel, and then you come up here like a pro and deliver, it’s really exciting to see. Own it, rise and let’s get you repped and out there. You’re ready. You both are.

Brad 2nd Recall*: Brad how are you?* Mostly good. Most of the lyrics that I’m not singing are the ones that are getting me the hardest. I think the screenwriter wrote the song and that was playing on me, but I was looking out and it felt different and it was a different experience. *Yeah I see it and for me it played best when you became her, when you said you were love and oblivion.* Yeah and I think the last take was less embarrassing, because I was doing it for me, until he spoke of course but I’m happy with it.

Critique:

Look it was beautiful, but look I think what was also beautiful but I gave you and Genny very similar notes and what I loved was that you both went inward*.* You didn't project it, you instead went to the place that dying people go, you were sick to your stomach and fixated on something and it showed. Look Brad, when we first met you told me you really wanted to expand on your drama, because your comedy was strong and you should absolutely stick to that, you’re hilarious, but you’ve also been putting in the work for a year an a half, and I just want to say you’re a real actor, you’re ready. You’re no longer practicing your chops, you’re there and like with David it’s a testament to your work and what you’ve done. You’re hirable. Ok is this coming up again? *We don't know, we’re thinking about it.* Do you guys have work coming up? *Yeah, Sam and I are doing Pillow Man and I’m debating shooting some stuff from the piece I wrote, maybe a sizzle reel. I’m thinking about it.* Have you gotten some feedback on it? Yep, I have it out there right now. Look if you believe in it, do it.