

SCRIPT ANALYSIS FINAL: *GET OUT*

The film's title, *Get Out*, is a subtle foreshadowing of the main action Chris, the protagonist, must take later when he fully comprehends the consequences of agreeing to spend the weekend with his girlfriend, Rose, and her family, the Armitages. *Get Out* follows Chris, a black man, and his interactions with the Armitages, a white, affluent family. The film depends on a viewer's knowledge of the racial tensions and prejudices black people have faced and continues to face in America to pre-fill in the gaps of why this interaction might not go pleasantly. Our pre-existing knowledge immediately sets the base for tension that the film will subsequently build on. Peele repeatedly plays with this tension by using Chris and Rose's relationship to comfort the audience immediately after high moments of anxiety and emotions. The relationship is the premising situation and what is most at work in this film, as the life-or-death predicament Chris finds himself in later stems from and clashes with his desire to further his romantic relationship. Ultimately, *Get Out* functions as a social commentary film that tackles issues like racism, cultural appropriation, and the objectification and exploitation of African Americans. Potential themes it emphasizes could be: "Societal issues like racism might not be as visible as we think they are, and we never know what someone's true intentions might be" or "Don't let your emotions override your gut instinct."

Love is the first stake. In Act 1, Chris has doubts as to whether he should meet his girlfriend's white family, the Armitages, who might hold racial prejudices. However, his desire to pursue his romantic feelings and further his relationship with Rose wins over, leading to him agreeing when Rose invites him to the family's house for the weekend. Dramatic tension originates from the difficulties that disapproval from Rose's parents of Chris will pose to the

relationship. Therefore, the dramatic question is, “Will Rose’s family truly approve of and accept Chris?” After Chris expresses his initial discomfort to Rose and she convinces him to stay at around 27:30, we begin Act 2 or the serious deliberation of the question. What’s unique about *Get Out* is that the Inciting Incident works like a crescendo where three incidents culminate into the Act One Lock and uncover the film’s arena: a secret society of affluent white individuals headed by the Armitages are obsessed with African Americans for their supposed superior genetics and body composition. They are so obsessed that they’ve developed a particular medical procedure called The Coagula, where the brains of white elderly individuals get transplanted into the bodies of those who are black, young, and healthy.

Furthermore, *Get Out* is unique because the highest-ranking antagonist is also the protagonist's first highest desire. In my opinion, Rose is the highest on the antagonist hierarchy because of how she exploited her relationship with Chris and her betrayal of Chris’ trust. Her ranking gets further influenced by the fact that she’s actively scouting out and bringing victims back to the estate to undergo the procedure. While Acts 1 and 2 build tension, Act 3 delivers the conflict centred on Chris’ attempt to escape from the Armitage estate. The devices most at work and which make *Get Out* notable are dangling effect and plants and payoffs. The film combines these with dramatic irony, misbehaviour, and metaphors (within horror and thriller genres) to deliver audiences a battle between the stakes of blood and love.

The hook, running from the beginning to 3:50, is an excellent example of posing a puzzle before the exposition. Right off the bat, the audience feels tension as we witness a man walking in a dark neighbourhood followed by a white car. In the background, the song “Run, Rabbit Run” establishes a sense of being hunted. At first, The dramatic question is: will something terrible happen to this man? This is followed up by the question: will he survive the kidnapping? The

film provides no immediate answer, so this scene serves as a dangling effect because it creates intellectual engagement by making the audience wonder about the cause of the abduction of this man. Trailer moments are hard to identify in this film without spoiling the entire movie, but the white car pulling up to the man with the “Run Rabbit Run” song playing in the background is a great trailer moment as it sets the feel of being the prey and being watched at all times. The exposition sequence follows this hook.

Sequence A, which I’ll title “Preparing to Visit the Armitages,” runs from 3:50 to 13:40 and accomplishes three objectives. The first is that it introduces and establishes the relationship between Chris and Rose to the audience and introduces Rose as the MRC. We understand that their connection is profound, and we are beginning to invest in their relationship, as the first thing they do when Chris opens the door for Rose is share a passionate kiss. This scene is followed by more scenes of Chris on top of Rose in bed, playfully arguing and kissing. The film presents the main conflict of Act 1 during these scenes, which is that Chris will be visiting Rose’s parents, but her parents don’t know that he’s black. We understand that both of their desires are to be with each other and that this will be impacted by the obstacle of how Rose’s parents treat Chris. Their relationship is at stake here. We’re reassured that nothing bad will happen to Chris by Rose, who seems incredibly caring as she plays with Sid the Dog, helps Chris pack, forbids him from smoking, and is protective of him when they meet the police officer. The second objective is to introduce us to the second MRC, Rod, Chris’s best friend. While Chris and Rose seem relatively normal, Rod is full of misbehaviours. He works for the TSA, and the first thing he tells Chris is that “the next 9/11 is gonna be on some geriatric sh\*t.” He’s silly, unfiltered, and cheeky, and he adds to the tension by constantly reminding Chris that “he shouldn’t go to a white girl’s parents’ house.” Sequence A’s third objective is to introduce four plants and payoffs: (1)

Chris is a photographer, and taking a picture will save his life later. (2) Rose doesn't want Chris smoking because it's the health of his body the Armitages want. (3) Rose takes the life of a deer, and Chris uses a deer later to take Dean's life. I would not count Chris agreeing to visit the Armitages as a distinguished Inciting Incident, for it doesn't force him to respond in some way. Chris may feel a little uncomfortable about the situation, but it has not created instability in his life. However, as his agreeing to visit does lead to the main conflict, I would say deciding to visit is the most left side of a crescendo of Inciting Incidents.

Sequence B, which I'll title "Meeting the Armitages," begins when the couple arrives at the estate at 13:40 and runs till 28:10. This sequence works to give a false sense of reassurance that the family will approve of Chris. Right away, we feel a sense of relief that the Armitages are not racist because they have a black groundskeeper. This sense of reassurance turns into suspense when we're shown the groundskeeper in a shot just staring at the front door as Rose's parents, Dean and Missy Armitage, welcome Chris. During this scene, Dean drops a barrage of plants and payoffs on the audience: (1) Missy is a psychiatrist, and we'll soon learn how her abilities are crucial to the family's sinister plans. (2) Jesse Owens beat Dean's dad in the Olympics, and "he almost got over it." The audience will later discover that his dad didn't get over it because he transplanted his mind into Walter. (3) The basement is sealed off. We later discover that the operation and containment room are in the basement. (4) In the kitchen, We're introduced to Georgina, the maid. Dean tells Chris they keep a piece of his mother in there. The payoff comes later when we realize Dean literally keeps a piece of his mother in the kitchen because he transplanted her brain into Georgina. This sequence also settles the uneasiness we felt about a white family with black servants. We're reassured that nothing is going on as Dean just couldn't bear to let Georgina and Walter go after their role as caretakers for his parents ended. It's funny

to note that this doesn't even answer the question of why a white family has black servants, but Dean's emotions in speaking about his parents, Chris' nonchalance, and Dean's transition to the fact that he would've voted for Obama a third time quickly dispels our thoughts about the weird dynamic. Even though we, as the audience, feel less uneasy about Dean and Missy after their explanations and lower our guards, all their comments are microaggressions contributing to Chris' uneasiness. We pick our guard back up when we meet Georgina, and tension arises when she appears to be in a trance when pouring drinks for the family and sends a spine-chilling stare to Chris when Missy opens the kitchen door. I would list this as the second Inciting Incident in the middle of the crescendo, as it takes the tension to a whole new level and is the point where Chris begins to realize that something is very off about the family. Jeremy, Rose's brother, adds to the tension through his misbehaviours. He has no sense of boundaries and is socially awkward as he talks about Rose biting her last crush's tongue off, her toenail collection, Chris' superior genetic makeup for MMA, and tries to wrestle Chris – ALL WHILE AT THE DINNER TABLE! This is the final event in a chain of events that make up the Inciting Incident, as this is the first time Chris verbalizes his discomfort and acknowledges that these incidents might be a problem. However, this sequence ends with Chris finding comfort in Rose and marks the end of Act 1 as the start of the following sequence is a serious deliberation phase on whether the family will accept Chris. Every time Chris finds comfort in Rose, it escalates/deepens their relationship as she provides him stability through reassurance. She is his support pillar and why the Inciting Incident is a chain of events rather than one. She settles his discomfort and prevents him from realizing the problem earlier.

The next sequence, "The Sunken Place," starting at 28:10 and ending at 42:10, which is the beginning of Act 2, establishes Georgina and Walter as dangling effects and introduces us to

The Sunken Place, which is the Act 1 Lock. Georgina and Walter's misbehaviours are so off-putting, and as the audience, we're hoping for an explanation as to what could've resulted in their misbehaviours. For example, we're jump scared by Georgina at 29:30, who's walking around the house in the middle of the night, at 30:30, who stares cross-eyed at her reflection in the door, and at 38:20, who seems to be frazzled with her hair (Georgina literally gave me nightmares). Walter misbehaves by sprinting around outside in the dark, which we'll realize later is the payoff to Dean's comment about his dad almost getting over losing to Jesse Owens. His dad didn't get over it and decided to transplant his mind into a black body to keep practicing his sprints. Walter also makes inappropriate comments about Rose, saying she's "top of the line" and a "real doggone keeper." Missy's non-consensual hypnotization of Chris is the Act 1 Lock. Before, the Armitages made Chris uncomfortable verbally and physically, but Missy takes it a step further by targeting Chris psychologically by violating Chris' privacy and forcing him to talk about the death of his mom, where we realize that the deer also acts as a metaphor for Chris' mom, who like the deer, was left suffering after a hit and run. Subsequently, Missy drops Chris into The Sunken Place, which is a plant and payoff as its significance will pop up later when the main tension of Act 2 reveals itself. Chris in The Sunken Place is another excellent trailer moment as it shows a key plot line in the film without giving anything away in a trailer. The Sunken Place also serves as social commentary as it can be interpreted as a metaphor for the history of segregation of African Americans – disassociated from the rest of society and placed into their own worlds. This sequence ends once again with Rose comforting Chris. These scenes where Rose comforts Chris dial the tension back down and dismiss the family's red flags for Chris and the audience.

Sequence D, or the beginning of Act 2, “Arrival of the Friends,” runs from 42:10 to 1:02:45 and works to reveal the true intentions of the Armitages. To the Armitages and their friends, their behaviours are normal, but to us and Chris, they are misbehaviours. It begins with The Greenes wanting to see Chris’ golf form even when he’s made it clear he doesn’t play golf, followed by Nelson admiring Chris and Lisa making a sexual remark by asking Rose, “is it better?” This is proceeded by another elderly couple stating that “black is in fashion.” Chris’s expression conveys that these conversations unsettle him, but he chooses to walk away instead of addressing them. He attempts to find solace in Logan King, another African American at the party, but instead of sharing similarities, King’s dialogue is stiff and old-fashioned. King’s relationship with Philomena, someone who appears to be much older than him, adds to his misbehaviour. Chris becomes more disconcerted when he sees King spin himself around to a crowd, showing something off. Chris succeeds at making himself somewhat comfortable when he bumps into another plant and payoff when Jim Hudson, a blind art dealer, compliments Chris’ incredible eye for photography. At this point, Jim’s presence dials the tension down and calms the roller coaster of discomfort we feel as the audience. Soon, we find Chris going to Rose for comfort once again. The difference this time is Chris calls Rod and discusses his discomfort. This phone call gives Chris a heightened sense of awareness and escalates the tension. Right after, Georgina misbehaves again by having a similar style of speech as Logan King, correcting Chris’ use of “snitch” with “tattletale.” The misbehaviour that turns Chris on high alert is when she begins to cry while laughing. He finally realizes he needs to get out when he takes a picture of Logan King, awakening him from The Sunken Place, leading to King screaming at him to get out. This is the midpoint that brings the story to a whole new level as Chris finally realizes he must act on the problem. This is also the first plant and payoff of Chris’ job as a photographer as

it's taking a picture that gives him the clarity he needs. The sequence ends with Chris telling Rose he needs to go while the Armitages are hosting a silent auction for him. This scene is the first time that the dramatic question of Act 2 is brought up: will Chris be able to get out? This silent auction scene is also dramatic irony because we know Chris is being auctioned off, but Chris doesn't, as he's off with Rose. This sequence answers the main tension question: "Will the Armitages approve of him?" The answer is "No," but we're presented with an alternative scenario where Chris can still achieve his desires as Rose agrees to leave with him. Rose's agreement marks the peak of the escalation of their relationship as it shows she's willing to give up her family for him.

Chris discovering that Rose has been lying about him being the first black person she's dated in Sequence E, running from 1:02:45 to 1:10:49, is the first sign that this alternative scenario is impossible. We'll call this sequence "Rose is in on it." This is another instance of dramatic irony as we know Chris has found Rose's box of pictures with her past relationships, but Rose does not. The fairy tale scenario of Chris and Rose ending up together proves impossible when the Armitages surround Chris. He repeatedly asks Rose to get the car keys, and she responds that she can't find them. As Chris gets more frustrated, Rose's terrified look disappears, and she reveals that she's had his car keys this entire time and can't give them to him because she's in on the family's plot. Rose's inability to find the car keys at first is estrangement in their relationship, but the revelation that she had the car keys and just didn't want to hand them over is the separation of their relationship. This is also the point where Rose transitions to the role of the main antagonist, and Rod gets promoted to MRC. Rose is the main antagonist rather than Dean or Missy because Rose is the one who scouted Chris out and brought him into this mess by manipulating his emotions. As the audience, we have feelings and emotions



invested in their relationship as well, and this betrayal makes us realize that Rose not only manipulated Chris from the get-go of their relationship but also manipulated us to believe that she'll always be there for Chris, thereby making us identify her as the main antagonist.

Sequence F, starting at 1:10:49, works by hinting at an answer to the main tension: will Chris be able to get out? It shows Rod calling Chris and looking up Logan King, A.K.A. Andre Hayworth, who we see has a missing persons case. This is an obligatory scene as it answers the question we have had since the beginning of the film, which is what happened to the man who was kidnapped. This answers the first dangling effect of what happened to him after the kidnapping, but it introduces a new one where we are left wondering what was done to him between the abduction and his reintroduction as Logan King that made him behave the way he did at the party (E.g. dating a woman more than twice his age and showing his body off to the Armitage's friends). Rod goes to the police for help, but they refuse to take him seriously, all while Chris is tied up in the basement of the Armitage estate. We're given a sense of hope when Rose picks up Rod's call, and Rod begins to record her, but Rose is too bright and completely changes the topic of the call to something inappropriate. We believe the answer at this point is that Chris will not be able to get out because Rod cannot acquire the evidence the police need to take action. This is the worst-case scenario and marks the End of Act 2.

Sequence G delivers the Resolving Twist and the beginning and middle of the Climax. It begins at 1:22:00, and we'll title this "Chris fights back." We get the payoff of Jim Hudson, the blind art dealer, when he reappears and tells Chris about The Coagula. Jim is undergoing the procedure because he wants Chris' eyes. The Sunken Place is brought up again, and we find out that it's the perpetual state of those who have their bodies taken over. This sequence also finishes the dangling effect of Georgina, Walter, and Logan, who we all now know have undergone the

procedure. The Resolving Twist occurs when Jeremy comes in to retrieve a passed-out restrained Chris from the holding room. Chris pretending to be passed out and then knocking Jeremy out is the Resolving Twist, as it's the only chance Chris could have survived his predicament. If Chris really had been passed out and brought to Dean by Jeremy, Dean would have successfully performed the Coagula procedure on Chris. This scene is surprising but inevitable as Chris must stay alive for the film to continue. We continue moving towards the Climax with every Armitage that Chris defeats. A payoff appears when Chris uses the head of a deer to kill Dean, as this traces back to the plant of the deer Rose hit at the beginning. The killing comes full circle as an Armitage took the life of a deer earlier, but now it will be a deer that takes the life of an Armitage. Another payoff that appears is when Chris is fighting with Walter and awakens him from the Sunken Place by taking a picture, tracing back once again to the plant of Chris as a photographer. This is the height of the physical Climax of his battle against the Armitages, for once Chris awakens Walter, Walter shoots Rose, knocking the last surviving Armitage down. However, I believe there is a psychological climax that proceeds this scene. This sequence ends at 1:36:00, right after Walter shoots Rose.

Whereas the prior scene with Walter shooting Rose represents the physical defeat of the Armitages, Sequence H or "The T-S-motherf\*ck\*n-A," running from 1:36:00 till the end, highlights the height of the psychological Climax where Chris is presented with the opportunity to deal the final blow to a dying Rose, but his emotions and feelings for her clash with his ability to accomplish this. This scene encapsulates Chris' internal struggle as we see that he so badly wants to strangle Rose to death for the horrifying ordeal she put him through, but he cannot as he has not gotten over his love for her. Right when we think Chris is free, the presence of flashing blue and red lights creates new instability: Chris will now have to deal with the law. This

heightens the tension once again, as we know through our understanding of police racial profiling in the status quo just how bad this looks on Chris: Chris is a black man who was just looming over a struggling white woman, who is now calling out to the police car for help. But it's not the police. It's Rod, the T-S-motherf\*ck\*n-A! This is the obligatory scene that we have been waiting for from Rod. All of Rod's past attempts to help Chris have led to failure, so this scene is the promised scene where Rod finally succeeds in helping his friend. This scene is also another resolving twist as we find out the red and blue lights are from Rod's TSA car, and Chris is now 100% free. The film's ending also presents us with the Denouement or the end of Chris and Rose's relationship. Rose lies on the road dying as Chris drives off with Rod, not offering her any help.

In the aftermath, we see that Chris is just wide-eyed and emotionless, which might just be him trying to digest his shock and how he will go about romantic relationships in the future. This scene might also be a scene of reflection where Chris is thinking about the resolution he has come to. The only thing Chris walks away with at the end of this movie is his own life. He has achieved none of what he set out to achieve at the beginning, which was to further his relationship with Rose and to gain the acceptance of her family. In the beginning, the worst-case scenario for his relationship in Chris' mind was that Rose's family wouldn't accept him and that he and Rose would just return to the city together. In the end, he realizes that the worst-case scenario for his relationship is that his girlfriend and her family literally just tried to kill him, and his only way to escape was by fighting back and killing them. Act 3 answers the main tension posed in Act 2: will Chris be able to escape from the Armitages? The answer is: Yes, he will, but at the cost of his relationship. The film ends on a somewhat comedic note, with Rod fulfilling his

role as the cheeky out-of-pocket MRC by believing it's the perfect moment for him to say: "I told you not to go in that house."

Through the use of dangling effect, plant and payoff, dramatic irony, and metaphor, situated within the genres of horror and thriller, *Get Out* presents a captivating social commentary on racism in today's society while also delivering a battle between the stakes of blood and love.