



**jodyhadlock@gmail.com** 10:43 AM (2 hours ago)

Hi Paul,

Here's my thinking behind my beat sheet:

I decided to open with Buck Franklin giving a speech about buying war bonds during WWI to show that he's "making a difference" and is respected, the things most important to him. And to also show the improved relations between whites and blacks as they came together to fight a common cause during WWI. Of course when the black soldiers came back from the war things regressed for them, there was no change in their status. And it's a way to introduce John Ross, the young soldier who was affected so much by the 1921 riot that he ended up in a state asylum.

I wrestled over whether to include the Baptist controversy—it's a minor part of the story, but it was also one of the reasons Franklin moved his family to Tulsa, and I thought it was a good example to illustrate the theme stated by Franklin's wife, Mollie. Franklin's autobiography goes into more detail. Rentiesville, OK was an all-black town and because he wouldn't join the majority Baptist church, one time Franklin's horse was shot and another time he was beaten up by blacks in his own community! That, combined with what happened in the Shreveport courtroom, prompted the move to Tulsa, which had a much larger black community (9,000 vs 1,000) where one's religion wasn't as important. If it makes it too complicated, I can cut the Baptist part of it. I can even have the whole movie set in Tulsa if it works better that way. What I'm trying to show is that Franklin moved to Tulsa to get away from racism (and hostilities in his small town) and instead ran right smack into it in a really big way. To me, the move is a need, but perhaps I'm not illustrating it well enough yet.

I can also cut the part about the landman offering to buy Franklin's property if it doesn't work. I included it to show how cautious Franklin was. There's something else I could possibly use to illustrate his character. Franklin was the kind of man who would counsel a couple to stay together instead of divorcing, which would mean he wouldn't make any money handling a divorce, but he felt it was the right thing to do. Or I could make something up...

Re the B-story, I don't think I really understand it yet. Would John Ross be the B-story? You also mentioned the sheriff could make a great minor character with his inner conflict. I chose to create a fictional central racist character who is shown throughout Acts 2 and 3, but I'm not sure whether that should be the B-story or something else? I'm kind of confused about the B-story, and how many subplots I can/should have.

Re the young black man accused of assaulting a white girl, Franklin didn't see it, just heard about it. I've been so focused on Franklin that I forgot to include what happened to the suspect. This is what happened: A shoe shiner named Dick Rowland got into an elevator in a building in the white section of town, tripped, and accidentally touched the elevator operator's arm. A reporter heard about the incident—rumors were already circulating, blowing the "incident" out of proportion. The ensuing article in the paper alleging that Rowland had assaulted the young white woman fanned the flames. Rowland was never charged because the accusation was

**Commented [PP1]:** Hi Jody...so let's address the questions you have here in this email, then I can brainstorm the BEAT SHEET with a bit more detail and we'll see if that answers come...vamos!

**Commented [PP2]:** I've worked on quite a few true stories both myself and with students. It's a challenge to know how FAITHFUL to be. My first movie was based on

**Commented [PP3]:** Well, you say it yourself that it's a minor part of the story. It's more important to Franklin PERSONALLY, as a character builder. But story-wise, you

**Commented [PP4]:** We need the smaller stuff—the Baptist church incident, this Rentiesville incident, to show

**Commented [PP5]:** What a different world, huh? I might be crazy but I'm not seeing why all this stuff can't be mov

**Commented [PP6]:** It's good you're up for considering cutting it. You may not have to. What we're doing here is basically brainstorming. I'm going to send you one of my

**Commented [PP7]:** That is very much how I'm leaning right now. FIRST KEY IMAGE is Franklin moving his family to Tulsa. THEN you get as much of the first act as is now in

**Commented [PP8]:** Yes, I can see that. Perhaps he can TALK to his wife about the Baptist church or Rentiesville stuff, so we make it 1-2 pages vs 10. But the set up WILL

**Commented [PP9]:** It might work, but there's JUST NO TIME for it. you can do all things in 100 pages. That's all you have. Some stuff has to go because there's no time for it.

**Commented [PP10]:** I like showing Franklin's spirit in the move, in the hope we see in his eyes early on, then show

**Commented [PP11]:** You had John Ross in here and I wasn't quite sure what you were going for. B-Story is more a TV script term. He's a major secondary character but I'm r

**Commented [PP12]:** Stop worrying about B-stories. This is a movie, it's not like there's ONE secondary character arc. There are five of them...

**Commented [PP13]:** You have as many subplots as are necessary, there's no one number. B-story, C-story are more TV terms.

**Commented [PP14]:** Yeah, that can't happen. It's all interconnected. And this is why you might have to dump the Baptist church—because if you have no time, and you hav

**Commented [PP15]:** Great, it's great you've researched this. OK, we can totally use this. The major change I'd make is it's not some random kid we just met—it's John Ross. It

proven to be false. I could have Franklin witness the incident if that would work better. And/or I can certainly include a scene after the riot where Franklin learns what happened to Rowland. Supposedly both Rowland and the elevator operator left Tulsa not long after the riot.

Re the finale, I totally get what you're saying about the insurance policies. I can definitely take that out. The big thing is the ordinance that would have kept nearly the entire community from rebuilding. There were some wealthy blacks in Greenwood, but a lot of the residents were manual laborers and domestic servants who worked in the white part of town. Just had an idea.... I could have another character, a woman who works as a maid in the white section. But my story is about Franklin, so I'm not sure I should create more characters. And it seems like they would need to intersect somehow.

Based on your comments on my final assignment, do I need to get to the riot more quickly? I'm wondering whether starting the riot at 25 pages in would be too quick. Thinking about it now... 50 pages in seems too long to wait. Ugh, what to do!

1

## Greenwood Beats

**Commented [PP16]:** I care but DON'T care about what actually happened. The movie is a movie, a fictional representation, not a documentary.

Everything is interconnected. Franklin up on that stage, a black soldier just back speaks, gets applause, they meet, it's Ross. Ross is in an elevator and something happens, he's arrested. Franklin is brought in. Folks in town want blood, seek to lynch the kid. THIS leads to the riot?

A happens. Because A happens, B happens. B cant happen independently of A. C happens from the causality of A and B.

**Commented [PP17]:** Yeah, no way that can be the climax.

**Commented [PP18]:** Didn't something like this happen in New Orleans and the poor neighborhoods? Developer interests wanted to greedily come in?

**Commented [PP19]:** Nope, too late. Only characters here at the end are people we've established earlier.

Got to figure out the major beats, then fill in around them like puzzle pieces. WHEN does the riot happen? At the MIDPOINT? It's not the climax of the movie. Is it the END OF ACT 2? Maybe. Can't be end of act 1, that's too soon. Riot is probably end of act 2. What's end of act 1? How about the arrest of John Ross for this bullshit charge in the elevator? The pages from your previous Act 1 can be found to build out Ross and the Sheriff plus the Antagonist here in ACT 2.

ACT 3 then becomes how Franklin impacts this situation and perhaps saves the day, through his court prowess, they DO get to rebuild.

I need Franklin to MATTER in this story, not just react to other people's issues. I liked him being directly put in danger, keep doing that.

**Commented [PP20]:** Yes, this is the key. I don't think you can get there by 25, there's too much to establish. But if you have the kid arrested at 25, then 25 to 50 would be establishing the town forces—the sheriff, the bad guy, Franklin brought in, Franklin put in danger (wife too, she's dropped out of the story), leading to the midpoint explosion, the riot. I need closure of the kid's case—does Franklin get him off and THAT sparks the riot? See what I'm trying to do? Causality, tying one event to the next. Inevitability.

Hope this helps. I'll send you some attachments on step outlines that should help.

Keep going!

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