Script Analysis: "CODA" — Part 2: Plot

A week-long analysis of this movie which was a big hit at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival. Download. Read. Discuss.

Reading scripts. Absolutely critical to learn the craft of screenwriting. The focus of this bi-weekly series is a deep structural and thematic analysis of each script we read. Our daily schedule:

Monday: [Scene-By-Scene Breakdown](#)
Tuesday: [Plot](#)
Wednesday: Characters
Thursday: Themes
Friday: Dialogue
Saturday: Takeaways

Today: Characters.

Characters are the players in our stories. They participate in scenes, move the plot forward through action and dialogue, influence each other, evolve and change. Each has their own distinct backstory, personality, world view, and voice. When a writer does their best, digging deep into their characters, tapping into their *souls*, the players in our stories magically lift up off the printed page and come to life in a reader's imagination.

But there's this: In a screenplay, characters exist for a reason. Hence my principle: Character = Function. Writers can shade and shape a story's character in limitless ways. But if you dig down deep enough, you can find each character's narrative function, and that can become a lens through which you develop the players in your stories.

Same thing with script and movie analysis: Look at each character and think about why they exist and what their function is.

Today, we discuss the characters in the script for *CODA*. You can download the script [here](#).

A list of the key players:

Ruby

Jackie

Frank

Leo

Arthur

Miles

Screenplay by Sian Heder, based on a motion picture by Victoria Bedos & Stanislas Carré de Malberg & Éric Lartigau & Thomas Bidegain

Plot summary: As a CODA (Child of Deaf Adults) Ruby is the only hearing person in her deaf family. When the family's fishing business is threatened, Ruby finds herself torn between pursuing her love of music by wanting to go to Berklee College of Music and her fear of abandoning her parents.

Major kudos to **Laura Bolton** or doing this week's scene-by-scene breakdown.

To download a PDF of the breakdown , go [here](#).

For Part 1, to read the Scene-By-Scene Breakdown discussion, go [here](#).

For Part 2, to read the Plot discussion, go [here](#).

To access over **100 analyses of previous movie scripts**

we have read and discussed at Go Into The Story, go [here](#).

I hope to see you in the **RESPONSE** section about this week's script: *CODA*.