

The Business of Screenwriting: "Everyone is here because of us"

[Scott Myers](#)

It is late spring 1988. I am in San Diego where *K-9* is being shot. It's my first day on a movie set. Ever. The scene the crew is shooting is the one where Dooley (James Belushi) enters a seedy bar seeking information on a bad guy named Benny the Mule (Pruitt Taylor Vince). Things go from bad to worse for Dooley until Jerry Lee intervenes in his unique fashion.

So I meet Belushi. The director. A few of the other actors. Some crew members (including [Gary Frutkoff](#), at the time an assistant art director, but for many years a production designer, and still one of my good friends). It's all exciting, dizzying, and very, very cool.

As I'm standing there watching people buzz around, my writing partner says something that I had never considered before:

"Everyone is here because of us."

That's right, I think. If it hadn't been for us cracking the story, me going away and writing it... if it hadn't been for us, not one of these people currently going about their

business would be here.

No producers. No director. No actors. No crew. No location.
No nothing.

Sie sind die zwei cleversten Cops der Stadt.

Der eine
ist nur etwas
schlauer als
der andere.



JAMES BELUSHI

***Mein Partner
mit der kalten Schnauze***

“K-9”

MIT JERRY LEE IN SEINER ERSTEN ROLLE

The GORDON COMPANY Production. Ein ROD DANIEL Film. "K-9" MEL HARRIS Drehbuch STEVEN SIEGEL & SCOTT MYERS
Mit MILES GOODMAN, DEAN SEMLER, A.C.S. Ein Produktion STEVEN SIEGEL, Ausführendes DONNA SMITH
Produktion LAWRENCE GORDON, CHARLES GORDON Regie ROD DANIEL. EIN UNIVERSAL-FILM IM VERLEIH DER

The German title for the movie: "My partner with the cold nose."

It's at this moment that I realize, perhaps for the first time in my life, the power words can have. That spec script — 112

pages, pounded out on an Apple 2C computer, printed on a dot matrix printer, selling for high six figures, surviving the inevitable development hell process, a race with *Turner & Hootch* to get done first — set into motion everything related to what was transpiring in front of my bedazzled eyes.

Everybody involved in the development, production, post, and marketing of a movie has a connection to it. But nobody can feel what the writers who originate the story can.

Creating something... out of nothing.

I can not describe to you precisely those emotions as I let those words — “Everyone is here because of us” — sink into my consciousness. But I do know this: It feels good.

The next day on the set is... eh... not so special. It's then I realize the tedium that goes along with film or TV production. It's like that line from William Goldman: “The most exciting day of your life is the first day on a movie set. The most boring is the second day.”

But nothing can ever take away that moment where I realized that my creativity had contributed to shifting Hollywood's time-space continuum just a *little* bit by initiating this project and causing well over 100 people on a film crew to show up on a sunny day in San Diego to try to make a little movie magic.

The Business of Screenwriting is a weekly series of Go Into The Story posts based upon my experiences as a complete Hollywood outsider who sold a spec script for a lot of money, parlayed that into a screenwriting career during which time I've made some good choices, some okay decisions, and some really stupid ones. Hopefully you'll be the wiser for what you learn here.

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