

Some thoughts about the 10-minute playscripts

A quick read of the scripts, with no need to mark them, gives an insight into how students are working. All of the students in this random sample have an awareness of how to write a playscript, relative to a novel, with all of the following emerging in the work:

- Use of interior monologue
- Strong audience awareness
- Good use of underspecification (the students understand they only need to provide minimal details, with gaps filled in by the acting, but also by an awareness of what has already occurred.
- Crafting action and placement of lines for dramatic effect
- Character motivation
- Use of stage directions written in a minimal style
- Use of lighting and staging
- Use of setting for effect

In reading the scripts, the teacher can gauge if students are struggling in any way. One or two use contemporary language not suited to this period piece (e.g. use of 'garage' in F), some have limited content, but even those students seem able to manage the form. For example, J's response needs developing, but the instruction 'All goes black' shows a keen awareness of dramatic effect and how to use language economically.

Not only has this work motivated the students, it has helped cement their understanding of the novel and to think hard about how meaning is communicated in different forms.

A



Audience is sat in a circle on a slight slope in an auditorium.

The lighting is bright and natural and mimicking daylight.

(lights are dim but slowly brighten. Meshak slowly walks nearer to the cottage. There is mumbled chatter coming from inside. Meshak leans closer.)

Alexander: Melissa, I... (the rest is muffled)

Melissa: Alexander, I love you, I truly do.

(They hold hands and look at each other lovingly. Meshak's eyes widen.)

Meshak: But- (to himself)

My angel-

(Meshak lets out a cry of despair. Melissa rushes to the window.)

Melissa: Must be a hound. Alex, would you check the door?

(Melissa shuts the curtains)

(Meshak stumbles to the ground and clutches his face, then lays there in sorrow. He hears the familiar sound of Melissa's voice and frantically gets to his feet and runs away.)

Melissa: How odd. You do not have a dog, do you Alexander?

Alexander: No, I don't.

Melissa: Very odd indeed...

(B.)

~~type~~

(Bright natural lights)

(gall~~ing~~ trotting)

Alexander - "This is a great galloping field!" Let's go for it!"

Thomas - "Ok"

~~Ad~~

(Thomas fails to get the horse into a canter)

Alexander - "Come on you've got to give him more leg than that!"

Thomas - "Ok?"

10 (Thomas gives to nunch leg. And the horse spooks and bolts)

Alexander - "Nice!"

~~(Thomas gallops)~~

Thomas - "Saw Ahhh"

(Thomas gallops off)

Alexander - "Good lord Thomas are you ok? Did he buck?"

Thomas - "Yes, I am ok thank you but

bii

"I've never ridden before."

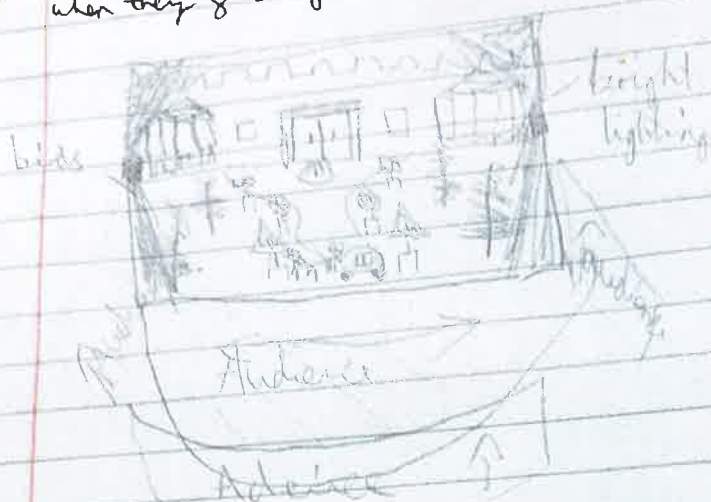
(Thomas gets up and sees his horse has bolted away.)

Alexander - "Here mount my horse, we shall ride back to the cottage before I go and get your horse."

Thomas - "Thank you ~~to~~ dearley Alex."

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A moment I would like to see in the play version of *Cream Man's* when they first get to ashbrook.



Alexander, Driver 1, Driver 2, Mrs Lynch and Thomas are sitting in a carriage that has at the end of the drive way. bird sounds are playing.

Alexander, here we are, ashbrook manor.

Thomas, gasps ~~what~~ you live here?

Alexander, well ~~um~~ yes, it is my house.

Mrs Lynch, come on now lets get out of the carriage boys.

Thomas, Alexander and Mrs Lynch exit the carriage, Thomas stares in awe at the house.

⑦

Scene

wagon is tumbling along a rocky path leaving the poorest
the mules come to a stop OTIS jumps off.

OTIS: Stop here. Throw them in.

MESHAK jumps off the back of the wagon and hauls a
sack over his shoulder

MESHAK stops and looks at the wrigling sack he has on
his shoulder He puts it down and digs a hole.

OTIS: (short and cold) What do matter throw them in now
boy

MESHAK: (Protestantly) But their still alive.

OTIS: (shouting) There'll die soon anyway' throw them
in

MESHAK looks at the sack before throwing it in

E

Alexander is seen sitting at his bedroom table, pieces of paper and envelopes scattered all round. He has an anxious, stressed expression, showing how he is worried about running away.

ander: "(Whispering) Is this really the right decision? Oh, all the people I am leaving behind..."

Melissa, father, Thomas, my home... Leaving it all behind feels so wrong." He is panicked, but tries to calm himself down. He takes deep breaths and picks up his pencil. As he writes, he reads it out loud.

ander: "My dearest father, though it may never come of interest to you, music is my passion. By taking it away, you take away a lifetime of potential I see for my future. You do not understand me. We are of the same blood, but of nothing else. Working to make our town even better and brighter is not what I long to do. It would kill the passion within me. So, I must leave it behind. I am certain that Edward would be just for the role of the next Lord Ashbrook. One day, I shall become a famous musician. I hope you will someday be proud of me."

The dark, navy blue lighting brightens as Alexander turns towards his window. A beam of strong white light comes in through the window to represent moonlight. He takes one final look at his bedroom before jumping out of the window.

(F)

Thomas and Alexander get out of the carriage and see ashbrook.

Scene 1: Alexander - "So then this is Ashbrook! My beautiful house I sleep at!"

Thomas - "This is all yours! All of it?!"

Alexander - "Well not mine, my father's. Sir William."

Thomas - "It is massive, you must have a pretty quite large family then"

Alexander - "Hahaha yeah I guess."

They both laugh about a joke Thomas makes.

Thomas - "your ^{garage} ~~garage~~ is bigger than my house!"

Alexander - "well come on then! Lets meet my family!"

(C)

* Thomas and Alexander are riding horses in the forest *

Thomas: Argh (Thomas horse starts to speed up)
Slow down boy

Alexander shouts out. Thomas horse speed up
even more and at Thomas screams then
he falls off. The stage turns black then slowly
dims to light.

Alexander: Thomas!? Thomas? Are you alright? Are you
quite hurt?

Thomas: I'm fine (groans) But where is Zanzibar?

Alexander: He ran off but I will find him later. But
right now I take you to Waterside

Thomas: What is water side

Alexander and Thomas walk off the stage
Waterside appears on the stage. Piano music is
heard. Alexander and Thomas walk back on.

Alexander: Now Isabelle has gotten good at piano since I've
been gone.

They walk inside.

#

Alexander: (shouts) Welcome to (pause) Ashbrook!

Thomas gasps and stands there

Alexander: (pulls ~~to~~ Thomas's arm) Come on then! Let's meet my parents

Thomas gulps and reluctantly follows

Lady Ashbrook, Lord Ashbrook, Isobel, Edward, Melissa and Alice,

Mrs Milcore appears

Isobel Isobel and Edward: (cunning) Alex! Alex! Alex!

Alice
Isobel: You're home! (hugs runs to hug his legs)

Edward: Alex!

Isobel: (pats Alexander's shoulder) Why are you so tall? You were
the same ~~big~~ ^{high} height as me when you left!

Lady Ashbrook: (steps forward) Alex! Welcome ~~to~~ home! (Goddess you've gotten
so tall!

Lord Ashbrook: Ahh yes! ~~A~~ Alexander is a man now! Ready ~~to~~
~~take~~ ~~take~~ ~~to~~ your responsibilities?

Thomas stands awkwardly

Alexander: No father, my voice is still ~~as~~ as clear as daylight. Forgive me,
this is Thomas (gestured to Thomas) ~~the~~ my dearest friend.

Thomas this is (points at the children) Issy

(I)

Scene

Thomas and Alexander ~~be~~ have boarded the coach, and one by one, each boy hanging on as it hops off, waving and yelling their goodbyes. The carriage is bouncing.

Boy 7 - See you next year!

Boy 7 jumps off.

Ms Lynch looks out the window in distaste.

Alexander - So, Ms Lynch, how are my siblings?

Ms Lynch - Oh, they're well enough; your sister has a new governess!

Alexander - Really? Who?

Ms Lynch - Your mother's second cousin, Ms Milcote. She has a daughter too, around your age, very pretty, mind you.

Alexander rolls his eyes at Thomas.

The scene changes to a big manor.

The carriage stops. And ~~there~~ Alexander hops out.

Alexander - Come on Thomas, I want to show you something.

Thomas hops out - what?

Alexander - You'll see.

They walk up a hill and Ashbrook looms ahead in the distance.

Thomas - Now! Whoever ~~to~~ lives there must be spanking rich.

Alexander laughs - come, let's catch up with the coach.

They run back and jump back in.

eventually, they arrive.

T - No way! This is your house?

A - laughs, welcome to Ashbrook manor, my friend!

Scene ends.



Thomas falls off his horse -

Horse goes too fast and ends up in the tree
he falls off screaming OW

~~it~~ meshak screams

All goes black