UNEXPECTED VISITOR

Write a scene in which one person is preparing for someone to arrive and the wrong person shows up. The person who shows up doesn’t necessarily want to leave and your main character can’t say outright that they want the unexpected visitor to leave. The scene ends with the arrival of the expected visitor. They either succeed or fail to get rid of the unexpected visitor.

Three characters. One location. Three to four pages maximum.

Who was your main character preparing for? To do what? It should be clear before the arrival of the unexpected visitor who your main character was expecting. It should also be clear eventually, what they were planning on doing. The timing of this information is important to the shape of your scene. Why has the unexpected visitor shown up? What do they want? Why now? Why don’t they want to, or can’t possibly, leave? You must give them a strong clear motivation and clear actions.

Why can’t your main character tell them outright to leave? This too should be clear.

The expected visitor: who is he/she? What was he/she expecting to find upon arrival? What is his/her reaction to the unexpected visitor? Does he/she know the other person?

Even though you have dialogue at your disposal, don’t have these people just talk to one another. Remember to use what you have already learned – about entrances, costume, props, setting activity, contrasts – to help tell the story of this scene and make it come alive.

Really imagine the circumstance, dream it. Make the people specific, real, interesting. Put us in the shoes of your main character! The more we care about him/her, the harder he/she struggles to get rid of the unexpected visitor, the more lively the scene.

Questions that should be answered by the assignment:

Who are these people? Is one more educated than the other? Are they of the same social-class? What is their relation to one another – professional, friendly, hostile neighbors…

Is it clear whose scene it is? Why does the main character want to get rid of the unexpected visitor? Why can’t or won’t that visitor leave? Why can’t he/she get rid of the visitor?

How has the scene moved – for example, from light to dark or dark to light?

How have the characters changed?

Where are these people coming from? Where are they going? What’s the next scene?