

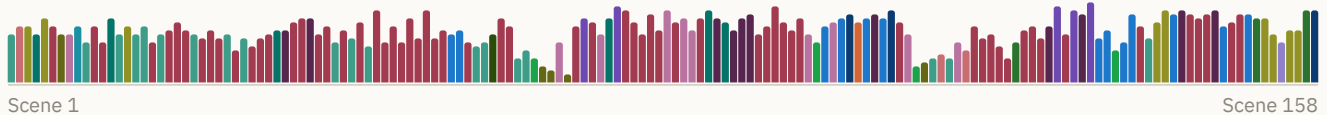
Screenplay diagnostic report

Parasite (2019)

Detected genre: Thriller. Genre drift at scene 93.

The script opens on dark comedy and empathy for a struggling family, then tightens into anxiety as their con unfolds. The Kims' triumph ends in violence. What follows is a long stretch of dread and grief, and the film closes on a quiet sadness.

At a glance: audience emotion, scene by scene



Tier

Feature

Instrument

1

Generated

13 July 2026

Instruments in this report

06  Narrative Architecture Who the story follows, and when it lets go of them.

Example analysis of Parasite (2019), screenplay by Bong Joon Ho and Han Jin Won. Shown for demonstration and commentary. It reads a finished film to show the format, so anything it flags may well be deliberate; on your own draft, treat each flag as a question.

Produced by The Narrative Laboratory, by Many Monkeys: manymonkeys.ai. The measures are the model's estimates, so they are given as bands (strong, moderate or weak; a fit reads strong, partial or weak fit) rather than scores. Scene numbers and counts are exact. An ochre rule in the margin marks what is worth a second look, an ochre underline a line the analysis flags; the notes for the next draft sit behind the same rule.

06 | Altman | Interpretive

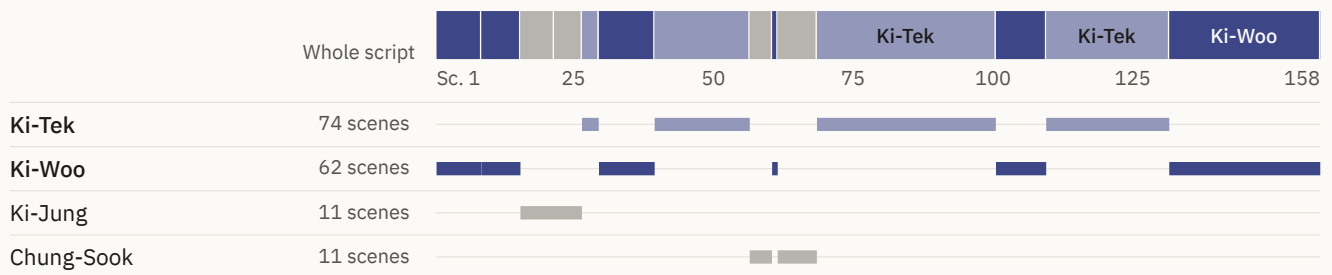
Narrative Architecture

Does my story stay focused, or does the narration wander away from the people the audience is following?

Single focus: Ki-Woo frames the story, Ki-Tek is followed longest

Ki-Woo holds the first and last stretches. In between, the story passes among four characters, and Ki-Tek is followed for 74 scenes to Ki-Woo's 62. The analysis still reads one protagonist, and is confident of it. Dark comedy, thriller and social satire usually run on single focus, and so does this script.

Following map, 158 scenes



Attention moves from one Kim to the next and never leaves the family, a 'hive mind' pattern. That is how a single-focus script can follow Ki-Tek for longer than its protagonist.

Ki-Woo bookends the narrative: the Wi-Fi hunt at the start, the telescope vigil at the end. That frame, more than his scene count, is what makes him the primary followee.

The infiltration scheme provides natural metonymic hand-offs: each new job placement transfers audience attention to the next family member being inserted.

The brief leakage scenes of the Parks alone are placed to build dread. We know what they don't, which gives dramatic irony without breaking alignment.

After the massacre the script moves into Ki-Woo's voice-over and point of view (scenes 132–158), so the story Ki-Tek carried through the middle ends in Ki-Woo's head. Sc. 132–158

Four notes on the genre fit

Ki-Woo frames the story and is the audience's way into the Park house, so the focus reads as his. The map shows Ki-Tek followed for longer, though: 74 scenes to Ki-Woo's 62.

The family acts as one, which gives an 'ensemble within a single focus': we follow the Kim unit as one organism.

The brief leakage scenes showing the Parks alone are functional (establishing the target) and don't undermine the Kim-centric perspective.

The closing voice-over moves into Ki-Woo's head, which gives the genre the moral and emotional anchor it expects at the end.

Ten of eleven changes of focus are spatial hand-offs

The map above shows eleven changes of focus; the analysis describes six of them.

A change of focus is where the story stops following one character and starts following another. Altman names three kinds. A spatial hand-off (metonymic) passes attention between characters who share a space. A thematic cut (metaphoric) links two stretches by likeness or contrast. An abrupt jump (hyperbolic) has no bridge at all.

Sc. 16	Ki-Woo recruits Ki-Jung at the hair salon; attention shifts to her preparation and interview. Ki-Woo to Ki-Jung, a spatial hand-off
Sc. 27	After Ki-Jung plants the driver trap, we cut to Ki-Tek practising at the Mercedes dealership. The scheme passes to the father. Ki-Jung to Ki-Tek, a spatial hand-off
Sc. 57	Ki-Tek hands Dong-Ik 'The Care' card; we follow Chung-Sook as she becomes the new housekeeper. Ki-Tek to Chung-Sook, a spatial hand-off
Sc. 69	The family gathers in the living room; attention centres on Ki-Tek during the drunken celebration and his cockroach outburst. Chung-Sook to Ki-Tek, a spatial hand-off
Sc. 101	After escaping the mansion, the family walks through the flood; Ki-Woo becomes the emotional centre at the evacuation gym. Ki-Tek to Ki-Woo, a spatial hand-off
Sc. 132	Post-massacre, the narrative shifts to Ki-Woo's hospital POV and voice-over, a temporal and subjective jump. Ki-Tek to Ki-Woo, a thematic cut

Three quiet scenes earn their keep

Sc. 68	Ki-Tek alone in the sauna, turning an hourglass. A quiet scene that keeps us inside his taste of stolen luxury (the steam, the Evian) before the storm. Following Ki-Tek
Sc. 104	Ki-Woo retrieves the viewing stone from the flood. No dialogue, little action. The stone already means luck and will soon mean violence, so the beat holds. Following Ki-Woo
Sc. 139	Ki-Woo climbs the mountain with his telescope. A quiet scene of watching. His patience holds the alignment, and the audience waits with him. Following Ki-Woo

23 scenes without Ki-Woo, eight of them described

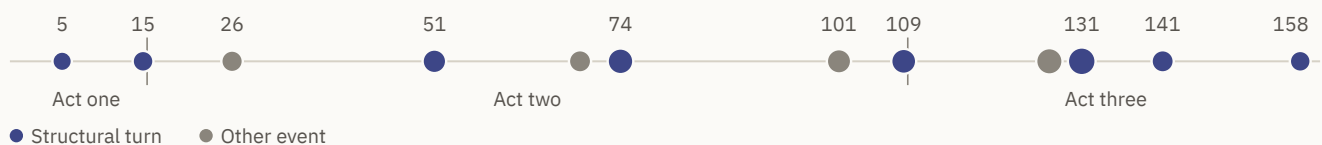
Sc. 62–68, 110–112, 114, 116–125, 128, 130

Sc. 62	Da-Song checks the sky from the garden with his walkie-talkie. A brief cutaway that sets up the camping trip. Shows Da-Song
Sc. 63	The Park family prepares for camping. Dong-Ik teases Da-Hae. Yon-Kyo gives Chung-Sook dog instructions. Shows Dong-Ik, Yon-Kyo, Da-Hae
Sc. 110	Morning after the storm. Yon-Kyo and Dong-Ik wake in the living room and check on Da-Song. Shows Yon-Kyo, Dong-Ik

Sc. 111	Dong-Ik checks on Da-Song in the teepee. Brief, functional. Shows Dong-Ik
Sc. 112	Yon-Kyo calls Jessica to invite her to the party. Shows Yon-Kyo
Sc. 114	The Parks plan the birthday party. Da-Hae excitedly offers to invite Kevin. Shows Yon-Kyo, Dong-Ik, Da-Hae
Sc. 116	Yon-Kyo instructs Chung-Sook on party setup. Shared scene but attention is on Yon-Kyo's absurd 'Crane Formation' directive. Shows Yon-Kyo, Chung-Sook
Sc. 118	Yon-Kyo shops and makes phone calls while Ki-Tek carries bags. Attention is on Yon-Kyo's obliviousness. Shows Yon-Kyo, Ki-Tek

Beats spread evenly across three acts, with the climax at scene 131

Beats across 158 scenes



Sc. 1–15, 16–109 +3

Under the genre shifts sits a plain three-act shape. Act One (scenes 1–15) is a caper comedy. Act Two (scenes 16–109) turns the con into psychological suspense. Act Three (scenes 110–158) becomes horror and tragedy. The false victory at the midpoint (scene 51) is a textbook turn. The climax (scene 131) is shockingly violent, and every part of it has been set up. The resolution is a fantasy sequence, and it is meant to disappoint: Ki-Woo will never buy that house.

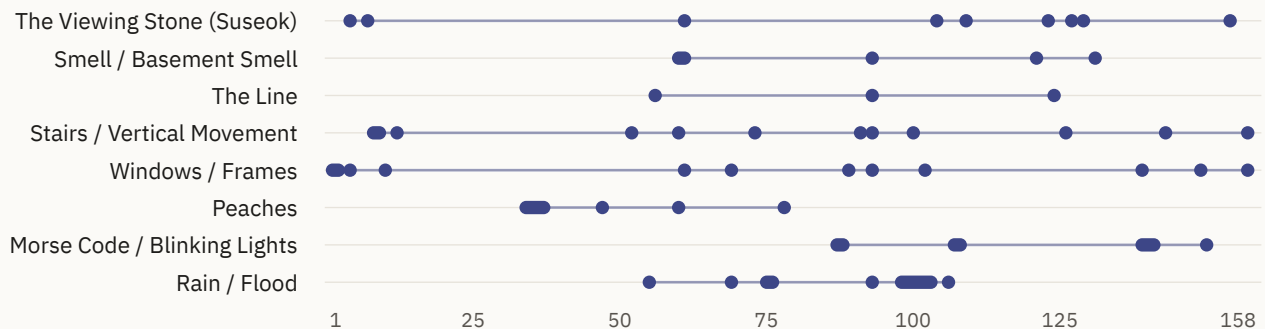
Twelve beats, scene by scene

Sc. 5	Inciting incident. Min-Hyuk offers Ki-Woo the tutoring job. The infiltration starts here.
Sc. 15	First act turn. Ki-Woo plants the seed for Ki-Jung's hiring. The solo con becomes a family operation.
Sc. 26	Event. Ki-Jung gets the driver fired and suggests her 'uncle's driver'. The con escalates.
Sc. 51	Midpoint. The hot sauce 'bloody napkin' finale completes the housekeeper's removal. All four Kims are now employed. False victory.
Sc. 69	Event. The Kim family indulges in the empty mansion. Class tensions surface in their drunken conversation. The doorbell rings.
Sc. 74	Low point. Mun-Kwang discovers the family's secret and records them on her phone. The entire scheme unravels.
Sc. 101	Event. The family returns to find their semi-basement flooded. The physical destruction mirrors their collapsing plan.
Sc. 109	Second act turn. Ki-Tek sets out his 'no plan' philosophy. His worldview has changed, and Act Three runs on that change.
Sc. 127	Event. Ki-Woo tries to kill Mun-Kwang with the viewing stone but is attacked by Kun-Sae. There is no way back from here.

Sc. 131	Climax. The garden party massacre: Kun-Sae stabs Ki-Jung, Ki-Tek murders Dong-Ik. The class war turns literal.
Sc. 141	Resolution. Ki-Tek's Morse code letter reveals he is trapped in the basement. He has taken Kun-Sae's place under the house.
Sc. 158	Resolution. Ki-Woo's fantasy of buying the house falls back to reality. The plan is impossible. The ending is circular.

Eight motifs recur, and six scene pairs rhyme

Motif map



The Viewing Stone (Suseok)

Sc. 4, 7, 61, 104, 109, 123, 127, 129, 154

A 'luck and money' gift that becomes a weapon, then a burden. It is false hope made solid, and by scene 127 the promise of moving up has turned lethal.

Smell / Basement Smell

Sc. 60–61, 93, 121, 131

The olfactory marker of class. Da-Song notices 'same smell' on the Kims; Dong-Ik describes it as 'old radish pickle / dirty rag.' The smell crosses the 'line' that behaviour cannot. It comes to a head when Dong-Ik holds his nose at Kun-Sae's odour, and Ki-Tek kills him.

The Line

Sc. 56, 93, 124

Dong-Ik's obsession with people 'crossing the line.' Ki-Tek tests this boundary again and again. Class boundaries here are unwritten codes, and they are enforced with violence.

Stairs / Vertical Movement

Sc. 8–9, 12, 52, 60, 73, 91, 93, 100, 126, 143, 157

Class hierarchy as climbing and descending. The Parks live at the top of a hill; the Kims climb up to work and are washed down by rain. The basement bunker is the lowest 'below.' Ki-Woo's fantasy ends with Ki-Tek 'walking up the stairs' into sunlight.

Windows / Frames

Sc. 1–2, 4, 10, 61, 69, 89, 93, 102, 139, 149, 157

The semi-basement window is urinated on and flooded through; the mansion has floor-to-ceiling windows onto the garden. Frames separate the Kims from the world they covet. The living room window reflection reveals the 'ghost.' Ki-Woo's telescope is the last window of all: he can look, never enter.

Peaches

Sc. 34–37, 47, 60, 78

Mun-Kwang's allergy, weaponised by the Kims. Peach fuzz, soft and luxurious, becomes the tool that removes her from the house.

Morse Code / Blinking Lights

Sc. 87–88, 107–108, 139–141, 150

Kun-Sae's 'welcome home' ritual becomes Ki-Tek's only line to the outside world. The motion-sensor lights turn out to be a man in the basement, the parasite signalling to the host. In the end it is the one thread left between father and son.

Rain / Flood

Sc. 55, 69, 75–76, 93, 98–103, 106

The storm that ruins the camping trip also floods the semi-basement. The rain falls on both families and lands differently: the Parks enjoy the 'clean air' while the Kims lose everything.

The viewing stone is the most complete motif. It goes from gift to weapon to burden, and in Ki-Woo's fantasy it is found in a clean stream, which hints at renewal.

Sc. 56

The 'line' motif arrives late (scene 56) but colours every class interaction before it. Dong-Ik keeps invoking 'crossing the line', so his death at Ki-Tek's hands feels inevitable.

Sc. 87	The Morse code/blinking lights reveal (scene 87) changes every earlier appearance of the motion-sensor lights. What looked like technology was human labour all along: the parasite performing for the host.
Sc. 33, 35–37 +2	The peach allergy is a tightly contained motif with clear setup (scene 33), execution (scenes 35–37, 47), and payoff (scene 78). No loose ends. The rain/flood opposition is the film's most explicit class commentary. One storm: the Parks lose a camping trip, the Kims lose their home.
Sc. 89	The 'ghost' echo (scenes 89 → 131) is slightly undermined by Yon-Kyo's exposition dump. The information is necessary but the delivery is the script's most overt explanatory moment.

Four thematic oppositions: two lean one way, two are evenly split

Above	Below	Plan / scheme	Chaos / no plan
16 scenes	24 scenes	14 scenes	9 scenes
Leans towards below		Leans towards plan / scheme	
Both at once in scenes 69, 93, 100 and 131.		Both at once in scenes 69, 80 and 109.	
The film's basic spatial split. The Parks occupy the sunlit hilltop; the Kims live in the semi-basement and end up in the secret bunker. The garden party massacre (scene 131) is where the two worlds collide. Below has more scenes than above, 24 to 16: the story goes down into the bunker and stays there.		The Kims plan carefully (the 'Belt of Trust'), and chaos breaks out when the basement couple appears. Ki-Tek's 'no plan' philosophy (scene 109) is where the theme turns: he stops planning because the system leaves him no hope. Planning runs the story up to scene 57; from scene 69 on, chaos does.	
Kindness (Rich)	Desperation (Poor)	Family (Kim)	Family (Park)
13 scenes	15 scenes	35 scenes	32 scenes
Evenly split		Evenly split	
Both at once in scenes 69 and 131.		Both at once in scenes 60, 69, 93 and 131.	
Chung-Sook's line 'She's kindhearted because she's rich' sums up this opposition. The Parks can afford kindness; the Kims' cruelty comes from precarity. Neither side is given the moral high ground. Money shapes behaviour in both houses.		Two families in a parasitic, or symbiotic, relationship. The Kims' strength is that they stick together; the Parks' weakness is that they notice nothing. The balance is nearly even, because the film paints both. The garden party (scene 131) destroys both families at once.	

Six echoes: three mirrors, two inversions and one setup and payoff

Sc. 4 to 61	The drunk man urinating outside the semi-basement window. First time, Min-Hyuk chases him away. Second time, Ki-Woo attacks with the viewing stone. The Kims have taken on the violence they once left to others. Mirror
Sc. 13 to 19	Ki-Woo takes Da-Hae's wrist to feel her pulse as a tutoring tactic. Later Da-Hae takes Ki-Woo's wrist. Now she is the one pursuing him, and the 'test confidence' technique has become seduction. Inversion
Sc. 89 to 131	Yon-Kyo tells the story of Da-Song seeing a 'ghost' in the kitchen (Kun-Sae emerging from the basement). At the party Da-Song sees Kun-Sae again. The ghost is back, and this time there is blood. Setup and payoff
Sc. 51 to 131	The 'bloody napkin' fake-out uses hot sauce on a tissue. At the party, real blood sprays from Ki-Jung's chest and Dong-Ik's neck. The Kims' theatrical violence becomes literal, and what was a con is now a massacre. Mirror

Sc. 5 to 100	Min-Hyuk says 'I trust you' to Ki-Woo. After the basement disaster, Ki-Woo asks 'What would Min-Hyuk do?' His friend's trust has led to catastrophe. The recommendation that started everything ends in ruin. Inversion
Sc. 109 to 153	Ki-Tek's 'no plan' speech in the gym. Ki-Woo's final letter: 'Today I made a plan.' The son rejects the father's nihilism, but his plan is a fantasy. The false hope goes round again. Mirror

For the next draft

Da-Song's Morse-code decoding (scene 108) pays off a Scout detail planted only shortly before, so the audience is handed the connection instead of making it. Could the Scout detail sit in one of Da-Song's earlier scenes?

Nothing sets up the German family who replace the Parks (scene 149), and they carry the idea of an indifferent cycle starting over on their own. Is that jolt what you want the audience to feel?

After his surgery (scene 132) Ki-Woo is said to have changed, but the script barely traces the change, so his final plan can read as real hope or as brain damage. Which reading do you want the audience to leave with?

Theory and terms

Following: Altman's reframing of narrative as the management of audience attention: which character the narration stays with, moment to moment.

Following unit: A continuous stretch of scenes that stays with one character (or a group travelling together).

Change of focus: A hand-over from one following unit to the next, which Altman calls a modulation. Metonymic: a spatial hand-off. Metaphoric: a thematic cut. Hyperbolic: an abrupt jump.

Leakage: A scene shown without the protagonist in a single-focus script. It often gives the audience knowledge the hero lacks.

Motif: A charged image, object, sound, or phrase that recurs and accumulates meaning. A motif that appears once is an orphan.

Opposition: A pair of opposed values (freedom and constraint, say) that structures a story's meaning (Lévi-Strauss).

Echo: A rhyme between scenes: a setup paid off later, a mirror (the same situation transformed), or an inversion (the meaning reversed).

Further reading

[Rick Altman - A Theory of Narrative](#)

[Lévi-Strauss \(1955\) The Structural Study of Myth](#)

[Genette - Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method](#)

Where to look next

Other instruments in the lab.

Emotional Rhythm Strip

€8

What the audience feels, scene by scene.

Reads every scene for the emotions it gives the audience, and shows where the intensity builds, flattens or drifts from your genre.

manymonkeys.ai/tools/emotional-rhythm-strip

Structure of Sympathy

€11

Who the audience recognises, follows and roots for.

Shows how strongly the audience recognises, follows and sides with each major character, and where that changes.

manymonkeys.ai/tools/structure-of-sympathy

Character Topology

€17

Who actually holds your cast together.

Maps who shares scenes with whom, to show who holds the cast together and who sits at the edge.

manymonkeys.ai/tools/character-topology

Every instrument has a free example report on its tool page. The full gallery is at manymonkeys.ai.