

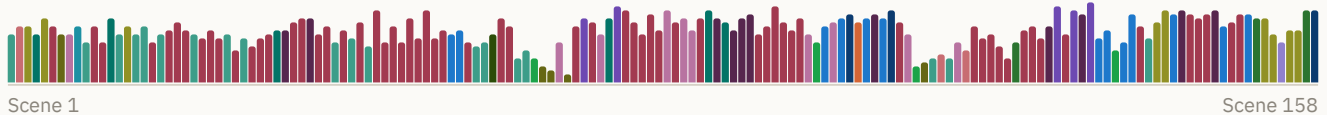
Screenplay diagnostic report

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

02  **Structure of Sympathy** Who the audience recognises, follows and roots for.

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.

02 | Murray Smith | Interpretive

Structure of Sympathy

Is my protagonist compelling? Is the audience rooting for the people I want them to root for?

The audience roots for all five, none of them strongly

Murray Smith's three levels of engagement. Recognition: the audience can pick the character out and remember them. Alignment: we follow the story at their side and get into their head. Allegiance: we are on their side. Each level is the model's estimate, given as a band.

Character	Recognition	Alignment	Knowledge
Ki-Woo Main point of view	Strong	Strong	Knows what we know
Ki-Tek	Strong	Moderate	Knows what we know
Ki-Jung	Strong	Moderate	Knows what we know
Chung-Sook	Strong	Moderate	Knows what we know
Yon-Kyo	Moderate	Moderate	Knows less than us

Allegiance is the same for all five: Moderate

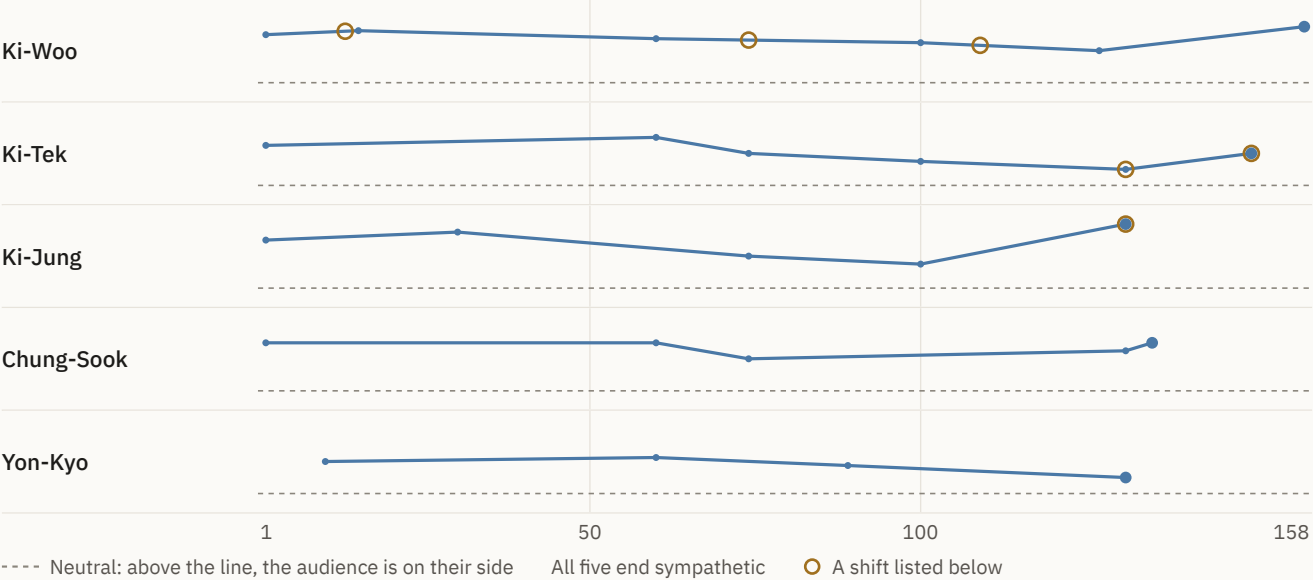
Ki-Woo has the strongest presence of the five and is the main point of view. After his brain injury the voice-over keeps him close, but what he feels gets harder to read, and alignment passes to Ki-Tek and his life underground.

Sc. 131, 74

Ki-Tek's murder of Dong-Ik in scene 131 is the most violent turn in the film, yet his allegiance line dips only slightly there; it falls further at scene 74, when the secret room is exposed. The film keeps him pitiable.

Ki-Jung gains the most sympathy by the end; Yon-Kyo loses the most

Allegiance by scene, 1–158



Sc. 13

Ki-Woo: sympathy rises as he cleverly secures the tutoring job and kisses Da-Hae.

Sc. 74

Ki-Woo: sympathy slips when the secret room is exposed and the family's scam is revealed.

Sc. 109

Ki-Woo: the audience stays with him as he despairs in the evacuation centre and clings to the viewing stone.

Sc. 131	Ki-Jung: sympathy spikes when she is stabbed and dies in the garden.
Sc. 131	Ki-Tek: sympathy dips only slightly after he murders Dong-Ik with the axe.
Sc. 150	Ki-Tek: sympathy recovers slightly as he sends Morse code letters and mourns Ki-Jung.

Ki-Woo is seen from the inside, Yon-Kyo only from the outside

Ki-Woo

Ki-Woo knows what the audience knows. Sympathy holds, apart from a dip at scene 127, and ends sympathetic.

Presence **■■■ Strong** Point of view **■■■ Strong** Inner life **■■■ Strong**

Recognition. Resourceful Wi-Fi hunter in the opening, immediately memorable. Charismatic impostor as tutor 'Kevin' with a pulse-taking technique. Carries the viewing stone as a symbolic gift and clings to it even after the flood.

Alignment. POV through his eyes in many scenes. Voice-over reveals his plans and inner thoughts. We witness his despair in the flood and evacuation centre.

Allegiance. Rootable underdog striving for family's survival. His romance with Da-Hae adds charm and humanity. His violent attempt on Mun-Kwang is a dark turn that tests allegiance.

Six moral cues that shape how we judge Ki-Woo

- Helps father with scams out of loyalty to his family.
- Defends family from the drunk man urinating on their window.
- Feels guilt and cannot bring himself to kill Mun-Kwang.
- Tries to rescue father by deciphering Morse code and making a plan.
- Cares for his sister Ki-Jung and grieves her death.
- Shows remorse and a desire to make things right after brain injury.

Ki-Tek

Ki-Tek knows what the audience knows. Sympathy holds, apart from a dip at scene 131, and ends sympathetic.

Presence **■■■ Strong** Point of view **■■■ Moderate** Inner life **■■■ Moderate**

Recognition. Marked by the 'smell' of poverty, which keeps coming back. His fake dignified speeches as a 'career driver'. The axe murder reveals his breaking point and is the film's most shocking image.

Alignment. We see his actions and humiliation but less inner thought. His rehearsals for the scams are shown, which gives partial access. Limited internal monologue; his rage is observed from outside.

Allegiance. We root for his family's success despite his flaws. His murder of Dong-Ik is shocking but rooted in accumulated humiliation. His final Morse code letters show enduring love and remorse.

Six moral cues that shape how we judge Ki-Tek

- Provides for his family despite repeated business failures.
- Protects his children during the chaos in the secret room.
- Shows remorse after killing Dong-Ik and flees in horror.
- Tries to give Mun-Kwang a proper tree burial.
- Endures humiliation with a smile to keep his job.
- Risked his own safety to save Ki-Jung and stop Kun-Sae.

Ki-Jung

Ki-Jung knows what the audience knows. Sympathy rises, despite a dip at scene 100, and ends sympathetic.

Presence **■■■ Moderate** Point of view **■■■ Moderate** Inner life **■■■ Moderate**

Recognition. Forges Ki-Woo's enrolment certificate in Photoshop. Poses as 'Jessica' art therapist, a completely transformed persona. Sings her fake bio with Ki-Woo, and the sibling bond in it is real.

Alignment. Her schemes are shown step by step, so we can follow how she thinks. Her cold demeanour hides vulnerability, seen in her outburst. We watch her death in slow motion.

Allegiance. Admired for her ingenuity and cool head under pressure. Her outburst 'Fuck rich people!' reveals deep pain and class resentment. Her stabbing draws the strongest sympathy in the film.

Five moral cues that shape how we judge Ki-Jung

- Helps brother get the tutoring job with her forgery skills.
- Protects Da-Song's trauma in art therapy, even if fabricated.
- Stands up to her parents about obsessing over rich people.
- Tries to reason with Mun-Kwang to avoid violence.
- Sacrifices herself by running toward Kun-Sae with the cake.

Chung-Sook

Chung-Sook knows what the audience knows. Sympathy holds, apart from a dip at scene 74, and ends sympathetic.

Presence ■■■ Moderate Point of view ■■■ Moderate Inner life ■■■ Moderate

Recognition. Former shot-putter, and that strength comes back into play later. Takes charge as housekeeper, mimicking the rich family's habits. Kicks Mun-Kwang down the stairs, a shocking and memorable act.

Alignment. We see her actions as housekeeper and mother. Her frustration with Ki-Tek is clear but only touched on. She fights Kun-Sae to the death, and we stay with her through it.

Allegiance. Rootable as a tough mother protecting her family. Her kick of Mun-Kwang is violent, but defensive in the chaos. She survives probation, still caring for her brain-damaged son.

Six moral cues that shape how we judge Chung-Sook

- Works hard folding pizza boxes to support the family.
- Stands up to the Pizza Shop Owner over unfair pay cuts.
- Tries to feed Mun-Kwang and Kun-Sae before the fight escalates.
- Defends Ki-Jung from Kun-Sae by stabbing him with a skewer.
- Kills Kun-Sae in self-defence to save her family.
- Cares for the brain-damaged Ki-Woo and visits Ki-Jung's urn.

Yon-Kyo

Yon-Kyo knows less than the audience. Sympathy falls but still ends sympathetic.

Presence ■■■ Moderate Point of view ■■■ Weak Inner life ■■■ Weak

Recognition. Gullible rich wife who immediately trusts 'Kevin'. Obsessed with her 'Belt of Trust' idea. Panics over Da-Song's trauma; underneath, she is fragile.

Alignment. We see her from the Kims' perspective, often as an object of mockery. She never sees the scams, and that blindness is the dramatic irony. Her sexual encounter with Dong-Ik is overheard, not seen from her POV.

Allegiance. She is a victim of the Kims' deception, but her naivety undercuts sympathy. Her fear for Da-Song is a mother's fear, and it makes her human. Lack of awareness makes her less sympathetic than the struggling Kims.

Six moral cues that shape how we judge Yon-Kyo

- Loves her children and tries to protect Da-Song.
- Generous to tutors, paying above the previous rate.
- Tries to understand Da-Song's trauma through art therapy.
- Kind to her housekeeper Mun-Kwang initially.
- Panics but is not malicious in her demands.
- Vulnerable and shattered after her husband's murder.

For the next draft

Through Act Three the audience watches Ki-Tek's fall from outside, with little access to what he thinks, so the axe murder in scene 131 arrives as a shock rather than a decision. Do you want the audience to see the decision forming?

Yon-Kyo never learns she was deceived, and her allegiance line sinks to its lowest in scene 131, the scene in which her husband is killed. Do you want the audience to feel for her at that moment?

Theory and terms

Recognition: How distinctly a character registers as an individuated person, with memorable traits and clear wants.

Alignment: How much the narration attaches us to a character: time spent with them and access to what they know and feel.

Allegiance: The audience's moral rooting: sympathy earned (or lost) through what the character does.

Knowledge position: Whether the audience knows the same as the character (aligned), more (superior, which gives suspense), or less (inferior, which gives mystery).

Further reading

[Murray Smith - Engaging Characters: Fiction, Emotion, and the Cinema \(2nd ed.\)](#)

[Cohen \(2001\) Defining Identification: Audiences and Media Characters](#)

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

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

Narrative Transportation

€7

Where the reader is pulled in, and where attention drifts.

Reads how firmly the script holds a reader, and flags the scenes where attention is likely to slip.

manymonkeys.ai/tools/narrative-transportation

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