

Character Breakdown Worksheet

One worksheet per role, not per scene. Fill it in pencil, and mark every entry **F** (a fact stated in the text), **R** (your reading — a choice the text supports) or **Q** (a question for the director), with a scene reference.

THE ROLE

Play / Script

Character

First scene

Last scene

WHAT THEY WANT ACROSS THE PLAY

"By the end, I want ..." — then the line or moment that supports it.

WHAT STANDS IN THE WAY

"I cannot have it because ..." — then the evidence.

THE FIRST TACTIC YOU WILL TEST

What you do to another person to get it — an action, not a mood.

WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU DROP THAT TACTIC

The response from your partner that tells you it is not working.

FALLS BACK ON UNDER PRESSURE

The habit, not the strategy.

WHAT THEY WOULD NEVER DO

The limit you will not cross.

THE CONTRADICTION — SAYS

THE CONTRADICTION — DOES

RELATIONSHIP MAP

Character	What I want from them	What they want from me	Changed by the last scene	F/R/Q

What to fill in, and when

Before the first rehearsal: the relationship map, the want, and the contradiction.

Before you are on your feet: the obstacle, the first tactic, the drop signal, and the limit.

After the first run-through: the arc on page 2, and a revision pass on the tactic.

Turns and What They Cost

A turn is a point where the character stops believing one thing and starts believing another — not every plot event is one. Use as many rows as the script supports; two or three turns are a real answer. If working forwards stalls, try starting from the last turn and asking what had to be true one step earlier.

#	Where in the play	What they believe now	What it cost	F/R/Q
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

QUESTIONS FOR THE DIRECTOR

Every row you marked Q belongs here. Bring them to the room instead of guessing.

Worked example

Original character. Nadia works nights on a hospital ward. Her brother Teo has come back after two years away and wants somewhere to stay.

Wants	Teo to stay without her having to ask him to. <i>R, sc. 2 — she makes the bed before he says he is staying.</i>
Obstacle	Asking would admit she needs him, and the last time she needed him he left. <i>R, from "I managed" — sc. 4, said twice.</i>
First tactic	Make staying the easy option: hand him a key, clear a drawer, give him the shift rota. <i>R, sc. 2</i>
Drop it when	He puts the key down on the table instead of pocketing it. <i>R, sc. 4</i>
Under pressure	Explains the immersion heater and the bin day instead of answering what he asked. <i>F, sc. 6</i>
Contradiction	Says the room is temporary; clears two drawers and moves her own coat off the hook. <i>F, sc. 2</i>
Turn 3	Scene 4: needing him is the thing to hide. Cost: Teo starts packing. <i>R, from sc. 4 — a belief is a reading, not a fact</i>

Four rules that keep the page playable

- Fill the relationship map first. A want that does not come from a person stays abstract.
- Write verbs, not adjectives. "Lonely" cannot be played; "hands him a key before he asks for one" can.
- Mark it F, R or Q rather than leaving it empty. A row marked R is a choice you can trade in rehearsal without losing the role.
- Check the tactic before the want. Your partner responds to what you do, not to what you want, so the tactic is the part a run-through gives you direct evidence about.