

REWRITING **SUICIDE SQUAD** *NOTES*

- **My Diagnosis:**

- **Breaking Fundamental Writing Rules:** There's two fundamental rules that come with screenwriting that this film completely ignored. Number 1) Show, don't tell...and Number 2) Less is more. *Suicide Squad* broke both of these rules right out of the gate. They broke the first rule with the introduction sequence of Task Force X, and they broke the second rule so many times throughout the film that it would take too long to list them all, but a great starting point would be the character designs of Harley Quinn and the Joker, especially when it comes to their tattoos and other accessories like their jewelry and clothes. We know the Joker is a mentally twisted sociopath, you don't have to tattoo the word "damaged" onto his forehead to get that point across. That's what I mean by show, don't tell. And that goes for this film's entire production design as well. Personally, I was not a fan of the art style that was used in this film. And while I do know what David Ayer was going for, I just personally think it's too much. Again, less is more. You take one look at the Joker and Harley Quinn's character designs and the best way that I can describe it is "more is less". So, I'm going to change the art style up a little bit and redesign the characters and the production design from being a gaudy, flamboyant and over-the-top punk style to something that is grittier and more worn-down to match the tone of the story. And this might just be my personal preference and my taste in art, but I don't think the original film's art style matches with a movie about a team of criminals and bad guys. The flashy color palette contradicts the dark and sinister characters, so it just feels off. These guys are murderers, rapists, and thieves. There really shouldn't be any kind of flamboyant colors or flashy graphics flying around the screen. The setting should match the character's personalities and so the environment should be just as dark, dirty, and rough around the edges as the villains themselves are. I'll agree that Zack Snyder's low-key lighting and dull color grades often make his films feel bleak, melancholy and depressing...and that's definitely *not* what the tone of every DC film should be like. Like *Batman v Superman* shouldn't have such low-key and depressing lighting. But for *Suicide Squad* – a movie about a team of blackhearted supervillains – I think that style would be appropriate considering how morally compromised the characters are.
- **Miscasting:** The earlier films in the DCEU were notorious for their miscasts and *Suicide Squad* was chief among them, especially with the controversial decision of casting Jared Leto as the Joker. But the Joker wasn't the only character who was miscast. I hate to say this because I'm a huge fan of Will Smith, but Deadshot just *wasn't* his role. And it's not because he's black either, which I know some fans complained about when he was initially cast to play Deadshot, who's always

been portrayed as a white guy. The DCEU's iteration of Deadshot doesn't lack in quality because he's played by a black actor. He's lacking in quality because he was miscast. You could've easily hired Jamie Foxx, Mahershala Ali, or any other prominent African American actor instead and you would've gotten a much more accurate performance for Deadshot than what Will Smith had to offer. And don't get me wrong, this isn't in any way putting down Will Smith at all, even though I know it sounds like it. Trust me when I say this. Ever since his *Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* days, Will has always brought a smile to my face and there's a special place in my heart for him. He's a lot like Keanu Reeves. I think they're both great actors and I've seen them both do amazing work, but neither one of them really has a lot of range and can play a wide variety of characters. They're not like Daniel Day-Lewis or Tilda Swinton where they can completely immerse themselves in the role and transform themselves to the point of becoming unrecognizable. I love Will Smith and Keanu Reeves! They're both really good at playing two or three types of roles and that's it. They don't too well whenever they try to branch off and take on new roles that are just simply outside their powerhouse. And there's nothing wrong with that. That doesn't make them bad actors. They're just playing to your strengths. And the role of Deadshot does not fit into Will Smith's range as an actor. There's really only two things that Deadshot cares about in this world; his daughter Zoe, and his reputation as a marksman. Everything else can go to Hell. Not to mention, Deadshot fulfills the Death Seeker archetype, where he's constantly throwing himself headfirst into every dangerous situation because he's secretly hoping that he will die. Deadshot hates himself, but not enough to take his own life, so he hopes that by carelessly jumping into a lethal scenario, he might find an acceptable death that will release him from his self-contempt. In the New 52 comic *Suicide Squad Vol. 1 Kicked in the Teeth*, there was even a time where Deadshot found himself cornered by a bunch of inmates in a prison riot, and he yelled at them, encouraging them to kill him. They then proceed to throw Deadshot from the roof, wounding him but not killing him. So later on, when Deadshot wakes up in a hospital bed and realizes that he's still alive, the first words that come out of his mouth are "damn". That's how much Deadshot wants to die. He gets disappointed whenever he finds out that he survived any lethal situation. This is how Deadshot was portrayed in the comics, but not in David Ayer's original *Suicide Squad* film. In the DCEU, Deadshot just really acts like a ghetto punk or street gangster with a chip on his shoulder the entire time, and that really bugged me. Deadshot just really acted out of character the entire film, and I found Will Smith's performance hard to swallow because it was so inaccurate to how the character was portrayed beforehand.

- **Redesigning Task Force X/Genre Maturation Process:** So, on top of redesigning the production design of this film, that also means we need to adjust the costume design of our characters. The more time I spent on these designs, the more I realized how the evolution of the superhero genre really influenced the costume choices that were made by David Ayer and his team, and while I do

understand what vision they were aiming for, I don't agree that it was the best direction to take the DCEU, and I'll explain why. When it comes to writing genres, we've figured out after years of study that a genre will go through 4 different stages in its lifetime of growing and maturing. The first stage is known as Primitive, that's when the genre is a baby. These are the first of their kind and they're not necessarily good stories, usually they're not. But they are filled with unlimited potential as this new genre introduces a bunch of brand-new ideas and concepts. If we were to use the superhero subgenre as an example, some pieces of superhero cinema that would qualify as Primitive would be the 1941 black and white serials of Shazam known as *the Adventures of Captain Marvel*. The next stage in the genre maturation process is called the Classical phase, this is when the genre has grown from being a cute but helpless baby to now being a child overflowing with energy and personality. This is the stage where after the trial-and-error period has passed, stories within this genre have figured out what works and doesn't work, and the movies in this genre start to become really good and these classics set the standard criteria for all of the future films to follow in this genre. The morality of films in this Classical stage are usually black and white. The heroes always act heroic, and the villains always act villainous. So, for the superhero subgenre, we can look at films like Sam Raimi's *Spider-Man*, Christopher Reeves' *Superman* and even Joss Whedon's *Avengers* as examples of the Classical Superhero film. After the Classical stage, you follow up with the Revisionist stage, this is where the genre grows up and becomes much more sensible and rational. They have to leave their pure and wholesome childhood behind. This is when the genre becomes an adult and starts to have deep, intrusive thoughts mixed in with existential crises. Like adults, the Revisionist stage starts to ask deep, provoking questions. The morality in this Revisionist films become very gray and complex, hardly every just a simple separation of black and white. Both heroes and villains will be flawed and broken people who make horrible decisions, and both are shown to have the capacity for great good and great evil. The Revisionist stage also tends to be a satire in the sense that it critiques the conventions of the Classical stage. The Revisionist stage is very realistic and grounded, asking practical questions and embracing the maturity that challenges the status quo established by the previous films in the Classical stage. Examples of the Revisionist stage in the superhero subgenre include Zack Snyder's *Watchmen*, Amazon Prime's *The Boys*, and Christopher Nolan's *Dark Knight* trilogy. The fourth and final stage in the genre maturation process is called the Parodic stage. This is where the genre becomes an old person. A senior citizen who has lived a long and fulfilled life. Like the Revisionist stage, the Parodic stage also uses satire, but rather than use it to ask serious questions and spark deep, philosophical debates, the Parodic stage highlights the conventions of the genre for the sake of humor. This is where the genre, like the old person, stops taking life so seriously and becomes comfortable making fun of themselves. Examples of the Parodic stage in the superhero subgenre would be films like *Deadpool* and *Megamind*. Now that we have that lesson on the genre

out of the way, I think a big reason why the DCEU is so controversial amongst its fanbase in comparison to the MCU is because filmmakers like Zack Snyder and David Ayer are not interested in telling superhero stories set in the Classical stage. They want to embrace the Revisionist stage and operate in that area. Which, I mean, hey, good for them. But I think that's where there is such a big disconnect between the majority of DC fans and the creative leaders behind the DCEU. While there is definitely a percentage of audiences out there who are happy to accept Revisionist versions of their favorite superheroes and supervillains, the reality is that they don't make up the majority of the fanbase. The majority of audiences want to see the Classical version of their favorite characters. They don't want to see a mopey and depressed Superman. They want to see a happy and hopeful Superman. They don't want to see a nihilistic version of Batman going on a killing spree. They want to see a Batman who displays fortitude, self-discipline and above all, values and cherishes life. Now, that's not to say that mainstream audiences aren't willing to accept Revisionist versions of superheroes here and there and be happy with it, but when it comes to a live-action cinematic series like the DCEU, that could potentially be pointed to as the default cinematic outlet for the DC franchise, audiences want the default setting to be Classical. Similar to the MCU, those versions of Captain America, Iron Man, Hulk and Thanos that appear onscreen are not Revisionist versions of the character. Rather, they are Classical versions, albeit with a bit of Revisionist sprinkled here and there. Now, circling back to David Ayer's *Suicide Squad*, one of the reasons why I want to redesign the costume design for our characters is because they are all Revisionist versions of themselves. You take one look at Deadshot, Joker, Enchantress and Killer Croc, and you immediately recognize that their designs barely resemble their comic book counterparts. The majority of them have bold and stark redesigns that didn't really sit well with some audiences, myself included. So, I'm going to redesign the characters to be a little bit more Classical, while also maintaining a level of realism and Revisionist to make them adaptable for a live-action medium. I want to make these designs fresh but familiar. But not too fresh, if you know what I mean.

- **Redesigning The Joker:** I know that the goal for this version of the Joker was to have the character be flashier and more stylish, as with past interpretations of the Joker seen in the comics, he's more vain, materialistic and is very envious of his possessions depending on who the writers are. That more covetous version of Joker is someone who likes to dress classy and doesn't settle for anything less than the best. Everything has a theme, and everything has to be nice and clean. His Lamborghini has to be purple, and his favorite pistol has to be a matching purple as well. This type of Joker will fuss over his hair and clean any blood he gets on his face with a silk handkerchief from his sports jacket. This isn't the messy, homeless-looking kind of Joker. This isn't the grubby and rugged anarchist Heath Ledger type of Joker, but rather a Joker that is a bit pickier with his fashion choices than his counterparts, while still being faithful to Classical interpretations of the character, as seen in adaptations like *Batman: The*

Animated Series, and the video game *Arkham Origins*. This more trumped up and peacock version of the Joker will *still* bash your brains in with a crowbar, but he'll make sure to clean up once he's done. So, I recycled some concept art from the 2011 game *Mortal Kombat 11* that I think aligns well with this more stylish take on the Joker and I applied that bougee outfit to some concept art of Joker from *Arkham Origins* to create a design that is hopefully a healthy blend of Classical and Revisionist. Which is what I believed the original costume design was attempting to achieve. And the idea that this version of Joker is so much more avaricious and materialist will actually help tie in to Harley Quinn's character development in this rewrite as the Joker's very possessive and controlling nature will greatly contribute to Harley's inner growth throughout this modified version of the story. As a side note, like the original version of Jared Leto's Joker in this film, my version of Joker's white skin and green hair will be all natural due to his exposure to the chemicals, rather than have it be all face makeup like Heath Ledger and Joaquin Phoenix, which is a popular trend created by more realistic Revisionist takes on the character.

- **My Treatment:**

- **Ground Rules for this Rewrite:** In order to keep this rewrite as fair and realistic as possible, we need to establish a couple of ground rules. 1) I can't swap out any of the characters and replace them with other ones. I need to work with the cast that was originally given to us. So that means everyone on the Squad will be the same. We still have Deadshot, Harley Quinn, Captain Boomerang, Killer Croc, El Diablo, Katana and Slipknot on the team. Rick Flagg will still be in the movie, but his role will be a little different. Enchantress will still be the main antagonist, and other characters like Amanda Waller and the Joker will still be in there as well. 2) The movie has to relatively end the same way. The Suicide Squad will get their act together and save Midway City before Enchantress can complete her master plan. The only thing that *will* change is Enchantress' master plan and her motivations for carrying out said plan. 3) All of the characters that died in the original version, need to die here as well, with the exception of adding a few more casualties to this film's fatality list.
- **Enchantress' Master Plan:** Instead of trying to take over the world and reclaiming her throne as a goddess like in the original film, the Enchantress is going to have a different plan in mind. She has seen visions of the future and knows that Earth will soon fall to the Dark God Darkseid. She knows he is still seeking the Anti-Life Equation. She is hoping to spare herself of Darkseid's scourging of Earth by joining his forces and supplying him with the Anti-Life Equation. She is going to use her arcane magic to create a portal strong enough to teleport Steppenwolf and his minions to Earth. After attempting to contact the forces of Apokolips, Enchantress finds herself in contact with Steppenwolf instead, the exiled general of Apokolips. Believing that Steppenwolf is still on good terms with Darkseid, Enchantress claims to have seen the full formula to the Anti-Life Equation and offers this knowledge to the forces of Apokolips in exchange for mercy once Earth has been conquered. Claiming to speak on behalf

of Darkseid, Steppenwolf agrees to these terms and wishes to come to Earth to investigate the Equation himself and confirm its existence. As a test, the Enchantress will try to open a shorter portal where a vanguard of Parademons will be sent as a test run. The experiment proves successful and the Parademon scouts successfully pass through unharmed before Enchantress loses the strength to hold the spell. The Parademons will then use a mind probe on Enchantress and glean the Anti-Life Equation from her that way. Via hologram, Steppenwolf watches this transaction from his ship, and he angrily accuses the witch of lying and wasting his time when it is revealed that she does not know the Equation. But rather, she knows that the remaining components of the Equation are on Earth, found within the DNA of several Metahumans. Steppenwolf decides that he will come to Earth himself and track down each of these individual Metahumans, solve the Anti-Life Equation himself, and then use it to bargain his way back into Darkseid's inner circle. But Steppenwolf forces Enchantress to help him in this endeavor. He promises her that he will speak to Darkseid on her behalf, but we as the audience can tell that he's lying. But Enchantress needs more souls to draw power from if she is to open another portal to transport Steppenwolf and his army to Earth. With these few Parademons from the vanguard at her disposal, Enchantress will begin collecting hostages and using their life force to open the portal that will teleport Steppenwolf and his militia to Earth. To prevent anyone from interfering with her work, the Enchantress casts a magical barrier around Midway City, which simultaneously traps all of her victims and prevents any outside forces from entering the city. The plan is successful, and Steppenwolf is successfully teleported to Earth.

- **Recasting Deadshot:** Now, even though Jaime Foxx would've been a good replacement for Will Smith as Deadshot, I think some of the actors who were originally considered for Deadshot during this film's casting would have been better candidates as well. There's Matthew McConaughey, Johnny Depp, Colin Farrell, Keanu Reeves, Jon Hamm, and a bunch of other actors. While these actors are all impressive candidates, I personally think Johnny Depp would've been the *perfect* choice to go with for Deadshot because number 1) Coming fresh off of *John Wick*, where he played an emotionally troubled master assassin, it would've been way too easy to typecast Keanu as Deadshot, another emotionally troubled master assassin. And 2) it would've helped Johnny Depp break out of his typecast Jack Sparrow roles and given him something new and fresh to sink his teeth into. We've seen him do really well in grounded and realistic roles before where he played criminals like when he starred in *Public Enemies*, *Black Mass*, and *Blow*. And number 3) Johnny just has *the perfect* look for Floyd Lawton...Look at these images of Deadshot from the comics and compare them side by side with Johnny Depp. They're practically identical.
- **Recasting The Joker:** Now that we got Deadshot recast and out of the way, let's move on to The Joker. I don't envy the casting directors at all for when the time came that Warner Bros. wanted to finally introduce a new Joker to the big

screen after Heath Ledger's passing. That's a heavy burden I wouldn't want to wish onto anybody. Now, I don't know how the DCEU handles its casting process because from what I can tell, they're not like Marvel where they have Sara Finn – who's just one person but I'm sure she has multiple assistants - working as the main casting director for the entire Marvel Cinematic Universe. I'm sure there are other casting directors working for each of the individual films within the MCU, but from what it seems to me, Sara Finn is part of the group that gets to have the final say on who gets cast in a Marvel movie. Especially when it's a big role. So, when it comes to casting actors for the DCEU, does DC hire their actors in-house? Or does Warner Bros? I'm not sure. I can't tell. All I know is that the casting directors for *Suicide Squad* were Mary Vernieu and Lindsay Graham. So, I don't know if they're the ones who decided to cast Jared Leto as the Joker but whoever had that responsibility, I don't envy them at all. The amount of pressure that was on their shoulders must have been insane with fan expectations being through the roof. No matter what decision you made, you would've never been able to please everybody. With all of that being said, I know there have been a lot of people fan casting Joker throughout the years. I know everyone keeps on talking about Willem Dafoe, but personally, if I had to be the one to cast a live-action Joker for the DCEU, I would've done something a little unorthodox and hired a voice actor for a live-action performance. I would've turned to Troy Baker, and here's why. For those of you who don't know, while Mark Hamill did voice the Joker for *Batman: Arkham Asylum*, *Batman: Arkham City* and *Batman: Arkham Knight*, it was Troy Baker who voiced the Clown Prince of Crime in *Batman Arkham Origins* and here's how they both sound (insert clips). There's hardly any difference. Troy Baker has nailed down Mark Hamill's interpretation of the Joker so well that he could easily be Hamill's successor in case he retires or passes away. So, on top of having both the voice and the laugh down, Troy Baker also has the advantage of physically looking like the Joker as well. Physically speaking, he matches a lot of the Joker's characteristics such as his height, his slim physique, his suave hairstyle and even the shape of his face. He totally looks like vanilla Joker. Now I don't know if Troy Baker - who's pretty much just stuck to voice acting his entire career - would be comfortable with taking on the heavy responsibility of Heath Ledger's legacy or if he would even be willing to take on a live-action role period. But he's my number one choice for the Joker in this rewrite.

- **Redesigning Deadshot:** Personally, I've always been a fan of the tactical look that Deadshot has in the *Assault on Arkham* animated film, and while it is not the iconic Deadshot look and is definitely a Revisionist design for the character, I think combining it with the goofy and unrealistic Classic look Deadshot had in the comics before the New 52 reboot would be a great place to start visually for Deadshot. I think in future sequels, as Deadshot gets more and more involved in the grander, more theatrical antics of the DCEU, his look can change and evolve as he upgrades his gear and embraces more of a New 52 look similar to his appearance in *Injustice 2*. The in-universe justification for Deadshot starting off

with such a grounded and realistic suit is because at this point in his career, he's only really dealt with characters like Batman and a few oddball Metahuman hitmen in Gotham City. Metahumans are not on the rise yet. So, he doesn't need to have all of this crazy, high-tech equipment if a few well-placed bullets can do the trick. So, when Deadshot upgrades his equipment in future sequels, it is to help level the playing field when facing off against the growing number of Metahuman enemies who totally outclass him. So, for his first film, I designed Deadshot to have tactical armor that highlights his roots as an ex-military man, combined with his Classical red jumpsuit, complete with a bullseye target painted over his chest as a sort of challenge to his enemies, inviting them to take his life, in accordance with Deadshot fulfilling the Death Seeker archetype. Finally, Deadshot will wear a white mask and an eyepiece that serves as scope and can be worn with or without the mask. Since actors are paid a lot of money to show their faces onscreen while performing, it's common for actors who wear masks or face-covering helmets to either take off their helmets or lose them throughout the story (insert montage of character taking off or losing their masks/helmets). This is done so that the audience can see the actor emote and show their facial expressions, allowing the audience to connect with the character on an emotional level. There's only a few occasions where characters don't do that and it's for a very intentional and artistic reason... *cough* looking at you, *Star Wars* *cough* (insert footage of Mando and Darth Vader). So anyways, I designed Deadshot's mask in this film so that it doesn't cover both of Johnny Depp's eyes or his jaw, giving him plenty of opportunities to emote while he is in-suit, and also provide some drama when he loses his helmet later on in the rewrite. In this version, I want Deadshot to be armed to the teeth with weapons and gadgets, kinda like Mando from *The Mandalorian*. On top of having his iconic arm turrets, I want Deadshot's gauntlets to also be equipped with a grapple hook launcher and a hidden blade. The first gadget is to help Deadshot reach high places and make a quick escape if he ever finds himself in a pinch, and the second gadget is for when Deadshot runs out of bullets, and he has to resort to melee weapons. Now for his guns, I want Deadshot to have a pair of pistols holstered behind his waist like in the original film, and a tiny pistol like a Lifecard 22 hidden in the soles of his boot as a backup weapon just in case he ever gets disarmed and captured. But when a target needs to be taken out from a distance, Deadshot will resolve to using a customized rifle that can also double as a sniper by attaching a barrel and a scope to the body of the gun. Deadshot would keep these rifle parts in a case that he keeps slung across his back like a backpack and when the time calls for it, Deadshot can take off the backpack, pop it open like a suitcase, assemble his rifle and have it ready to fire in a matter of seconds. Most of this gear that I just listed existed in the comics. I mean, what can I say? Deadshot is a fan of guns, so let's stick with that for this rewrite.

- **Redesigning Harley & Croc:** I adopted this same mindset of fresh but familiar and combining Classical with Revisionist when redesigning Harley and Killer Croc. *Cinema Therapy* actually did a decent video on the way Harley has been

portrayed in the DCEU, and one of the things they highlighted were the differences between how the same character was portrayed by male directors as opposed to female directors. Whether it was intentional or not, Ayer's version of Harley was a bit objectified and sexualized, not just in the way her character is blocked, framed, and shot in the film's final edit, but also how her costume is designed. So, I want to rectify that by giving Harley a design that is a bit more modest while at the same time honoring her harlequin aesthetic that was established in her roots in *Batman: The Animated Series*. Again, a combo of Classical and Revisionist Harley. She'll have her blonde hair dyed with pink and blue, and her braids or ponytails – whichever you prefer – will mimic the ears or the horns, whatever you want to call them, on her jester hat. But her outfit will still be inspired by her original red and black harlequin jester costume, just updated for a modern setting and being more flexible for the character to fight and move around in. I also played around with the idea of giving Harley her domino mask from *the Animated Series* just to further highlight her loyalty to the Joker and how her identity is still so obsessively wrapped her abusive boyfriend and his image as a clown-inspired criminal. Plus, I think Harley's weapons like her mallet, her baseball bat and her bedazzled pistol were all really fun weapons that totally embody her volatile yet childish personality. Ayer's version of Killer Croc was a very Revisionist and realistic take on the character that seemed to fit in more with the grounded and realistic world of the DC universe seen in Nolan's *Dark Knight* trilogy rather than in the supernatural, CGI-filled DC universe we are introduced to in the DCEU. I've heard that the reason why Killer Croc was brought to life with makeup prosthetics instead of CGI was because of budget restrictions. Yet, James Gunn's *The Suicide Squad* only received 10 million more dollars more in their budget compared to what David Ayer was given. Which I mean, 10 million is a stupid amount of money for us poor people. But 10 million isn't a whole lot when talking about budgets for blockbuster Hollywood movies. So, I don't really think the limit of CGI was the real issue for Ayer's *Suicide Squad*, but more of how it was used. I would've pulled back on all of the crazy CGI that went into the effects used on Enchantress and Incubus and replaced it with a motion capture suit for Croc's actor Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje. I really like Killer Croc's design from the 2004 show *The Batman*, and I thought it would be interesting to give a live-action version of Croc a more reptilian appearance than traditionally seen in his Classical comic book look, complete with a whole crocodile tail and a snout. Another little unique detail I added is that Croc wears a filthy and matted safari vest that references his backstory as a Steve Irwin-type of carnival performer who wrestled with alligators in front of live audiences before he became a criminal. I'm not exactly married to the idea of Harley keeping her domino mask or of Croc having a vest so if you guys think those design elements should be dropped, cool. Just create your own head canon as to how you would've liked to have seen these characters appear. But if you like my redesigns, great! Either way, on with the show!

- **Parademons < Mutant Mooks:** So you know those weird, barnacle head zombies from the original film? So basically those guys fulfilled an antagonist archetype used in storytelling known as Mooks. Mooks are basically your standard-issue, disposable bad guys that are just used as cannon fodder for the heroes to plow through like stormtroopers, orcs, battle droids and goons. These minions are the bad guys' foot soldiers that are meant to be expendable. So these barnacle zombies – who apparently are called the Eyes of the Adversary (that's actually a pretty kickass name, I'm not gonna lie) – are going to be replaced by Parademons as the Mooks for this rewrite because like my *Batman v Superman* rewrite, I want to use *Suicide Squad* to help set up for the *Justice League* movie since all three of those movies are ensemble films and that's the perfect place to start worldbuilding and setting up for sequels, instead of forcing those set-ups in the standalone hero movies like *Wonder Woman* or *Aquaman*. In my *Batman v Superman* rewrite, I helped set up the *Justice League* movie by modifying the cameos of the Justice League team members like Cyborg, Flash, Aquaman and Wonder Woman. So, in *Suicide Squad*, I'm going to help set up for the Justice League by introducing the Parademons and Steppenwolf.
- **Rick Flag is the Warden:** Replace Griggs with Colonel Rick Flag and have Flag be the Warden of Belle Reve. Instead of having Griggs abuse the inmates of Belle Reve, we're going to have Rick Flagg be a fair but firm warden who rules the prison with respect and integrity. If an inmate shows consistent good behavior, then Flag will reward them with privileges like books, movies, limited internet access etc. But as soon as that prisoner relapses and falls back into their bad behavior, all privileges are stripped from them, and they are harshly disciplined before being thrown into solitary confinement. Visitations are strictly forbidden because nobody from the outside world is allowed to know of Belle Reve's existence. It's a well-kept secret, and Amanda Waller wants to keep it that way. The entire staff of Belle Reve is made up of Black Ops and Special Forces operatives. Soldiers who know how to keep a tight lip. That being said, Colonel Flag is a lot like Paul Edgecombe from *The Green Mile*. He might be a good guy and he's willing to show an inmate some mercy if they earned it, but don't try to take advantage of his generosity because you'll find yourself in a world of hurt. Flag might forgive, but he never forgets, and multiple inmates have tried to escape, riot or murder Flag, and all have failed. And Flag has remained in command of Belle Reve without having to break a single rule and by doing everything by the book. This is why the Colonel is both feared and respected by both guards and inmates alike within the walls of Belle Reve.
- **Joker's Role:** The Joker is a wild card, and he originally travels to Midway City for an arms deal with the Tattooed Man, and it's in the middle of this meeting that the Enchantress casts the magical barrier around the city and unleashes the first vanguard of Parademons to rally up hostages. The monsters of Apokolips barge in on the meeting and attack everyone in sight. Suspecting foul play from the Tattooed Man, Joker and his goons slaughter the crime boss and all of his men, as well as the Parademons, save for a few casualties. But once he goes outside, Joker realizes that the Parademons are a completely different faction altogether. They're part of a third party, and now Joker's curiosity is piqued. After capturing and torturing one of the Parademons, Joker is able to convince the primitive beast to guide him to its master. The Parademon hostage delivers

Joker to the Enchantress and after a brief discussion regarding her motivation and her endgame, Joker decides to volunteer his services and allies himself with the Enchantress, joining her in her mission to bring Darkseid to Earth in exchange for Darkseid's mercy once he conquers the planet. Joker and his gang will then serve as the Enchantress' agents as they wreak havoc throughout Midway and add to the chaos by aiding the Parademons in capturing more hostages. Joker and his gang are dispatched to kill Task Force X after the Parademons fail to do so and this is when Joker is reunited with Harley. She immediately flocks over to the Joker's side, reaffirming her love and loyalty to him. Deadshot tries to convince Harley to stay with the team, but the Joker's influence is too strong. Joker and his men then engage Task Force X in battle, with all of them taking damage and receiving wounds from Joker's psychotic followers. Killer Croc forces Joker and Harley to make a retreat back to the Enchantress' base after all of their goons are slaughtered. As their chopper takes off into the air, Deadshot aims at Harley, but can't bring himself to pull the trigger, and instead aims for the rotors, disabling the chopper and causing it to crash. As the helicopter spirals out of control, Harley grabs the only parachute left and tells Joker that they'll fly out together. But Joker takes the parachute for himself and jumps out of the chopper, abandoning Harley. Not being one for sitting back and taking orders, Joker is contemplating finding his own way out of Midway City and returning to Gotham, when he bumps into a patrol of Parademons, who forcefully escort the Joker back to Enchantress' base. Joker now realizes that he's not allowed to leave, and he's gotten himself in too deep, and we can tell that he isn't pleased by this. Once Task Force X attack Enchantress' base, Joker will suddenly turn on the Enchantress and begin executing all of her hostages, which sabotages her portal spell. Once the fight is over, Joker will publicly swear his love for Harley. Harley falls for it and takes her puddin' back with open arms. With her nanobomb disabled, Harley and the Joker return to Gotham as a free couple while the rest of the Suicide Squad are coerced into returning to Belle Reve.

- **Batman Is to Blame:** Every member of Task Force X was apprehended and incarcerated by Batman. Seeing as how in the DCEU, Batman is the only confirmed superhero who has been a public vigilante for nearly 20 years, it would make perfect sense for the majority of the DCEU's villains to be Batman villains. Wonder Woman is a different story because she's more of a secret vigilante but that's a different topic altogether. So, Batman is the one who is responsible for the arrest and capture of Deadshot, Harley Quinn, Killer Croc, Captain Boomerang, and Slipknot. El Diablo got arrested by regular policemen, but we'll get to that later in this rewrite. So now, everyone in the Suicide Squad has a grudge against Batman and has a reason for hating him.
- **Killer Croc and Enchantress Romance:** Instead of having Enchantress' romance be with Rick Flagg, I'm going to pull some inspiration from the comics and have Enchantress' affections be for Killer Croc instead, which will help tie into his character development later on for this rewrite. Before Task Force X is assembled, Killer Croc and June Moon get the chance to get to know each other when their cells are placed next to each other. Through heartfelt conversations, the two start to fall for each other in a Beauty and the Beast kind of romance. Unlike everyone else, June is able to see through Croc's physical appearance and chooses to treat him as a man rather than a monster. What's

impressive, is that the Enchantress shares June's attraction to Croc, which is the only thing that the two seem to agree on. So regardless if he's talking to June or Enchantress, Killer Croc knows that he is talking to someone who sees him and loves him as a man and not as a beast. Whenever Croc and June are unable to speak to each other face-to-face, June will relinquish control over to the Enchantress so that she can use her magic to communicate with Croc telepathically. While Killer Croc holds no love for mankind, he doesn't condone the slaughter of innocents like children, stating that mercy was something his love for June taught him. The Enchantress will try to persuade Killer Croc to join her side because she has seen the doomed future that awaits Earth, but instead he tries to convince her to abandon her mission, stating that it isn't right to condemn the innocents based on the actions of the wicked. So that is why Killer Croc chooses to sacrifice himself and detonate the bomb beneath Enchantress, weakening her and leaving her vulnerable for the rest of Task Force X to kill. Right before Killer Croc detonates the bomb, he'll telepathically apologize to the Enchantress before telling her goodbye. As Enchantress shouts out "NO!!", Killer Croc will whisper "I am not a monster" and the bomb will consume both him and the Enchantress.

- **Deadshot's Character Development:** For Deadshot's character development, I pulled some reference from the character Long John Silver in *Treasure Island*. Because the more I thought about it, the more I realized how much Deadshot and Silver have in common. They're both black-hearted criminals and cold-blooded killers who use everyone else as a means to an end, but they're not entirely evil. They both have one innocent, defenseless person in their lives whom they regard as the exception from the rest of the people that they consider worthless. These innocent characters are the only ones that the villains will spare from their wrath. So, in order for Deadshot to work as a protagonist, he needs to have some kind of redeeming quality. As a cold-hearted assassin who kills for money, Deadshot doesn't have a lot of room in his heart for love and acceptance. He's a very selfish survivalist. The only thing he really cares about is his daughter Zoe. So, we know that his undying dedication to return to his daughter is not only Deadshot's motivation in this film, but also his redeeming quality. His daughter is what helps him keep what little humanity he has left. Take Zoe out of the picture, and the audience doesn't have a lot of reasons to root for Deadshot. Zoe is what we call a Morality Pet, a character that befriends a villain or anti-hero and through their stabilizing presence, they help draw out the most positive qualities of the villain, slowly converting them into being a better person. So, in order to keep Deadshot an empathetic character, he needs a Morality Pet. But since Zoe isn't around, we need a new character to take her spot. And that character is Harley Quinn. And I know this sounds crazy given how unstable Harley is, *but* she *can* be the stabilizing presence that Deadshot needs in his life to keep his moral code in check. Just like how Jim Hawkins is Long John Silver's Morality Pet in *Treasure Island*, Harley will be Deadshot's Morality Pet in this rewrite of *Suicide Squad*. There's a new trend in DC's continuity that started a couple years ago, where whenever Harley is separated from the Joker and is forced to work in Task Force X, she starts to develop a romance with Deadshot that in some versions is genuine and in other versions is superficial, as they both just use each other as convenient friends with benefits. To help make Harley an effective Morality Pet, let's

have her attraction to Deadshot be sincere in this rewrite. While Harley is attracted to Floyd's bad boy, lone wolf persona, she's also looking for love and acceptance, hoping to find it in Floyd where she couldn't find it in the Joker. But Floyd's not interested in any kind of moral commitment outside the connection he has with Zoe. But...this makes Harley all the more drawn to him, since girls are always falling for guys who don't give them the time of day. She thinks Deadshot is teasing her and playing hard to get, when in reality, she gets on his nerves. But Deadshot will still use her for sex just so he can get *something* out of this one-sided relationship Harley has with him.

- **Establishing Character Moments:** Something that the animated film, *Batman: Assault on Arkham* handled much better than Ayer's *Suicide Squad* was the introductory scenes for each of the members of Task Force X. In Ayer's *Suicide Squad*, the "show, don't tell" rule was broken by having Waller literally *tell* the audience who each team member is, where they come from, and what their motivations are. Whereas in *Assault on Arkham*, we're *shown* all of that same information, but it's conveyed visually through a quick montage and not a single line of dialogue is spoken, yet it does a much more competent job of introducing the audience to these characters and establishing their personalities and backgrounds. So, we're going to do the same thing for Deadshot, Harley Quinn, Captain Boomerang, El Diablo, Killer Croc, Slipknot and Katana, where we are going to showcase establishing character moments for each member of Task Force X, followed up with them either being incarcerated or recruited into the team.
- **Opening Scene/Deadshot's Intro:** (insert clip of Amanda Waller talking about Superman's death and pitching Task Force X to the Secretary of Defense). I'm not a real fan of the dialogue used in the original version of the film, it's very surface-level and in your face. It doesn't provide any subtext or undertones for the audience to chew on, but nonetheless, the establishing character scenes as they are written for Deadshot, and Harley do work on a fundamental level. So, we're not going to change too much here. Just imagine Johnny Depp in the role of Deadshot and we're good. Just like in the original film, Deadshot will assassinate an informant using a trick shot, but I want to add some more conflict to this scene by having Deadshot's escape route be compromised and instead of getting away Scot free, he has to fight his way through some unforeseen obstacles like maybe a traffic jam or a car crash, trapping Deadshot on foot in the middle of the freeway. "Oh, shit...", Deadshot mutters as he finds himself surrounded by police who order him stand down. This is where we get the chance to see how much of a master marksman Deadshot is, using various firearms in his arsenal like his wrist guns, his pistols, and a throwing knife to make nearly impossible shots and improvise an escape route for himself, dodging in between vehicles, sliding under cars, and taking cover behind car doors, leaving a wake of death around him. All of the civilians on the freeway flee in fear, and once the coast is clear, Deadshot examines the battlefield to find one wounded police officer still alive. Deadshot menacingly approaches the man, and the officer pleads with him to spare his life, begging him to show mercy so that he can go home to his wife and kids. Without any regret or hesitation, Deadshot quick draws his pistol and shoots the officer dead. He turns around to see a terrified teenager huddled in a nearby car, stealthily recording the entire thing from his phone. Deadshot yanks open the car door, snatches the phone out of the kid's hand and hurls it off the

freeway, shooting in midair with his wrist gun. He then roughly throws the teen out of the car, hijacks the car and peels away. We cut to Deadshot and his daughter Zoe, where they are out Christmas shopping together as his alter ego Floyd Lawton before he is ambushed and arrested by Batman. Just like in the original film, we can see that Zoe is the center of Deadshot's moral compass as he willingly surrenders to the Dark Knight after his daughter pleads with him to not be a monster and to stop hurting people. Making these two scenes – one dark and murderous – the other tender and vulnerable – as the first chapters of our story really helps set the tone that the rest of the film will have going forwards. As Deadshot is being taken away, we then transition to the film's main title.

- **Harley's Intro:** Dr. Harleen Quinzel – a young, beautiful, and brilliant yet isolated and ignored psychiatrist – is seduced by the Joker while trying to treat him during his time as an inmate at Arkham Asylum. The Closer Look proposed an alternate version of Harley's intro in his own video regarding 2016's *Suicide Squad*, showcasing how she is a loner amongst her peers who is overlooked and how she manages to befriend her patient, The Clown Prince of Crime himself, in their first session. So, we'll borrow that rewritten scene for this rewrite, establishing Dr. Quinzel's status quo before she becomes Harley Quinn. We then make a sharp cut to the Joker's gang breaking into Arkham to save their leader, and Joker responds to Dr. Quinzel's kindness by torturing her, just like he does in the original film. We then cut to the same scene from the original film where Batman chases down both Harley and the Joker but only manages to capture Harley.
- **El Diablo's Intro:** I want to make the incident that Waller describes to the Secretary of Defense where El Diablo incarnates an entire gang of inmates who try to jump him and convert that moment into actually being El Diablo's first onscreen appearance in this film. El Diablo will be minding his own business, brooding in the prison yard, when he is approached by a group of tough-looking inmates who don't look very happy to see him. These are all members of rival gangs that used to wage turf wars with El Diablo and his crew back when they were all free men in L.A. El Diablo glances over at the prison yard's security guards, who are turning a blind eye to the incident, and Diablo realizes he won't receive any help there. With a scowl, he warns the gangsters to back away. But the thugs aren't scared, as they tell Diablo that they know why he finally got caught and about his little promise to not use his powers again. El Diablo warns them that he doesn't need his powers to kill them, but the gangsters are undeterred, and they swarm Diablo. He manages to get in a few good hits before he is quickly overwhelmed and they all begin beating him to a pulp, kicking him repeatedly as they plan on killing him. Diablo's eyes suddenly light up like embers as he shouts out, "¡DIJE ALTO!!" and a blazing inferno bursts forth from his curled-up body. The heat is so intense it instantly burns the gangsters closest to him into ashes while the others are reduced to roasted corpses. The guards look out in astonishment, frozen with disbelief. Breathing heavily, El Diablo looks around at the devastation he has inflicted, and he lowers his head with shame. We then cut to El Diablo brooding in his prison cell and the door opens to reveal Waller.
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- **R&R:** Somewhere in Act 2, the Suicide Squad will take a break and they'll camp for the night in an abandoned apartment complex. Before they can set up camp, everyone will

scan through the building to make sure the area is secure. Deadshot will kick open a door and brandish his wrist guns, only to see a housecat hiss at him. “Hey Croc, I found you a snack”, Deadshot calls out. Killer Croc lumbers his way over to Deadshot and he’ll scoop up the cat as it tries to run away, and the camera will cut away as he viciously tears into it with his teeth. Once he’s done, Killer Croc begins rummaging through all of the kitchens in the apartment complex, looking for more food. El Diablo will be scanning the rooms as he overhears this exchange, using a fireball in his hand as a torch. He’ll open a closet door to see a ragged family of survivors huddled inside, too scared to even make a sound. They flinch in fear at the sight of El Diablo, the fireball in his hand casting shadows over his skull-tattooed face and making him look like a terrifying replica of the Grim Reaper. Deadshot calls out to El Diablo from the down the hall, “Hey, we clear, ese?”. El Diablo looks over at Killer Croc ravenously scouring through the kitchen. He turns back to the frightened family, and places a finger over his nose, silently shushing the mortified civilians. “Yeah, we’re clear”, he shouts back. He slowly closes the closet door and briskly walks out, beckoning Killer Croc to follow him and look somewhere else for food. As they walk out, Killer Croc stops and looks over his shoulder, his senses alerting him to another presence. A nervous El Diablo continues to prompt Croc into following him. There’s a pause as Croc contemplates before eventually turning and following his teammate into the next floor of the complex. Killer Croc’s search is rewarded with a frozen leg of lamb that he retrieves from a freezer, and he asks El Diablo to light a fire so that they can thaw the meat out faster. “Why settle for raw meat, when we can have a roast?”, asks El Diablo with a smile. Using a pile of broken debris and his powers, El Diablo starts a campfire and Killer Croc uses pieces of rebar to create a makeshift spit to which they can roast the lamb over the fire. Waller will radio Deadshot and ask him why the team has stopped making progress towards their target. Deadshot will tell Waller that his team is injured and exhausted, and they need to patch themselves up and sleep before carrying on. Waller retorts that this isn’t a union job. There are no breaks. Either they get back out there, or she blows their heads off. Deadshot barter with Waller and is able talk her down and convince her to spare the team. He does this by pointing out that if Waller detonates the bombs and executes Task Force X, that still leaves her with an ancient witch and her army of monsters still in control of Midway City, and the Pentagon without a party of scapegoats to take the blame. Waller’s much better off letting the Squad get some R&R and regain their strength before they move on to take down the Enchantress. Waller grudgingly agrees to give Task Force X their R&R but tells Deadshot that he and his team only have one hour. After that, she wants them to remobilize and finish the job.

- **Croc and Diablo Talk About Monsters:** While Deadshot is talking down Waller off in the corner, Croc looks over at El Diablo from across the campfire. Croc: “You lied about the coast being clear...”. El Diablo remains silent, giving Killer Croc a hard glare. “...there were young ‘uns up there...I smelled them...you thought I was going to eat them”. El Diablo: “You wouldn’t have?”. Croc scoffs and tosses aside the lamb bone that’s been licked clean. He seems to be slightly pouting. Croc: “You think I’m a monster...just like everyone else”. Croc gets up and is about to walk off. El Diablo: “You may have big teeth and claws, cocodrilo...but you’re not the biggest monster here...”. El Diablo opens his

closed fists and looks into his hands, a sudden wave of sadness overpowers him. El Diablo: "We've all killed before...cops...sinners...men...women...but have you ever taken the life of a child?" There's a pause. Diablo sharply turns to look at Killer Croc, resisting the urge to break down in tears. El Diablo: "Huh?! Have you?!". Croc regards Diablo uncomfortably before eventually responding with, "Nah...The world is a bad place...but I ain't neva laid a hand on any young 'uns". Diablo turns back to look at the fire. "...I have", he whispers. "Boohoo", calls out Boomerang as he leans forward and imitates El Diablo, pretending to rub imaginary tears out of his eyes as he mocks the pyrokinetic. Diablo frowns at the Australian thief, "what about you, Boomer?...Have you killed kids?". Captain Boomerang leans back and kicks up his feet as he picks lamb out of his teeth with a toothpick, Captain Boomerang: "Not on purpose. Collateral damage on a job one time. Wasn't my fault. Kids shouldn't been playn' out on the road". Diablo looks at Boomerang unsurprised, then turns to Harley. El Diablo: "Harley?". Harley teasingly answers, "do you really have to ask?...". She raises an eyebrow at El Diablo, but he continues to hold eye contact with her. Harley drops her façade. Harley: "Ok fine! No!...Jesus, you don't have to look into my soul like that". Diablo looks back into the campfire, the faint echo of screams ring through his ears. El Diablo: "Whether you believe in the Devil or not, I pray that none of you ever have to feel that...because even though I know I'm cursed to Hell for what I did...every day I wake up...and I feel like I'm already there". The rest of the teammates exchange looks as they watch El Diablo intensely brood over his sins. Harley: "Ya don't need a psych degree to feel the guilt in here". Deadshot walks back in and orders everyone to rest up because they're heading back out in another hour. Boomerang complains and demands that he needs more time to sleep. Deadshot shuts Boomer up by telling him to be grateful since Waller wanted to kill them all just for taking a break, and if it wasn't for his fast talking, they'd all be headless right now. Grumbling, the rest of Task Force X reluctantly fall in line and take their separate sleeping positions.

- **Deadshot's Suicidal Tendencies:** While Task Force X is resting in the abandoned building, Deadshot will sit by himself in an empty bathroom, slouching tiredly in a chair as he reloads his many firearms. When he's finished replenishing a magazine, Deadshot looks at the corresponding pistol and sighs. He lowers his head and rests his chin on the barrel of the gun, so that if he were to pull the trigger, he'd shoot himself through the head. He doesn't necessarily look ready to immediately pull the trigger. He looks more tired than anything else, as his head bobs and lulls over the gun. Deadshot blankly stares off into the distance as he experiences a few flashbacks. We see an 8-year-old Floyd Lawton playing with his 12-year-old brother Eddie in one of the rundown ghetto apartments of 1980's Gotham City. We see their alcoholic father George – a Gotham City police officer – stumble into the room, drunkenly shouting at his boys after he trips on one of their toys. We see George shouting and beating his sons. His wife Genevieve tries to intervene, but George rounds on her and begins beating her as well, using his standard issue Glock 22 to pistol whip her. The boys Eddie and Floyd jump on their father as they try to tag team him and overpower him. Floyd wrestles the pistol out of George's hands and his arms shake uncontrollably as he aims at his father, who is still subduing Eddie. Floyd closes his eyes and fires the gun, the recoil causing him to trip and

stumble backwards. Everything goes quiet. Trembling, Floyd slowly opens his eyes and crawls over to the still forms lying on the floor in a pool of blood. Both George and Eddie lie dead, being killed by the same bullet. Genevieve pays no attention to George or Floyd and neglects him as she hovers over Eddie, choking over her own tears. Floyd lies frozen in place, traumatized by his mistake. Fast forward to a cemetery, where Floyd stands over Eddie's tombstone and whispers a promise to him. He swears to never miss another shot again. We cut back to Deadshot in the present, sitting in the bathroom, as we can see the conflict in his face as the memories of pain and loss start to wash over him. This is where we can really show off Johnny Depp's acting chops by doing what we call in filmmaking, "acting with your eyes". This is one of the best ways an actor can embody the rule of "less is more" through their performance. Where just by reading their subtle face expressions, we can understand all of the emotions that the character is experiencing without having to speak a word of dialogue. We cut back to another flashback. This time Floyd is an adult enlisted in the U.S. military and we see him completely outclass the rest of his peers as they practice their marksmanship in the shooting range. We then show a montage of Floyd being an unmatched marksman as he notoriously guns down every single one of his targets with his sniper rifle out on the battlefield, no matter how difficult the shot may be. We then cut to an emergency room, where Floyd is dressed in his regular street clothes and is doting over a woman who has just given birth. It's his wife Susie, and she's just delivered their daughter Zoe. Fast forward to Floyd coming home from work and walking in on his wife making love to another man, with their infant daughter Zoe obviously sitting in her play crib next to Floyd and Susie's bed. The homewrecker immediately splits and leaves the room as Floyd unleashes all of his rage onto his wife. They get into a very loud and heated argument, which causes baby Zoe to start crying. Floyd picks up Zoe and tells his wife that he is leaving with their child, telling Susie that she doesn't deserve to have a family. Susie tries to stop them but with one hand, Floyd effortlessly shoves his unfaithful wife out of the way. As Susie falls, she scrapes her head up against the doorframe, causing her forehead to bleed. As Floyd walks out, Susie calls out to Floyd in hate and screams that he is a worthless husband, a piece of shit of a father an even more pathetic sex partner. We cut back to Deadshot in the present, sitting in the dirty and decrypt bathroom, and we see that the gun is still situated under his jaw. His finger starts to curl over the trigger. We see another flashback of Floyd playing princess with Zoe and how she gets this cruel and pitiless murderer that is her father to laugh by placing a bedazzled tiara on his head and calling him "milady". We cut back to the empty bathroom. Deadshot's eyes start to mist as he thinks about his daughter, his finger wavers over the trigger. His face is the perfect picture of misery. Deadshot finally removes his finger from the trigger and pulls the gun away, slouching back in his chair as he lets out a heavy, ragged breath. He takes a few moments to regain his composure before wiping his eyes, clearing his throat, and holstering his weapons. Deadshot washes his face in the sink as Harley slides in, leaning seductively against the doorframe. "Hey, killer...", she says lustfully. "Not now, Harley", Deadshot replies curtly.

- **Harley Renounces the Joker:** When the rest of Task Force X find Harley sitting on the hood of a car, crying in the rain, she'll be holding her domino mask in her hands, looking

down at it mournfully. She'll toss the mask aside in frustration, curling her knees up to her chest and wrapping her arms around them as she embraces herself. She'll spot the rest of her teammates approaching and just like in the original film, she'll pretend that everything is ok as she greets the rest of the supervillains.

- **Nicknames:** Harley will rarely ever refer to anyone on the team by their actual names, usually coming up with monikers for all of them. She refers to Deadshot as "cowboy", "chief", "killer", "bronco" and "bullseye". She refers to Captain Boomerang as "Boomer" and "Kangaroo Jack", Killer Croc as "Croc", "munchies", "Dundee" and "Bowser". She also calls El Diablo, "sparky", "hot stuff" and "ink boy". Deadshot on the other hand, will refer to everyone by name except El Diablo and Captain Boomerang, whom he refers to as "ese" and "Digger" respectively. Captain Boomerang gets offended when nobody calls him by his actual supervillain name and Deadshot explains that it sounds too stupid, and to avoid sounding as dumb as Boomerang, Deadshot refers to him as "Digger", which is kinder than what Deadshot really wants to call him. Harley will refer to Waller as "the Queen of Hearts" because she's always threatening to remove their heads.
- **The Soultaker:** Katana's magic sword is called The Soultaker and it allows her to take the souls of those who are killed by the sword and trap those souls within the blade itself. The magic inside Soultaker will allow the Suicide Squad to penetrate Enchantress' magic barrier around Midway. Using the Soultaker, Katana will cut a hole through the magic wall and Task Force X will quickly pass through the opening before the shield repairs itself and seals the opening shut. When the Suicide Squad get into their first skirmish with the parademons, everyone will get a chance to see the Soultaker in action as it absorbs the souls of all of the parademons that fall before it. This will cause the rest of Task Force X to become nervous around Katana now that they know what she's capable of.
- **Five-Man Band/Magnificent Seven Samurai:** I'm going to follow both the Five-Man Band team archetype and the Magnificent Seven Samurai plot device for this rewrite. So, for the Leader we have Deadshot serving as a combination of the Headstrong and Levelheaded Leader, Captain Boomerang as the Lancer who is always challenging the leader's decisions, Harley Quinn as the Smart Guy with a Ph.D. who used to be a practicing psychiatrist. We have Killer Croc as our obvious Big Guy, serving as the Gentle Giant variety of this trope, and El Diablo will be the Heart since he is the most emotional, gentle, and sensitive of the group. Meanwhile, both Katana and Slipknot are the Sixth Rangers that get taken out pretty quickly. For more information on what the Five-Man Band and the Magnificent Seven Samurai are, you can go ahead and click the links here to take you to those videos (insert linked clips). Director David Ayer has been quoted as describing *Suicide Squad* as "the Dirty Dozen with supervillains", which sounds perfect on paper but in practice, that's not what we got at all. Unfortunately, the final result of *Suicide Squad* turned out to be something completely different. It was more like Zack Snyder's *Army of the Dead* than it was *the Dirty Dozen*. So let's see if we can try to remedy that and get this film back on course by implementing these tried and true writing techniques.

- **Katana's Death:** Deadshot will abandon Katana in the middle of the street battle with a horde of Parademons, and he'll selfishly sabotage his teammate by tripping her and running away, leaving her to be dogpiled and consumed by the Parademons. Tearing Katana apart kept the Parademons distracted long enough for Deadshot to retreat. Her death buying Deadshot enough time to escape.
- **Deadshot vs Enchantress/Climax:** In the final fight, Deadshot will find himself presented with the opportunity to run away and save his own skin or go back and save Harley's life. He chooses the latter, this being the first time we see Deadshot going out of his way to *save* someone's life, rather than take it. Sure, he's spared some people's lives in the past. But this is the first time Deadshot has actively *rescued* someone out of his own free will. This is the first time he's done something *heroic*. Something he never would've done if it hadn't been for his exposure to both Zoe and Harley. Instead of the Enchantress attempting to stop Deadshot by projecting an illusion of his daughter, she's going to sense the bond between Harley and Deadshot and when Harley has the opportunity to kill Enchantress, she will grab Deadshot and hold him as a hostage. This causes Harley to hesitate, and when Deadshot tells Harley to shoot, she can't bring herself to do it. But Deadshot takes that opportunity to press his wrist gun up against his chest and shoot both himself and Enchantress with the same bullet. They both collapse, gasping and bleeding out on the rubble, but not dead. Harley rushes over to Deadshot's side and he's unable to speak as he lies there in complete surrender, refusing to fight for life. He gives Harley a look and we can see in his eyes that he's ready to die. As Enchantress lays on the ground and begins casting a spell to heal herself, she chuckles and mocks Harley for not having the spine to save her lover. As the gunshot wound in her chest begins to close, the Enchantress begins to gloat about how she has lived for six thousand years and in that time, nobody has been able to slay her. Harley suddenly snaps and grabbing her pistol, screams bloody murder as she unloads the entire clip on the Enchantress, cutting her off from her monologue.
- **Deadshot and Harley's Goodbye:** Nursing the gaping bullet wound in his chest, Deadshot will be supported by Captain Boomerang, wrapping one arm around the thief's shoulder. The pair of villains will be approached by Joker, who raises his pistol point-blank at Deadshot's face, preparing to kill him for fraternizing with his Harley. Harley suddenly stands in between the two and protectively stands up for Floyd. She finally stands up to the Joker and unleashes a side of herself that he's never seen. She shouts down to the Joker, listing off all of the selfish and abusive treatment he's inflicted on to her, but not anymore. She's taking a stand. If Joker still wants Harley around, then things need to change. Starting now. He doesn't get to do whatever he wants anymore. As far as she's concerned, Joker is in the doghouse for that stunt he pulled with the parachute. Joker doesn't take kindly to being ordered around, declaring that he's had to endure enough of that with the Enchantress, but Harley cuts him off and threatens to burn down the pleasure room that they have, along with all of the toys in it. Joker legitimately becomes horrified, more because of losing his toys than because of the idea of Harley leaving him. Now that she has leverage over him, Harley snaps for Joker to go find a car to drive them home. Joker agrees, but only on the condition that they get to do kinky stuff later. Harley agrees, telling Joker that he has a lot to make up for.

Whistling a cheery tune, Joker holsters his pistol and leaves to go find a working getaway vehicle, leaving Harley alone with Boomerang and Deadshot. Harley will step in and take Deadshot's arm, relieving Boomer of having to hold Deadshot up and allowing Harley to support him. She'll fondly place her hands around Deadshot's neck and for the first time ever, he'll reciprocate the affection by placing his hands around her back, holding her close as he leans on her for balance. With distinct sadness, Harley will tell Deadshot that she likes him a lot, but she can't leave the Joker. "Sure, he beats me up...but I can't stop lovin' him". Deadshot will regard Harley with silence as he studies her and caresses her. "Hmmm" he mumbles, and he lets go of Harley, prompting Boomerang to come in and wrap his arm around his shoulder again. Harley will kiss Deadshot on the cheek and turns around to leave. As she's about to turn the corner and disappear from sight, Deadshot will call out, "Harley...", she stops and looks at Deadshot longingly. "...stay out of trouble". Harley will flash him a smile and aim a finger gun at Deadshot, "you got it, cowboy" and proceeds to wink and giggle as she fires the gun and skips away. "I can't believe it...she stood up to that looney wanker", Captain Boomerang will mutter incredulously. Deadshot glances at Boomer, but his eyes suddenly close and Deadshot slips and weakly collapses to the ground, unconscious. "Awww Hell...", mumbles Boomerang as he kneels down beside Deadshot and we fade to black.

- **Resolution:** Deadshot wakes up in a hospital bed, disappointed at having survived the suicide play. He weakly looks around at the room, recognizes that he's in a hospital, and drops his head back into the pillow and lets out a disappointed sigh. Deadshot: "damn it...", he whispers. All of that regret is immediately washed away as Zoe runs into the room and jumps onto his bed, hugging him tightly and unintentionally hurting his tender torso. Rick Flagg and two guards follow Zoe into the room, but they hang back by the door, respectfully not interfering in this heartfelt moment between father and daughter. Deadshot and Zoe have a short conversation and they begin watching cartoons on the hospital's TV together, with Zoe wrapped under her father's arm. That's when Waller walks in and tells Flagg that it's time to wrap it up. Flagg puts his arm out in front of Waller and advocates for Deadshot. "Who knows how long it will be before they see each other again. Let him have this, Waller. He's earned it". Waller backs down, but she tells Flagg that next time Task Force X is deployed, she wants Flagg to take point. The Suicide Squad needs a strong, structured leader that will keep them in line. They need a leader that not only commands respect but also holds loyalty to the U.S. government, a quality Deadshot does not possess. Rick Flagg checks off all of the boxes and that's why Waller believes he's the man for the job. Waller is about to walk out when Flagg asks her, "what if I refuse?". Waller stops and looks over her shoulder, "you don't have a choice, Flagg".