

Ozark

Season 2

Editor's 6 Core Questions Analysis



1. What's the Genre?

Global Genre: Thriller

Internal Genres: Morality, Worldview

2. What are the Obligatory Scenes & Conventions of the Global Genre?

Thriller (Global) obligatory scenes

- **Inciting Incident of the villain** - Cartel is threatening to kill Marty if he can't secure reparations from the Snells for Del's death
- **Speech in praise of the villain** - We know what the cartel is capable of because we've seen some of it already (torture in the first season and killing Marty's partner), maybe not necessary? We do see the cartel gun down Jacob and Darlene. (*How is this different than Killing Eve and the 12? Why is it more impactful?*)
- **Hero becomes the victim** - Marty is getting deeper and deeper, and so is his family. He tries to take care of Ruth, and Rachel, but he's a victim of a Cartel.
- **Hero at the Mercy of the villain** - though there are scenes with the cartel, most of the villain of this episode is the chaos Marty has created in his life because of his choices; he's at the mercy of the FBI for most of the season until he solves that problem (or Caleb solves it for him) and he's at the mercy of Mason too.
- **False ending** - yes, they end up not leaving on Marty's pre-planned escape.

Thriller Conventions

- **MacGuffin** - Cartel wants its money laundered still
- **Red Herrings** - We think the Cartel has kidnapped Wendy but it's Mason. We think Rachel will do Marty in. We think Caleb will turn Ruth against Marty and we fear think Darlene will do something crazy
- **Making it personal** - the cartel sees anything Marty does as personal, even if they misinterpret the action. It's also clear that his entire family is under the same threat that he is, which makes it very personal
- **Clock** - Marty is always on a deadline to launder the money

Morality (Internal Genre)

The protagonist faces an All Is Lost Moment and either discovers their inner moral code or chooses the immoral path. Whether or not the protagonist ultimately accepts the call depends upon the subgenre, the kind of story you want to tell.

Marty faces constant all-is-lost moments - does he kill Mason?

He realizes that his children are being brought down, can he change their path? He tries to leave but fails.

To illustrate the presence of morality in this story, look at the showdown. What's the showdown for Morality?

- **The Showdown - protagonist actively sacrifices self in service of an individual, a group, or humanity (positive) or consciously chooses to remain selfish (negative)**

Marty tries to actively sacrifice for the family, by taking them away but he's thwarted by Helen and Wendy

- **The protagonist faces literal or metaphorical death and either loses the battle but gains self-respect, meaning, and peace; or wins the battle but loses those things a great sacrifice. In all internal genres, there is a paradoxical ending.** Marty loses the battle, does he gain self-respect? Yes, from the viewers at least.

3. What's the point of view?

3rd Person - Mostly Wendy and Marty's family, some from the bad guys POV.

4. What are the objects of desire?

- Marty and Wendy want to survive and need to get the Casino approved.
- Most characters in this series want money and power. The Snells wants money and power although once Jacob is killed Darlene wants to become a mother by adopting Zeke.

5. What is the controlling idea/theme?

It's a combination of Thriller and Morality. On one hand, we see that Lives are saved and power is gained when the hero does whatever it takes to appease the villain. Marty and his family survive when Marty and Wendy bend rules and play fast and loose with morality, but they live to see another day.

We also see that Evil reigns when Marty and Wendy put the safety of their family above everyone else. They have created a casino for laundering drugs, they have

destroyed Mason's family and have handed the preacher's son Zeke to a killer, Darlene.

For viewers, it's an exciting thriller but the community has suffered loss and darkness has taken hold.

6. What is the beginning, middle and end payoff of the story?

Beginning Hook:

The Cartel finds out about Del's murder and Marty is forced to play negotiator between two powerful drug families. Jacob kills Ash as reparation, angering his wife.

Middle Build

The FBI seems to be closing in on the Byrds, as they force Rachel into wearing a wire while working back at the Blue Cat. Rachel reveals the truth to Marty, who plays hardball with Petty. Petty is forced to back off and is later killed by Cade.

End Payoff

Jacob is killed by Darlene who then antagonises the Byrds by demanding Zeke in return for the casino land. Marty realises his family is falling apart and plans their escape but is slowly losing control of his position - Wendy is one step ahead of him and has Cade killed and stops their escape. The Casino is opened.