

Who Is Mr. Williams?

MR. WILLIAMS

Age: 50s

The Businessman. The Kingmaker. The Danger You Don't See Coming.

UNDERSTANDING MR. WILLIAMS

Mr. Williams is one of the most important characters for an actor to understand correctly.

Because if you play him like a villain—

YOU'VE MISSED HIM.

Williams is a highly successful record executive and businessman. He has money, influence, relationships and access. He has spent years in an industry where careers can be created by the right opportunity—and destroyed by the wrong decision.

He can be charming.

Funny.

Generous.

Encouraging.

Even fatherly.

And all of those things can be genuine.

But underneath them is something Rod hasn't completely figured out yet:

MR. WILLIAMS NEVER DOES ANYTHING WITHOUT A REASON.

WHO HE IS

Williams is a man who understands business at a very high level.

He understands talent.

He understands money.

He understands people.

Most importantly—

HE UNDERSTANDS LEVERAGE.

When Rod meets him at the abandoned nightclub, Williams isn't just standing inside an old building.

He's standing inside part of his history.

He tells Rod the club used to be the talk of the town.

It's where he made his first million.

That tells us something important.

Williams remembers where he came from.

He didn't wake up wealthy.

He built something.

And because of that, when he looks at Rod, he may recognize a younger version of something he understands very well:

HUNGER.

HIS PERSONALITY

Williams is **intelligent, charismatic, sophisticated, strategic, generous, observant, unpredictable, confident and quietly dangerous.**

He's comfortable with people.

Unlike Morelli, Williams doesn't necessarily need distance to demonstrate power.

He can laugh with you.

Put his arm around you.

Give you advice.

Make you feel like you're the most important young man in the room.

AND STILL BE MOVING YOU EXACTLY WHERE HE WANTS YOU TO GO.

That's the character.

WILLIAMS & ROD

This relationship is extremely important.

WILLIAMS SEES SOMETHING IN ROD.

Not muscle.

Not street reputation.

Not celebrity.

His **mind**.

Rod is intelligent.

Strategic.

Ambitious.

He sees possibilities other people miss.

Williams knows Rod has an exam coming up. He pays attention to details in Rod's life and tells him:

"I don't invest in people I'm unsure about."

That word matters.

INVEST.

Williams sees people partly in terms of potential.

Rod has potential.

And Williams intends to use it.

DON'T PLAY THE RELATIONSHIP AS FAKE

This is very important for the actor.

Williams may genuinely like Rod.

PLAY THAT.

He may genuinely believe Rod can become something extraordinary.

Play that too.

He may genuinely want to give Rod opportunities.

Play it.

The complexity comes from the fact that Williams can care about Rod—

AND STILL USE HIM.

Those things don't have to contradict each other in Williams's world.

That's what makes him interesting.

THE MONEY

Rod brings Williams money.

Williams leaves it sitting there.

That's a major character moment.

Rod thinks the money matters.

Williams wants Rod to understand:

THIS ISN'T ABOUT YOUR LITTLE STACK OF CASH.

Williams is operating at a different level.

By leaving the money behind, he demonstrates power without ever saying:

"I'm richer than you."

The gesture says it.

THE COMPETITION

Williams explains that the music competition is now:

\$5 MILLION. WINNER TAKES ALL.

Three artists.

One stage.

One winner.

But Williams isn't thinking only about the prize money.

He tells Rod:

"By the time it's over. That's 50 million on a bad day. Do the math."

That's Williams's brain.

Rod sees a competition.

Williams sees an ecosystem.

Artists.

Audience.

Attention.

Money.

Deals.

Influence.

Opportunity.

HE SEES THE BUSINESS BEHIND THE EVENT.

That's one reason Rod interests him.

Rod has the capacity to eventually see it too.

THE THREE ARTISTS

There's another important clue.

The competition supposedly hasn't even begun.

But Williams has already secured the other two artists.

Rod recognizes the contradiction.

Williams tells him:

"Don't be naive... This is the real world."

That line tells us a great deal about Williams.

The public sees a competition.

Williams sees the machinery behind it.

He knows that what people believe is happening and what is actually happening are often two different things.

AND HE IS COMFORTABLE OPERATING IN THAT SPACE.

"PULLING THE STRINGS"

Williams gives Rod one of the clearest lessons about how he sees life:

"You're either pullin' the strings or you're the puppet."

That's not simply advice.

That's Williams's philosophy.

He believes someone is always controlling the situation.

If it isn't you—

it's someone else.

And Williams has spent his life making sure he's rarely the puppet.

THE KEYS

Then comes one of the most important scenes for understanding Williams.

He gives Rod **two sets of keys**.

The first set represents something Rod desperately wants:

NISSI'S SALON.

Rod asked for that.

Williams delivers.

That's the generosity.

That's the opportunity.

That's the dream.

Then Williams gives him another set.

THE NIGHTCLUB.

Rod didn't ask for that.

Now we understand the transaction.

Williams didn't simply grant a favor.

HE CREATED AN OBLIGATION.

THE ACTOR MUST UNDERSTAND THIS MOMENT

Don't suddenly become sinister when the second set of keys appears.

That's too obvious.

Williams doesn't think he's doing something sinister.

From his perspective:

I gave you what you wanted.

I'm giving you something even bigger.

Now I'm asking you to step up.

That's how he sees it.

THE TRAP SHOULD LOOK LIKE AN OPPORTUNITY.

That's what makes Williams dangerous.

"THIS IS ALL I'M ASKING IN RETURN."

That line is Williams in one sentence.

It sounds reasonable.

Almost generous.

But Rod realizes this was never really a request.

Williams has already created the circumstances.

The building.

The salon.

The competition.

The artists.

The opportunity.

Rod's role.

Everything is already moving.

Now Rod has to decide whether he's going to move with it.

NISSI

Williams knows exactly what the salon means to Rod.

That's important.

He tells Rod:

"Go take that pretty little girlfriend of yours those keys. Make her happy."

On the surface, it's warm.

Generous.

Almost fatherly.

But underneath it is leverage.

Williams understands that Rod isn't only ambitious for himself.

ROD'S LOVE FOR OTHER PEOPLE CAN MOTIVATE HIM.

A sophisticated businessman recognizes that.

FOR THE ACTOR

DO NOT PLAY MR. WILLIAMS AS A GANGSTER.

Don't force intimidation.

Don't constantly lower your voice.

Don't stare Rod down.

Don't make every sentence sound like a threat.

Don't announce that there's something dangerous underneath you.

LET US DISCOVER IT.

The best version of Williams may be the man audiences actually enjoy being around.

He's funny.

He's smart.

He tells good stories.

He gives opportunities.

He's successful.
He makes Rod feel seen.
We should understand why Rod would want this man in his corner.

HIS CHARM MUST BE REAL

This is critical.
Don't play charm as manipulation.

BE CHARMING.

If Williams laughs, laugh.
If he's proud of Rod, allow yourself to feel proud.
If he's impressed, be impressed.
If he's giving advice, give advice.
The audience shouldn't constantly be thinking:

He's pretending.

Because Williams doesn't necessarily need to pretend.
The danger is that his affection and his agenda can exist simultaneously.

WILLIAMS VS. MORELLI

These two powerful men should feel completely different.
Morelli wants control over something connected to Rod's **past**.
Williams sees enormous value in Rod's **future**.
Morelli is chasing what Rod inherited.
Williams is investing in what Rod could become.

BOTH MEN RECOGNIZE VALUE IN ROD BEFORE ROD FULLY UNDERSTANDS HIS OWN VALUE.

That's what makes Rod's position so dangerous.
But don't play Williams like Morelli.
Williams should have more warmth.
More humor.
More accessibility.
More mentorship.
Which can make him even harder for Rod to read.

WILLIAMS'S TEMPERATURE CHANGE

Williams can go from warm to cold quickly.
But don't make the transition theatrical.
No giant facial transformation.
No dramatic music in your performance.
Sometimes it can simply be:
The smile disappears.
A pause.
The eyes stop playing.
The voice becomes slightly more direct.

AND SUDDENLY ROD REALIZES HE'S NOT TALKING TO HIS FRIEND.

He's talking to Mr. Williams.
That distinction is powerful.

HIS ANGER

Williams does not need to explode.
In fact, anger may make him more controlled.
More direct.
Less charming.

THE WARMTH IS A CHOICE.

When he removes it, the room should feel different.
That's where the actor's presence becomes important.

THE FINAL WARNING

Williams tells Rod:

"You do this right... your life changes forever."

Rod understands enough to ask what happens if he does it wrong.

Williams responds:

"Your life changes forever. Just in a different way."

This line can easily be ruined by playing it as a threat.

DON'T.

Williams doesn't need to lean forward.

Don't glare.

Don't make your voice sinister.

You can almost say it like a businessman explaining reality.

Because that's how Williams sees it.

Opportunities have consequences.

Success changes lives.

Failure changes lives too.

HE DOESN'T NEED TO EXPLAIN WHAT "DIFFERENT" MEANS.

Rod is intelligent enough to understand.

THEN WILLIAMS LEAVES THE MONEY

This is the button.

After everything—

Rod looks at the money he brought.

WILLIAMS NEVER TOOK IT.

That tells us who had the leverage in the meeting.

Rod arrived thinking he was bringing something Williams wanted.

He leaves realizing:

WILLIAMS WANTED SOMETHING MUCH BIGGER.

Him.

His intelligence.

His ability.

His future.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't play a gangster.

Don't play a villain.

Don't imitate famous record executives.

Don't make every line threatening.

Don't overdo wealth.

Don't constantly show that you're smarter than everyone.

Don't play the kindness as fake.

Don't make Williams emotionless.

Don't turn him into Morelli.

Don't overplay the second set of keys.

And don't tell the audience:

"YOU SHOULDN'T TRUST ME."

Make them want to trust you.

That's much more interesting.

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

We're looking for an actor with **charisma, intelligence, sophistication, humor, authority and tremendous presence.**

Someone believable as a man who has spent decades around artists, executives, money and powerful people.

Someone who can mentor Rod without becoming sentimental.

Someone who can make generosity feel genuine.

Someone capable of becoming dangerous without changing his volume.

Someone who can make us understand why Rod might think:

THIS MAN COULD CHANGE MY LIFE.

Because he can.

That's the problem.

THE HEART OF MR. WILLIAMS

Williams understands something most people learn too late:

OPPORTUNITY AND OBLIGATION OFTEN WALK THROUGH THE SAME DOOR.

Rod wants to build a future.

Williams can open doors Rod couldn't open himself.

The salon.

The nightclub.

The competition.

The artists.

The money.

The connections.

The opportunity.

But Williams doesn't give Rod those things because he's running a charity.

HE'S INVESTING.

And investments are expected to produce returns.

Williams looks at Rod and sees something extraordinarily valuable:

A MIND THAT COULD MAKE A LOT OF PEOPLE A LOT OF MONEY.

He may like Rod.

He may believe in Rod.

He may even care about Rod.

But never forget:

MR. WILLIAMS IS STILL PULLING STRINGS.

The question isn't whether he's helping Rod.

He is.

The question is:

WHAT WILL THAT HELP EVENTUALLY COST HIM?

That's Mr. Williams.

Now show us your version of him.