

**IFWA MEETING**  
**Thursday, December 7, 2017, 7:00 PM**  
**Sentry Box**  
**MINUTES**

**Information Items:**

**New Members:** Madison McSweeney (writes science fiction and horror) and Mark Philip Ross (writes fantasy - different worlds)

Time	Topic	Person
7:00 PM	<b><u>Crits for December</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crit 1: Philip Vernon - Story of Quiet, Psych. Horror Crit by Susan Forest &amp; Jeff Campbell</li> <li>Crit 2: Chris Carolan - Lovecraftian story with sea monsters - "Shadow Over Backlot 36" Crit by Dave Worsick, Chris Jessop</li> </ul>	Shannon Susan / Jeff  David / Chris
	<b><u>Crits for January, 2018</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crit 1: Dale - fantasy chapter 1 Crit by Cameron / Chris Carolan</li> <li>Crit 2: Kevin Weir - fantasy - steampunk with oil Crit by Ed Wilson / Rick Overwater</li> </ul>	Shannon
8:00 PM	<b><u>Skills Session</u></b> Building Character Arcs - "What a Character" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See attached notes</li> </ul>	Craig DiLouie
8:30 PM	<b><u>Call for Agenda Items</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ed Wilson - Super Volcanoes (April)</li> <li>Chris Carolan - Submissions for Enigma Front open - started Indiegogo campaign</li> <li>Renee - Patreon changed</li> <li>A good gift for fellow writers: Write Reviews of their books or stories on Amazon or Goodreads</li> <li>Ron Friedman - 1) Escape Velocity - Kobo - code GIFT50 2) Propose panel to Comic Expo</li> </ul>	Michael
8:35 PM	<b><u>Braggs</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Susan - got proofs for story coming out in Analog</li> <li>Randy - NaNoWriMo in Mexico and edited 250k words</li> <li>Marc - had last proof for first novel coming out next week - "Death Dresses Poorly" by Marc Watson</li> <li>Liz Grabowski - launch of self-published novel - Houses of the Old Blood - urban sci fi about girl with dark family secrets - also wrote book entitled "Ashen" Offer received</li> <li>Cassandra Arnold - NaNoWriMo - got over 50K</li> </ul>	Michael

Time	Topic	Person
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ed Wilson - did NaNoWriMo by handwriting - ink - 125K (guess)</li> <li>• Dale Portman - Sent off manuscript (non-fic) travels from China</li> <li>• Craig DiLouie has been writing - 6000 words of 10k done</li> <li>• Heather Osborne - just passed he dissertation - Doctor of Creative Writing</li> <li>• Lesley Renton - Cat Between Two Worlds - just published</li> </ul>	
8:40 PM	<p><b>Discuss / Decide</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on IFWA Society Revival — Calvin</li> <li>• Next year will be IFWA's 30th anniversary, should we do something to mark the occasion? – Shannon - January will throw some ideas around - Founders - 8 of them - one passed, one in SK, one in N. Alta - should invite the founding members - Hayden &amp; Liz - Colin Remelard - Thank Sentry Box</li> <li>• Report on IPB – Susan - spoke with Romance writers and Alexandra Centre - haven't heard from ARWA - Alexandra will not be supporting - sold a few books - Coffin Hop Press donating \$250 to us -</li> <li>• IFWA Christmas Party - Dec 16, at 7pm - gift exchange (\$10) - Susan Forest - will send out address and directions - BYOB</li> </ul>	Michael
8:55 PM	<p><b>Announcements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New After-Meeting Pub:</b> Since Mugs Pub now has a Bingo session Thursday nights that is not likely to end in the near future, we have decided to move to a different pub. This month, the after meeting pub is once again at the <b>Newcastle Pub:</b> <a href="http://newcastlepub.ca/">http://newcastlepub.ca/</a> <b>Address:</b> 2703 17th Avenue SW, Calgary <b>Directions:</b> Head west from the Sentry Box, go under Crowchild and turn west onto Bow Trail. Turn left off of Bow Trail on 26th Street and go straight a few blocks until you get to 17th Avenue. It will be on your right.</li> <li>• <b>A Taste of Local Authors:</b> Check out 9 new releases from 9 local authors. Genres from Mainstream to Science Fiction to Fantasy to Romance to Paranormal Romance. Even better, the authors will be on hand to give short readings from their work, answer questions, and sign books. Come out and join us for an evening of words and music. <b>Location:</b> Owls Nest Books - <a href="#">815A 49th Avenue SW</a> <b>Date &amp; Time:</b> December 14, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.</li> <li>• <b>Writers in the House:</b> January 27-28, 2018: Join local writers in a weekend of writing in the Fireside Room.</li> </ul>	Michael

Time	Topic	Person
	Location: Calgary Delta Hotel South – 135 Southland Dr. SE Drop by any time from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Saturday, Jan 27 or 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Sunday, Jan 28.	

## **ENIGMA FRONT: ONWARD - CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS**

**Enigma Front: ONWARD.** We're living in uncertain times. With Trumpism and North Korea dominating the headlines, unprecedented natural disasters and persistent grim economic forecasts, some stories of hope are something we could all use right now... and something the writers of IFWA can pull off without being too Pollyanna about it! We're looking for stories that turn a hopeful eye to the future (or at least the future of whatever world your story inhabits).

The anthology is open to all current members of IFWA in good standing.

Stories can be any speculative genre; SciFi (hard or soft), all varieties of fantasy, any of the \_\_\_\_punk genres, horror, cli-fi, NobleBright... even GrimDark, if you think you can put a hopeful slant on it. Ultimately, though, your story should contain some speculative element and the message of hope should be present, even if it is slight. We're aiming for a YA to Adult readership, so stories with excessive gore and explicit sex will not be a good fit.

Maximum length for stories is 6000 words.

We'll consider a small number of reprints, but we would rather publish new works from IFWA writers. As in the past, IFWITs can submit two pieces for consideration with responses being hold, request for revision, or rejection.

**Hold:** We reserve the right to accept, but this is not an acceptance. Decision reserved until all submissions have been reviewed at the end of the submission period.

**Revision Request:** We will give feedback to allow the author to rework the story with the objective of becoming a Hold.

**Not for Us:** The story doesn't work for us.

**SUBMISSION PERIOD:** December 1st to January 31st. For submissions received before January 15th we will do our best to reply within two weeks, with the final responses being sent by mid-February.

Please submit your MS in .doc, .docx, or .rtf in standard short story format:

<https://www.shunn.net/format/story.html>

**SUBMIT TO:** [ExitZeroSF@gmail.com](mailto:ExitZeroSF@gmail.com) with the header "SUBMISSION: Title by Author Name"

**PAYMENT:** We will be running an Indiegogo campaign to raise funds for this project. Payment to the authors will be dependent on the success of the campaign, but we are hoping to pay each author \$40 to \$50 plus one print copy of the book upon publication.

First-publication rights are exclusive to the anthology for 3 months from date of publication, non-exclusive to the anthology ongoing afterwards.

We're looking for 15 to 21 stories, adding up to a total word count of at least 60,000 words. If we can't meet these requirements, the project will not go forward. Our goal is to have the book ready in time for When Words Collide 2018.

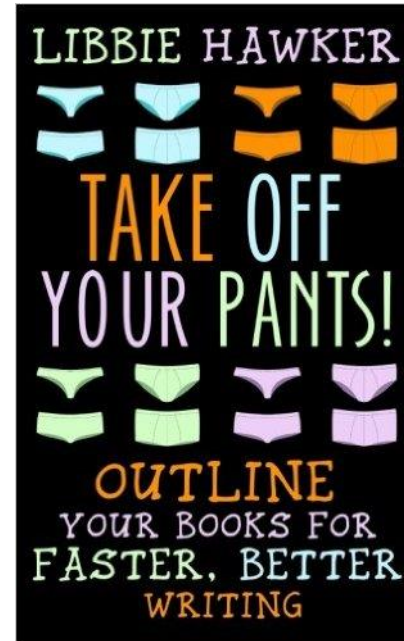
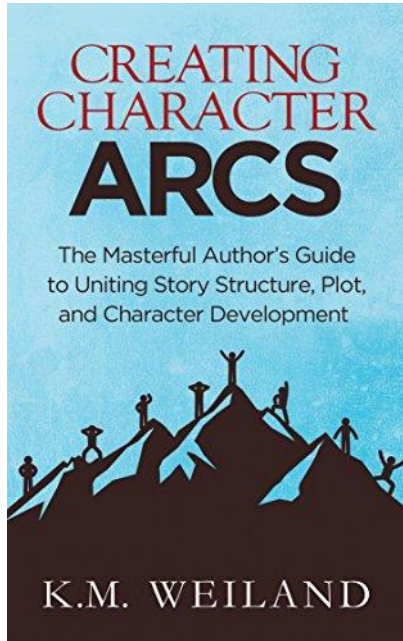
**Now... ONWARD!**



# “What a character!”

The role of the character arc in  
building stories that matter

By Craig DiLouie





Great characters make a great story.





# Characterization is at the heart of story.

“What does characterization do for a story? In a nutshell, it allows us to **empathize with the protagonist and secondary characters, and thus feel that what is happening to these people in the story is vicariously happening to us**; and it also gives us a sense of verisimilitude, or the **semblance of living reality.**”

—Karen Bernardo, “Characterization in Literature”





**CHARACTER**

**vs.**

**PLOT**



## **CHARACTER-DRIVEN**

The character's attributes lead to actions and events.



## **PLOT-DRIVEN**

Character's actions lead to a plot point.

# Characterization always drives story.

“In the best of stories, it is actually characterization that moves the story along, because a **compelling character in a difficult situation creates his or her own plot.**” — Karen Bernardo, “Characterization in Literature”

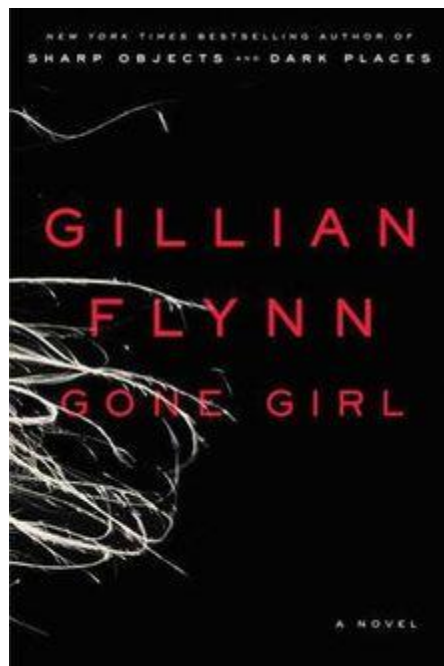
“**Structure is character; character is structure.**” — Robert McKee, *Story*

“**Characters shape the plot, and the plot shapes the characters.**” —Rayne Hall, *Writing Vivid Characters*

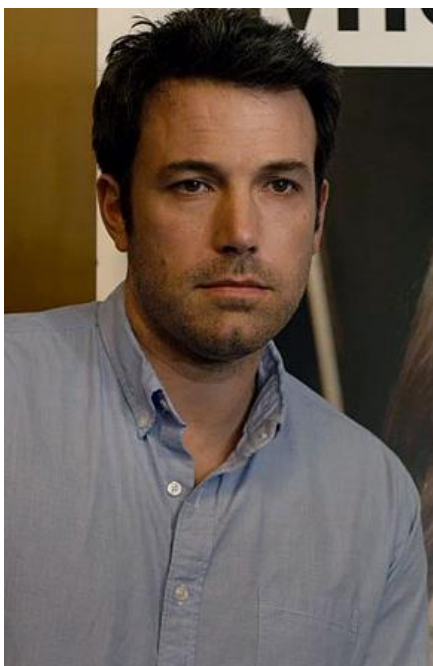
PLOT	CHARACTER
Plot is story told through ...	... the eyes of characters.
Things happen because ...	... characters make choices.
Plot tell us what happened, while ...	... character tells us why it happened.



# Characterization always drives story.



Wife disappears on a couple's anniversary, with foul play suspected.



"I will reflect on what she means to me and gain insight into my marriage."



"I will find a new lease on life freed from the constraints of my marriage."



"I will find her and rescue her using the clues in her diary."



**The Roleplaying assistant**

System Edit Group Dm options Pc (generation) Pc (characteristics) Help Format Report

**Report Designer - feuille.frx**

0 1 2 3 4 5

▲ Page Header

**The Roleplaying Assistant**

**Player's name:**

**Character's name:**

**Class:**

**Experience:**

**Level:**  /  / 
**Alignment:**

**Race:** 
**Deity:**

**Class abilities**

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<input type="text" value="name2"/>	<input type="text" value="spclas2"/>
<input type="text" value="name3"/>	<input type="text" value="spclas3"/>
<input type="text" value="name4"/>	<input type="text" value="spclas4"/>
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**Characteristics**

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<input type="text" value="INT"/> Int	<input type="text" value="int"/> #of languages	<input type="text" value="int"/> Maximum spell level	<input type="text" value="int"/> Learn	<input type="text" value="int"/> la %	<input type="text" value="int"/> #spell/wl	<input type="text" value="int"/> n	
<input type="text" value="WI"/> Wis	<input type="text" value="wis"/> Save	<input type="text" value="wis"/> Fail	<input type="text" value="wis"/> %	<input type="text" value="wi"/> Bonus	<input type="text" value="wi"/> wi	<input type="text" value="wi"/> wi	<input type="text" value="wi"/> wi
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<input type="text" value="CH"/> Cha	<input type="text" value="cha"/> HENCH	<input type="text" value="cha"/> Loyalty	<input type="text" value="cha"/> React	<input type="text" value="cha"/> cha			

**Saving throw**

**Bonus**

**Notes**

Paralyzation, Poison:

Petrifi, Polymorph:

Rod, staff, wand:

Breath weapon:

Spells:

**HP** 
**Wounds**

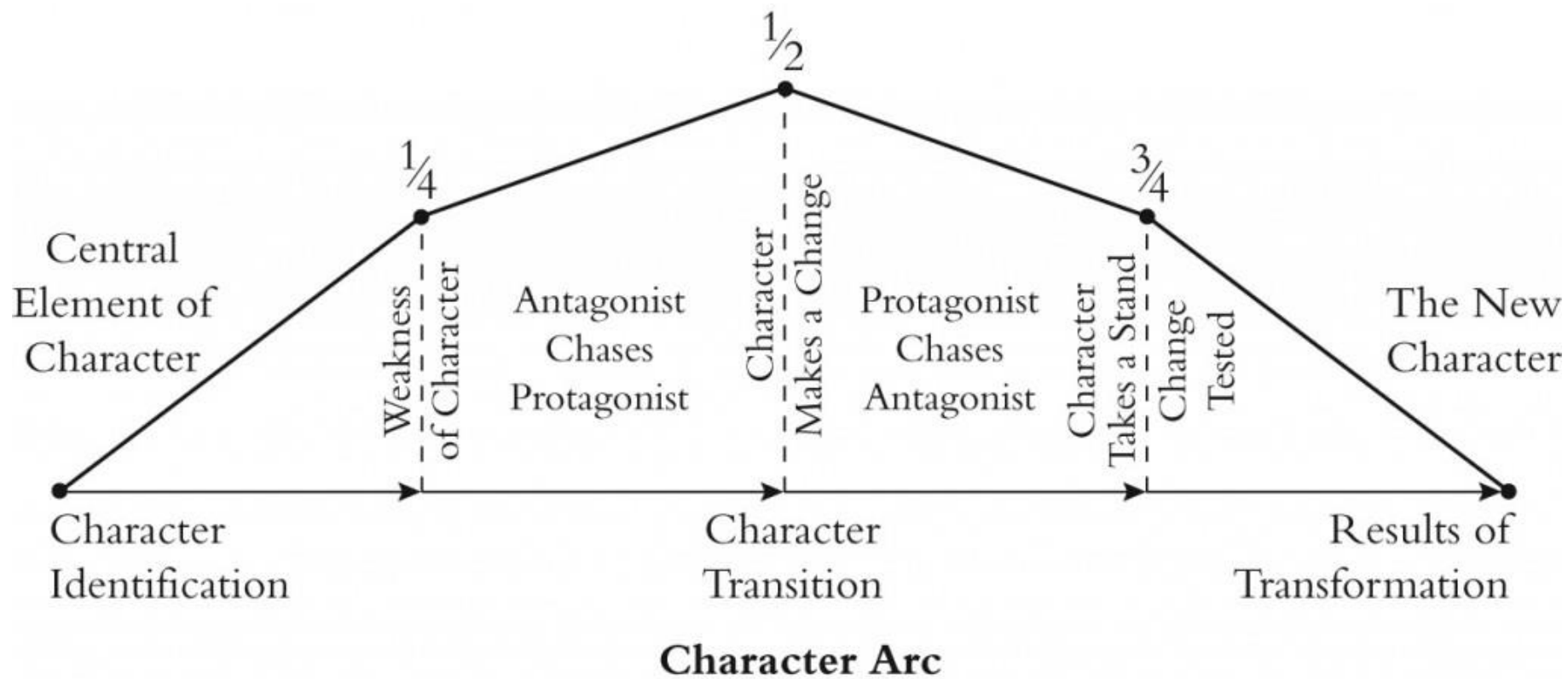
**Ac** 
**Rear Ac**

**Armor worn**

**#attack/round** 
**Backstab**

**Weapon Proficiency penalty**

Weapon	Range	Speed	Hit	DMG	Small/Large
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# Fundamentals





# Character Types



## **PROTAGONIST**

Main character with whom we typically identify. The hero (or an anti-hero).



## **ANTAGONIST**

A character opposing the protagonist, which results in conflict. The villain.



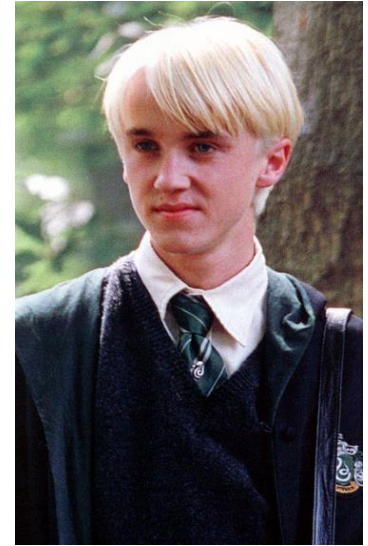
## **MAJOR**

Play a critical role in developing and resolving the central conflict.



## **MINOR**

Supporting character who complements protagonist or villain and helps drive the plot.



## **FOIL**

Supporting character who highlights another character's (usually protagonist's) traits through contrast.



# Character Types



## ROUND

More developed and well rounded in attributes and emotions. Typically the protagonist and sometimes the antagonist.



## FLAT

Little depth, typically a singular character trait. May be stock, stereotype or symbolic. Majority of supporting characters. More memorable with a quirk.

# Character Development



## **DYNAMIC**

A character who undergoes change as a result of the central conflict. Typically the protagonist and sometimes the antagonist.



## **STATIC**

No change. Majority of supporting characters and often the antagonist as well.

# Character Revelation



**What the  
narrator says  
about the  
character**



**What the  
character says  
about  
him/herself**



**What other  
characters say  
about and how  
they interact  
with character**



**What the  
character does**

---

*Direct, reader is told*

---

*Indirect, reader infers what character is like*

# Narrator Types

TYPE	HOW IT WORKS
<b>First person</b>	Character tells the story (“I”)
<b>Second person</b>	Narrator tells story to another character (“you”)
<b>Third person omniscient</b>	Narrator is not a character and knows everything about the story (“he/she”)
<b>Third person limited</b>	Narrator is not a character but views story through perspective of single character (“he/she”) (POV)



# Emotional Arcs

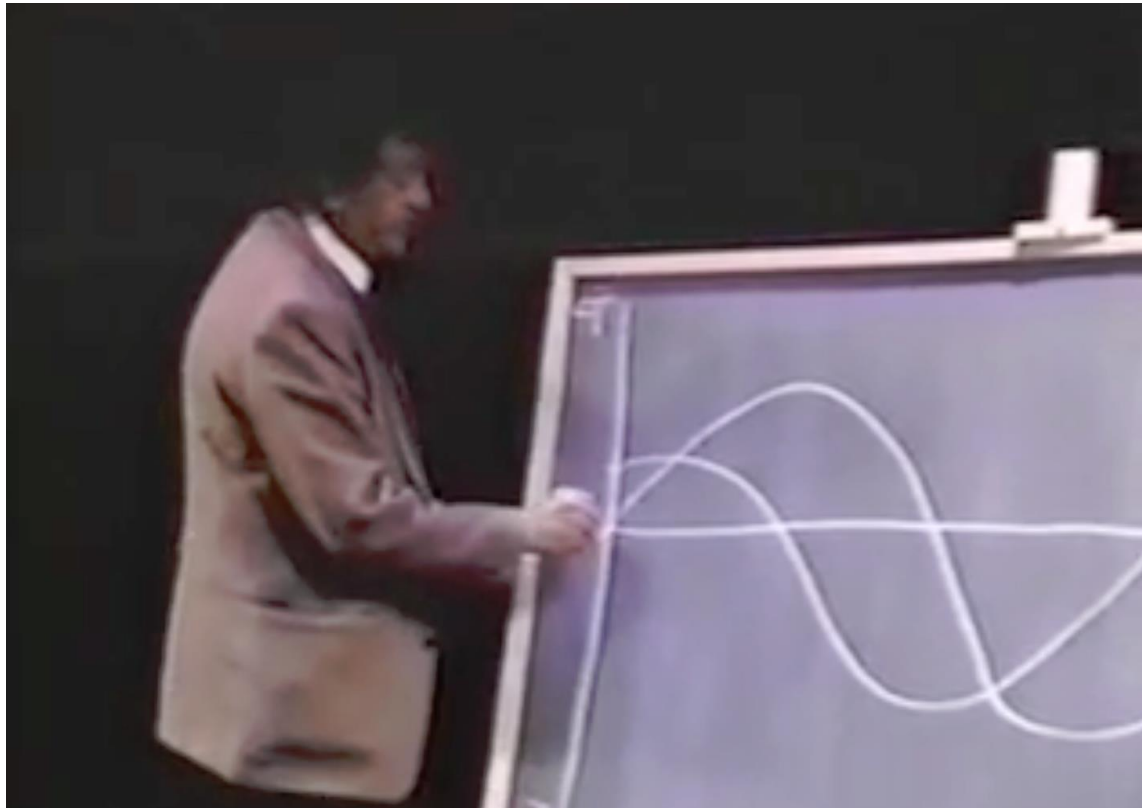


# Emotional Arcs

Kurt Vonnegut's  
master's thesis in  
anthropology:

A story's main character  
has ups and downs that  
can be graphed to  
reveal story shape.

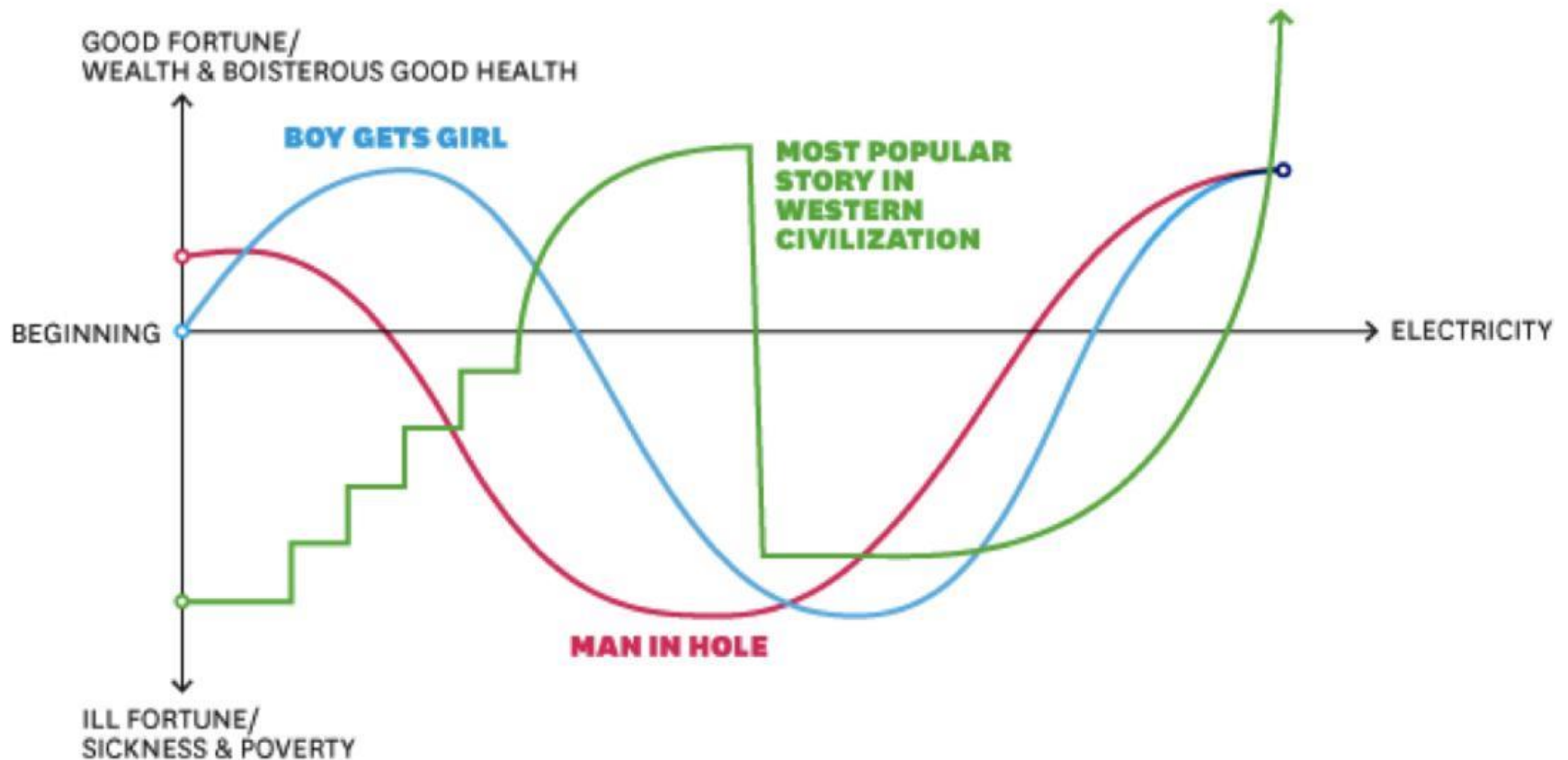
**“The shape of a given  
society's stories is at  
least as interesting as  
the shape of its pots  
or spearheads.”**



# Emotional Arcs

## SIMPLE SHAPES OF STORIES

As told by Kurt Vonnegut.



# Emotional Arcs

- University of Vermont and University of Adelaide researchers hypothesis: certain story arcs are more meaningful
- Analyzed more than 1,300 works in Project Gutenberg fiction collection
- Algorithm assigned emotional ratings to words like “death” and “love” and “laugh” to plot happiness arc
- Story shape bends down when happiness decreases and up when happiness increases
- Identified six primary emotional arcs as most popular based on number of downloads from collection



# Emotional Arcs

STORY	ARC
<b>Rags to riches</b>	Rises over course of story
<b>Riches to rags</b>	Falls over course of story
<b>Man in a hole</b>	Falls then rises
<b>Icarus</b>	Rises then falls
<b>Cinderella</b>	Rises, falls, then rises again
<b>Oedipus</b>	Falls, rises, then falls again

# Riches to Rags

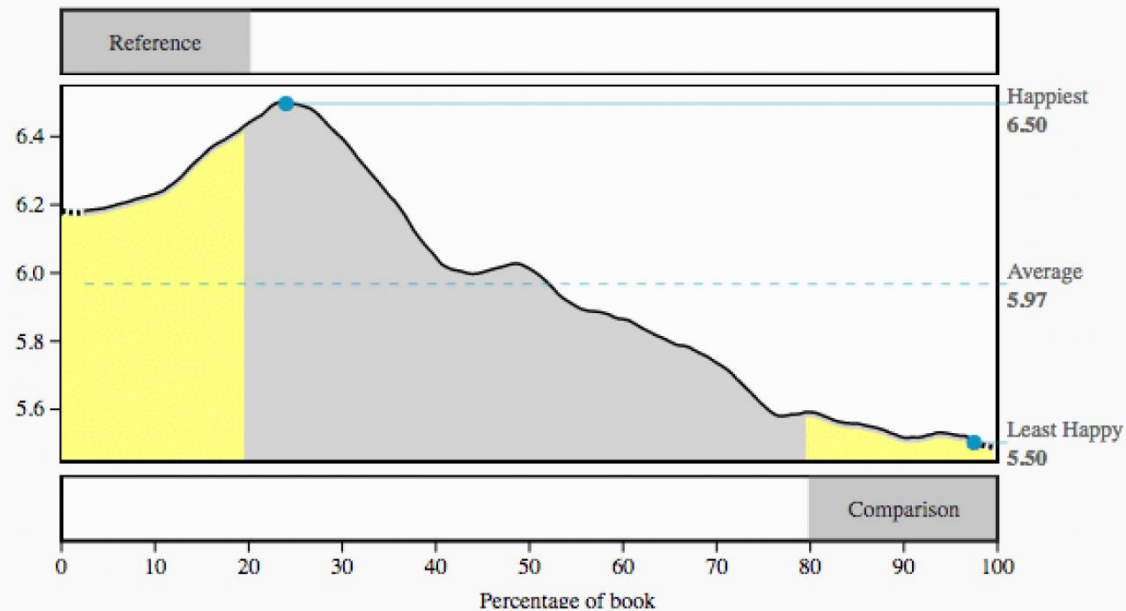
## Romeo and Juliet

by Shakespeare, William

Search Books

### Book happiness time series:

Explore the work's emotional dynamics by sliding and resizing the reference and comparison sections.



# Man in a Hole

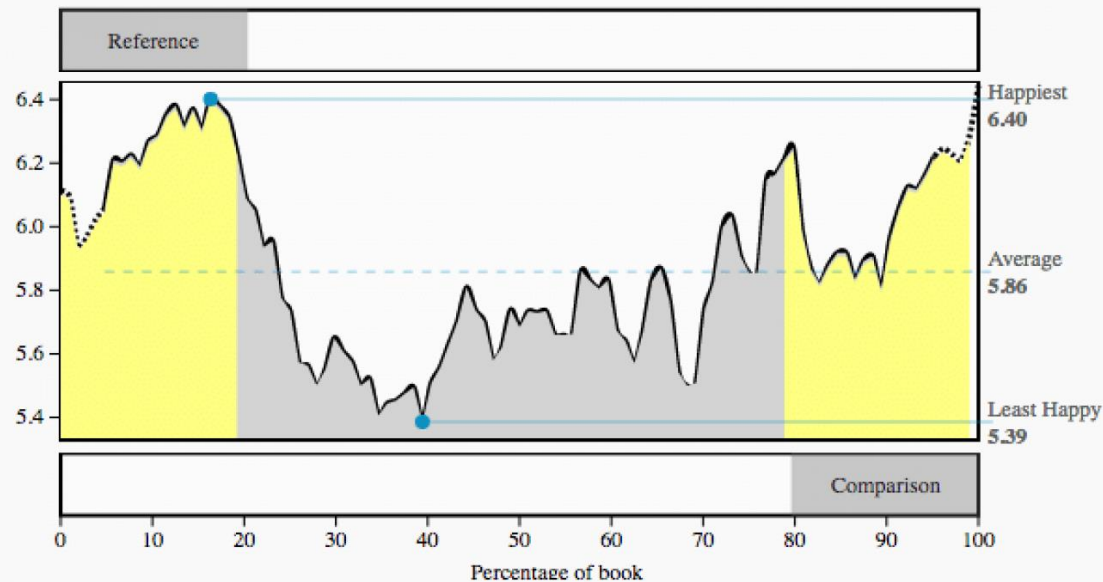
## The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes [\(wiki\)](#)

Search Books

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

### Book happiness time series:

Explore the work's emotional dynamics by sliding and resizing the reference and comparison sections.



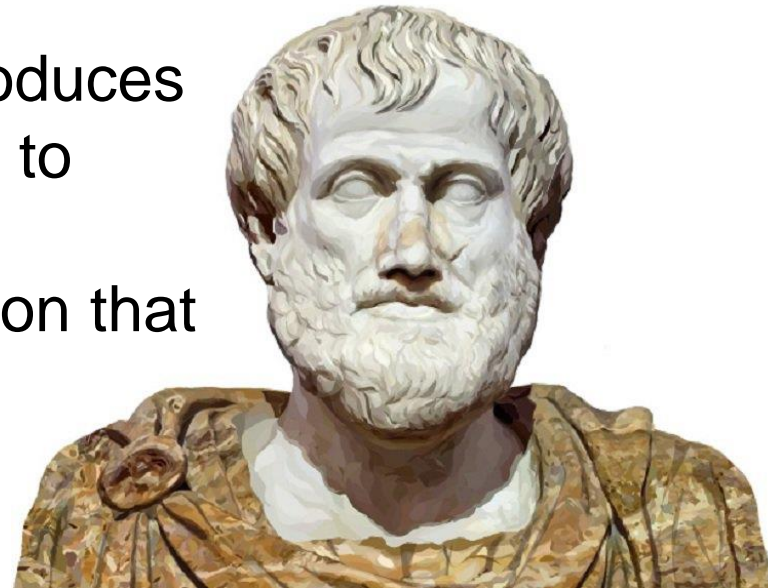
# Plot Arcs





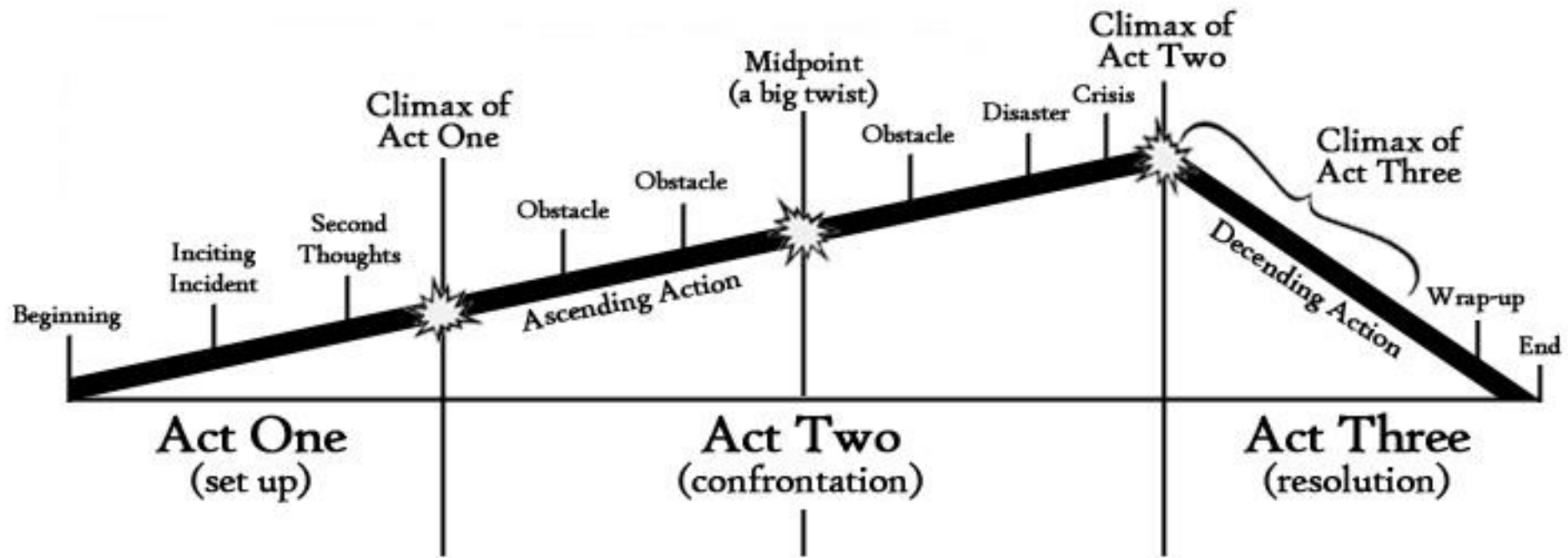
# Aristotle on Plot (*Poetics*)

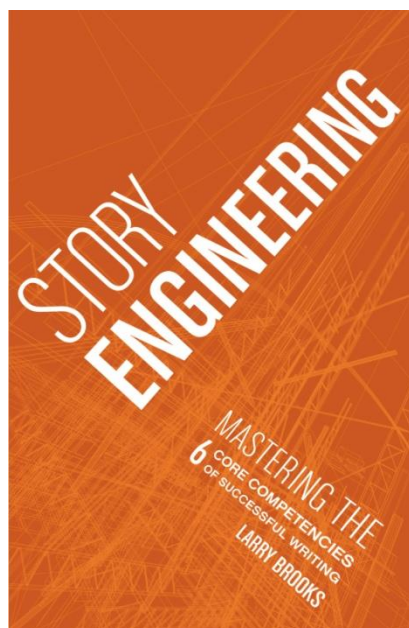
- **Beginning**—start at or near inciting event
- **Middle**—build tension
- **Reversals**—from good fortune to bad and back as a result of character choices and actions
- **Discoveries**—characters should learn about themselves
- **Complications**—obstacles between character and what s/he wants
- **Catastrophe**—disruption that introduces change and chance for characters to advance plot by how they react
- **Resolution**—satisfactory conclusion that stems logically from story (avoid *deus ex machina*)



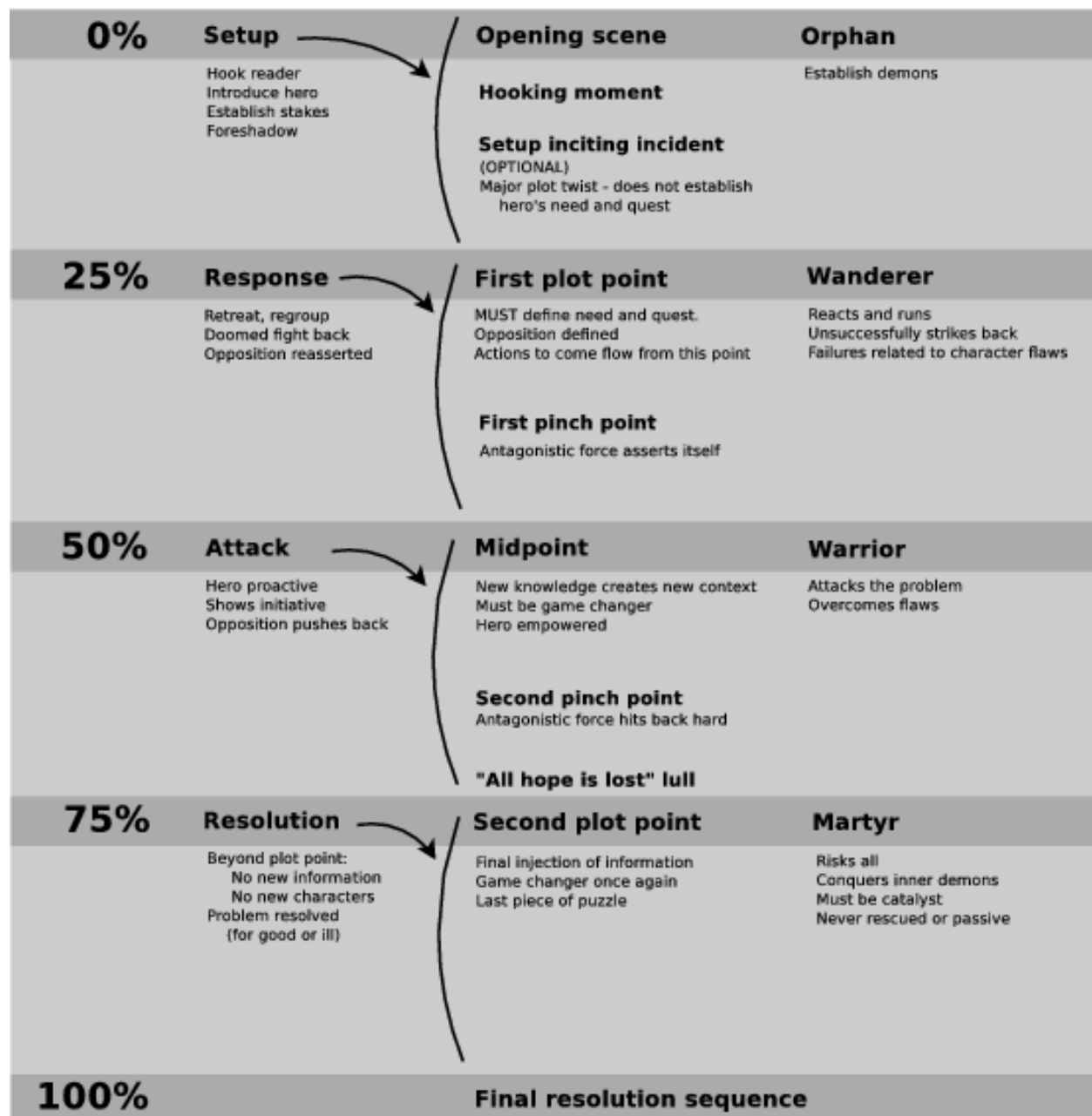
# The Hero's Journey

## Three-Act Structure





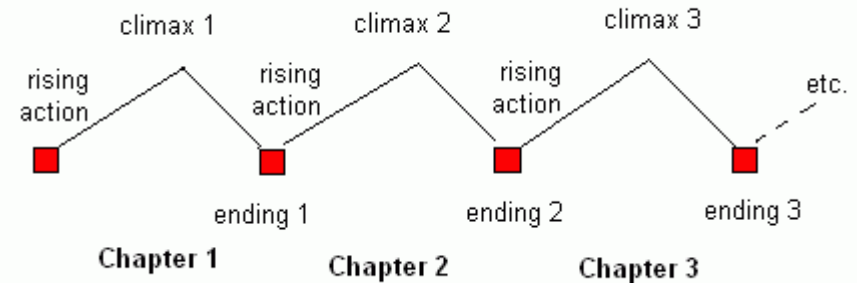
## Larry Brooks' Story Structure



# Other Plot Types

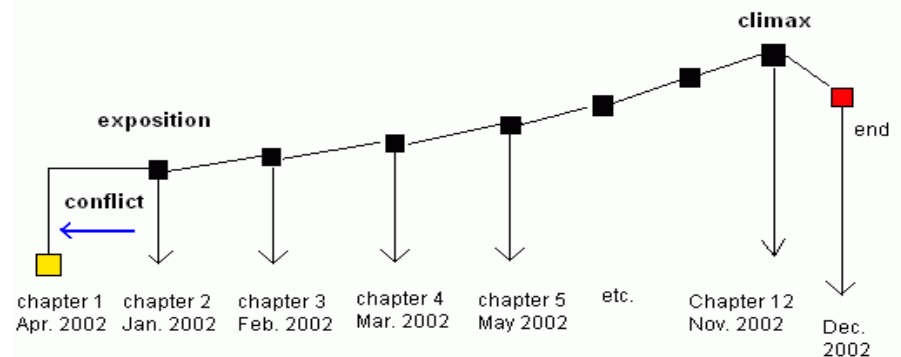
## EPISODIC

Multiple consecutive plots linked by common character or theme



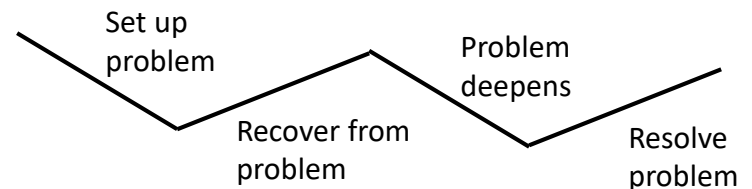
## FLASHBACK

Story begins with current events and then catches up (medias res)



## W-SHAPED

Character overcomes one problem but problem deepens in reversal

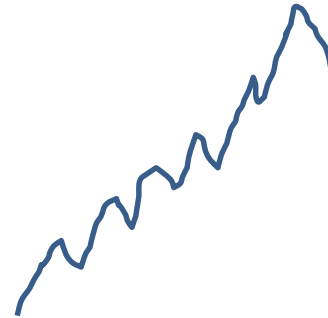




# Other Plot Types

## **MOUNTAIN**

Character faces increasing tension in increasingly significant, small climactic moments until resolution (common in literary novels)



## **EMBEDDED**

All plot structures are open to subplots and embedding

## **PARALLEL**

Multiple concurrent plots linked by common character or theme

# Character Arcs



# The Character Arc

Character's transformation or inner journey over a story.



## THE NORMAL

Character starts in one state



## CONFLICT

Character grows through conflict



## THE NEW

Character reaches a new state, hopefully one that's better



# The Character Arc

Character's transformation or inner journey over a story.



**SYMPATHETIC**  
**IDENTIFIABLE**  
**LIKEABLE**  
**FLAWED**



**OBSTACLES**  
**ADVERSARIES**  
**CHALLENGES**  
**INCREASING DIFFICULTY**



**NEW STATE**



# The Characteristic Moment



Luke is a dutiful nephew but wants to go to the Academy to prove himself. He's introduced to droids that will change his life.



Han is a tough smuggler who lives for himself. He sees the job he's given by Obi Wan and Luke as a way to clear his debts.

- Introduce the character (hook)
- Name, gender, important physical characteristics (distinctive)
- Manner of speaking (distinctive)
- Convey this is the protagonist
- Hook reader sympathy and/or interest in memorable scene
- Convey character's goal
- Hint or demonstrate the Lie the character believes
- Reader should identify with character and find them likeable
- Genres have familiar types

# How to Make Readers Relate to MC



Sympathetic,  
likeable



Funny,  
likeable  
(street wise)

Michael Hauge says you need at least *two* of these to make readers relate to a character:

- Sympathetic
- Funny
- Likeable (e.g., special talent, as people respect competence)
- Jeopardy
- Powerful

# The Lie the MC Believes



"I want to be tested before I learn what I need to. I test everybody and everything."



"I take care of myself because nobody else ever has. That makes me self-centered."

MC believes a Lie about themselves or the world, resulting in them being an incomplete person.

The Lie may have symptom(s), such as fear or inability to love.

The Lie is so ingrained the MC resists change. May even see it as strength.

# What the MC Wants Vs. Needs



"I want to rescue the Princess and prove myself."

Needs to mature so can fight effectively.



"I want to do this job and clear my debt to Jabba."

Needs to commit to a cause bigger than himself.

MC wants something but can't have it. Usually something external, and usually the wrong thing.

What the MC wants often belies what the MC needs.



# The MC's Ghost or Wound

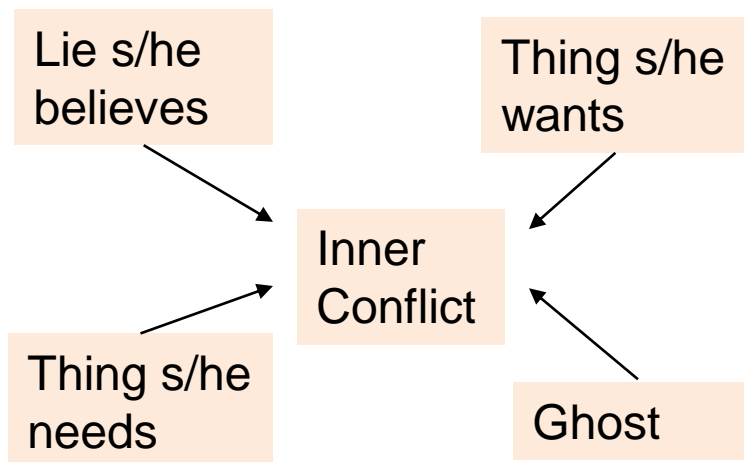


Luke never knew his father. Grand reveal is he finds out who his father is.



Han owes a crime lord money and has a bounty on his head.

This where the Lie is embedded, something that haunts the MC. It can be revealed in pieces, culminating in a grand reveal.



# The Normal World



Lives on moisture farm on desert planet. Isn't allowed to go to the Academy a year early.



Meets his clients in dangerous bar in lawless city.

Act 1 should describe the Normal for the MC, which dramatizes or enables the Lie.

# Trigger



Meets the droids, who set him on path of meeting Obi Wan and seeing Leia's message. Family's death sets him free.



Is hired by Obi Wan and Luke, which sets him on path of fighting for the Alliance and falling in love with Leia.

An event occurs near inciting incident or first plot point, which gets the story moving. The trigger should put the MC face to face with Lie s/he believes and catalyze the story.

# The Antagonist



Libbie Hawk (*Take Off Your Pants!*) on antagonist:

- Wants same external goal as protagonist
- Conflict from same goal or MC deviating from goal
- May provide dark side of theme: “Change or you’ll become like me”
- Not necessarily villainous or evil



# The Ally



Libbie Hawk (*Take Off Your Pants!*) on the Ally:

- Has the power to force the MC onto the right path
- At some point may spell exactly what the MC needs

# Types of Character Arcs



## POSITIVE ARC

Character's beliefs and abilities challenged. S/he must conquer flaw (and possibly antagonist too), ending a better person. Most popular for MCs.



## FLAT/STEADFAST ARC

In a flat arc, MC ends the same as began (flawed), resulting in a tragic ending.

In a steadfast arc, MC is already good (no Lie and resulting flaw) and advances through strengthening of resolve. MC does not change but is catalyst of change, as the essential flaw is in the external world.

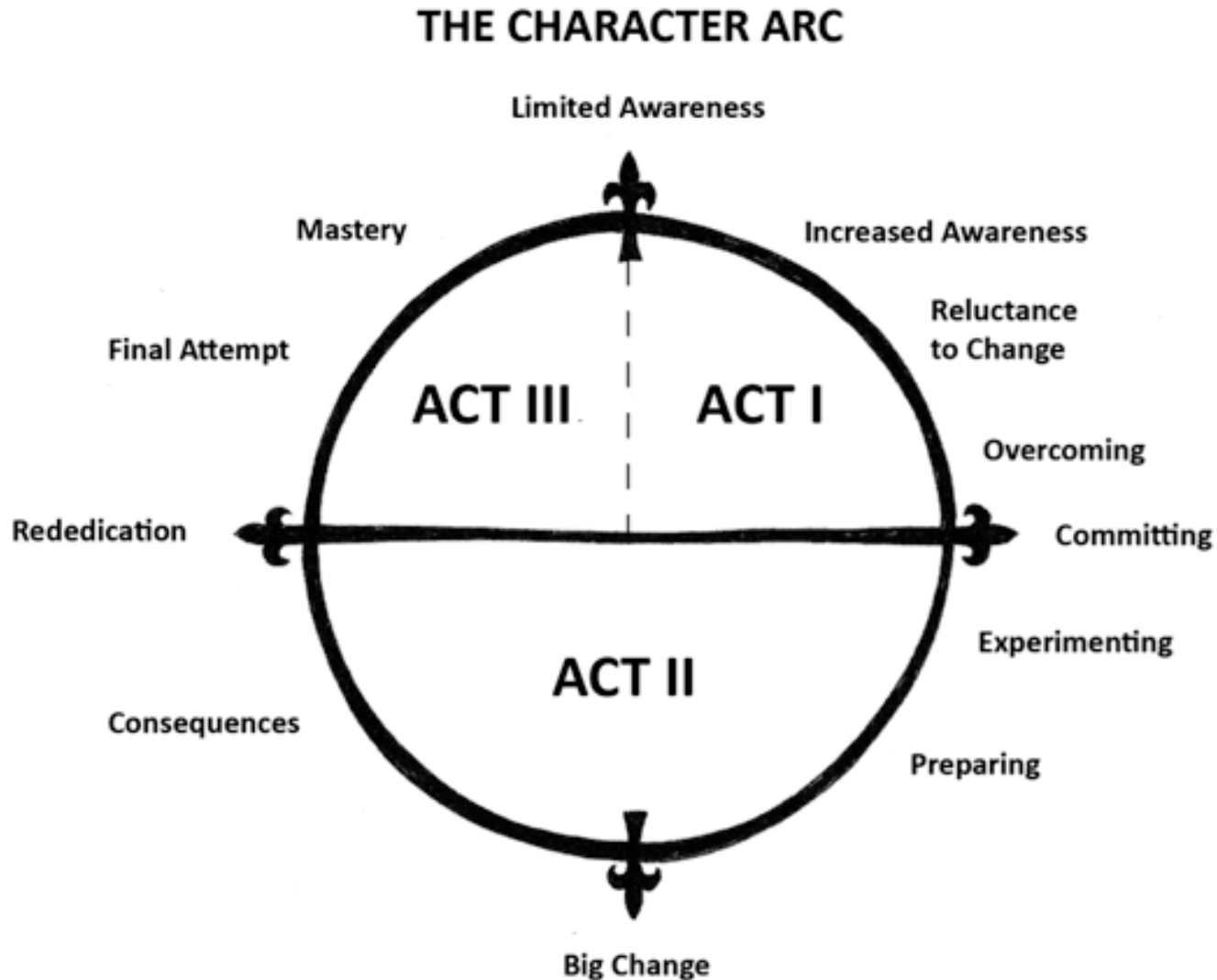


## NEGATIVE ARC

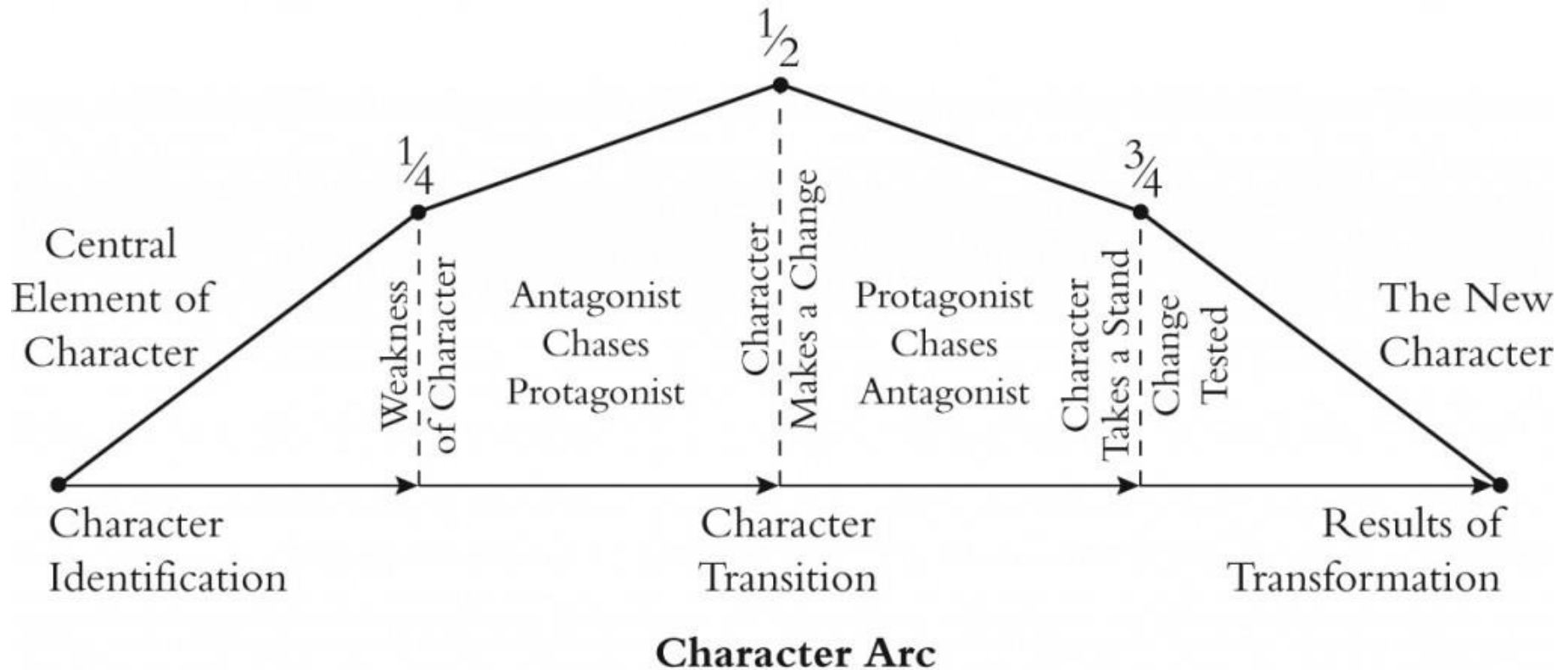
Character ends up worse off than where s/he started.

Common for villains.

# Positive Character Arc

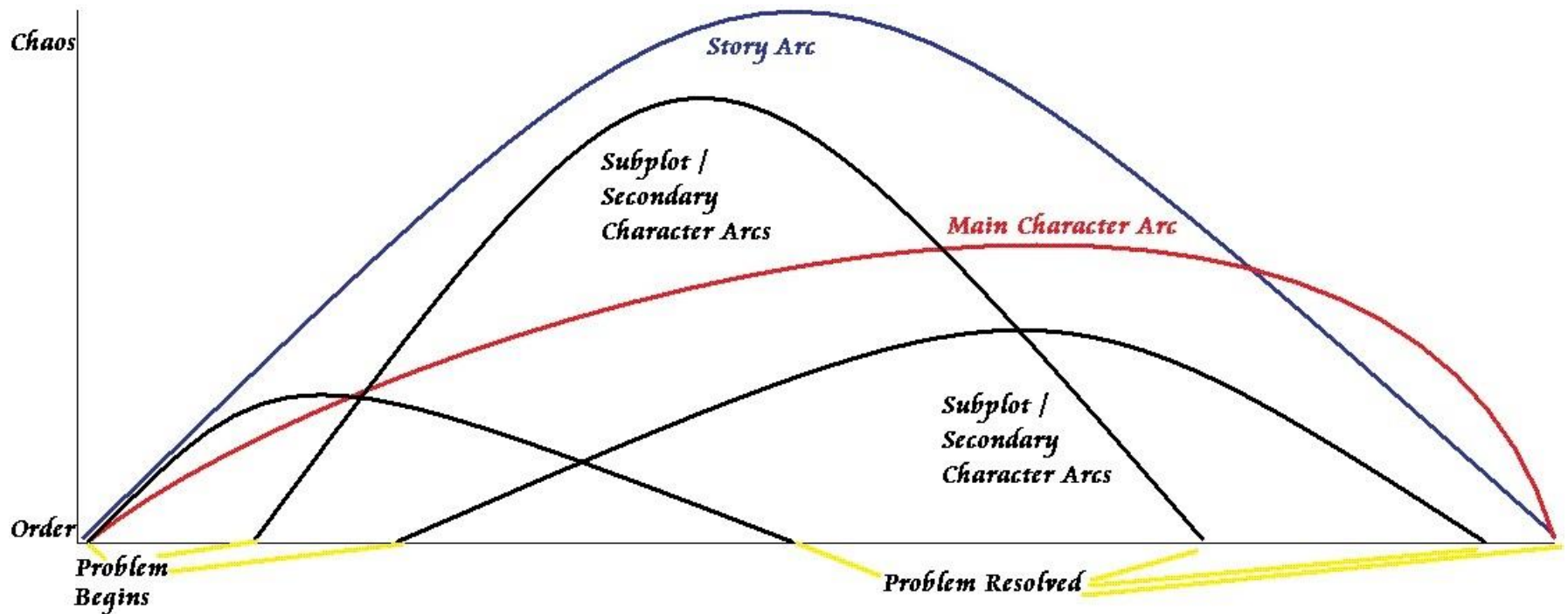


# Positive Character Arc





# Positive Character Arc



# Positive Character Arc: SHREK



## OPENING IMAGE

Can offer theme, symbol, metaphor and foreshadowing of central conflict.

*Somewhere in the world is a beautiful princess requiring rescue, who will be freed by her true love's kiss.*



## CHARACTERISTIC MOMENT

Character arc begins with introduction scene. Shrek is funny and strong (likeable).

*Shrek is an ogre who lives alone in a swamp and seems to be happy. He goes through the gross ogre version of a normal morning routine.*

# Positive Character Arc: SHREK



## TROUBLESOME TRAIT

The MC has a trait that may lead to trouble, such as brave, curious, nosy.

*Shrek is an ogre.*



## BELIEVES A LIE

The MC believes a Lie about themselves, resulting in them being an incomplete person.

*Shrek believes it's better to be alone because he's an ogre.*



## SYMPTOMS OF LIE

Symptoms of Lie may include negative trait such as fear or inability to forgive.

*Shrek is abrasive because he assumes others judge him.*

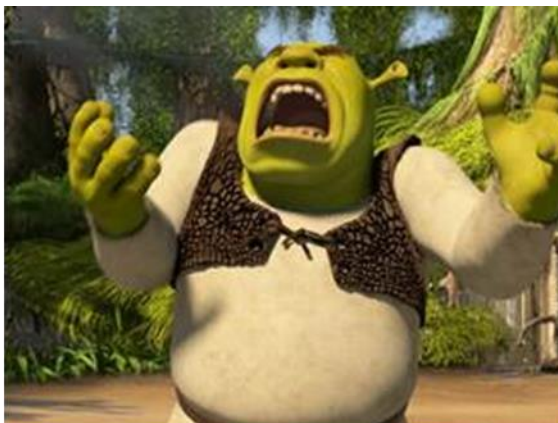
# Positive Character Arc: SHREK



## TRIGGER

The inciting incident (about 12%) or first plot point may expose the Lie as a weakness.

*Shrek's swamp is invaded by fairy tale creatures who want him to protect them.*



## RESISTS CHANGE

The lie is so ingrained the MC doesn't want to change. May even see it as a strength.

*Shrek is comfortable living alone. When fairy tale creatures come, he wants them out.*



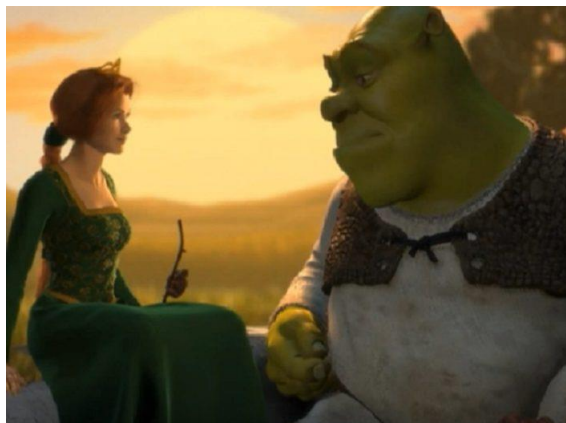
## WHAT MC WANTS

MC wants something but can't have it. Usually something external, and usually the wrong thing.

*Shrek wants the fairy tale creatures to leave and be alone. Lord Farquaad wants the same thing for Shrek.*



# Positive Character Arc: SHREK



## WHAT MC NEEDS

What the MC wants often belies what the character needs.

*Shrek needs to be surrounded by people who love him and accept him as he is.*



## THE GHOST

Also called the Wound, this is where the Lie is embedded, something that haunts the MC.

*People have always judged and feared Shrek.*



## REVELATION

The Ghost can be revealed in pieces, culminating in a grand reveal.

*Shrek tells Donkey everybody always judges him before getting to know him.*

# Positive Character Arc: SHREK



## FIRST PLOT POINT

Major event happens that changes everything and propels story in new direction.

*Shrek goes on adventure to rescue Fiona and get his swamp back.*



## TOOLS TO DEFEAT LIE

The MC should be given tools to defeat Lie and find it hard to continue believing it.

*Donkey tells Shrek what his problem is. After getting to know Fiona, he develops feelings for her.*



## CLOSER TO WANT

The MC should get closer to what he wants and further from what he needs.

*Shrek is taking Fiona to Lord Farquaad. They don't get along. He's mean to Donkey.*

# Positive Character Arc: SHREK



## MIDPOINT

Something happens that prompts MC to be ready to change. Realization.

*Shrek falls in love with Fiona.*



## TAKE ACTION

The MC now takes action to escape the Lie as a result of new understanding.

*Shrek goes to tell Fiona he loves her.*

## FALSE VICTORY

The MC appears to have victory in his/her grasp.

*We know Fiona returns his love and that Shrek will get everything he wants if he opens up.*



# Positive Character Arc: SHREK



## ALL HOPE IS LOST

MC appears to be defeated.

*Shrek overhears Fiona and believes she finds him repulsive. Goes back to swamp, which seems empty now.*



## SPELL OUT THE NEED

What the MC needs should be blatantly spelled out for him, typically by the Ally.

*Donkey tells Shrek he needs love but turns people away who love him.*



## SECOND PLOT POINT

Another major event. Choice of want/need. MC commits to need. Old self dies, rebirth.

*Shrek learns Fiona wasn't talking about him and resolves to accept Donkey as friend and rescue Fiona.*



# Positive Character Arc: SHREK



## RISING STAKES

The stakes should be jacked to the max to test the MC's new self and resolve.

*Fiona is going to marry Lord Farquaad.*



## REALIZE

The final act assembles all characters and ties up all subplots and foreshadowing.

*Fiona's and Farquaad's wedding.*



## CLIMAX

P/A confrontation inevitable. MC goes all in against antagonist. Conviction ultimately tested, Lie rejected.

*Armed with friendship (Donkey and Dragon), Shrek goes to Duloc and defeats Lord Farquaad.*

# Positive Character Arc: SHREK

## RESOLUTION

Tie up loose ends, show MC's new self in new Normal, relax readers after climax, clearly answer thematic question, give reader a chance to say farewell.

*Fiona permanently becomes an ogre (interesting twist on kiss turning frog to prince). They get married. The fairy tale characters celebrate. It's better to take risks to have love and friends than to be safe and alone. If you accept yourself as you are, you will find others who will too.*

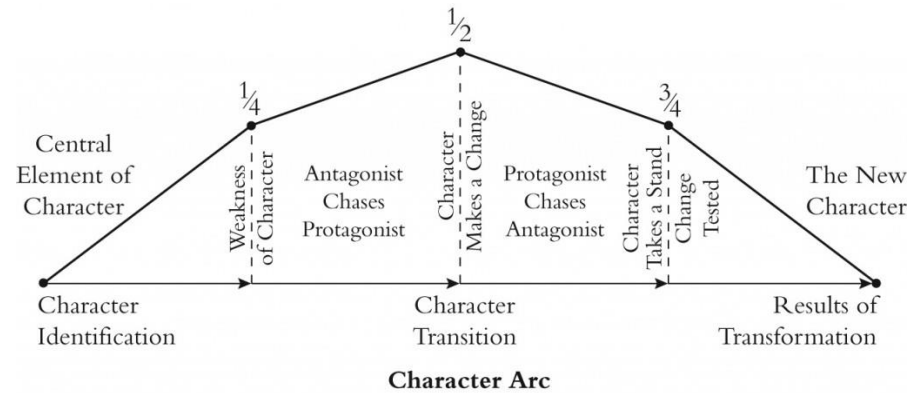




# Putting It Together

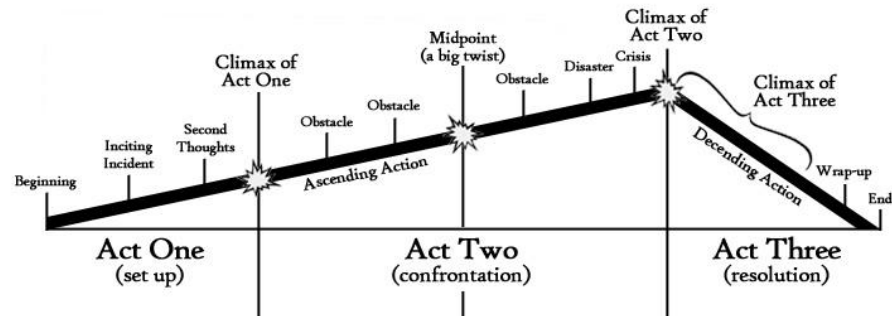


# Character

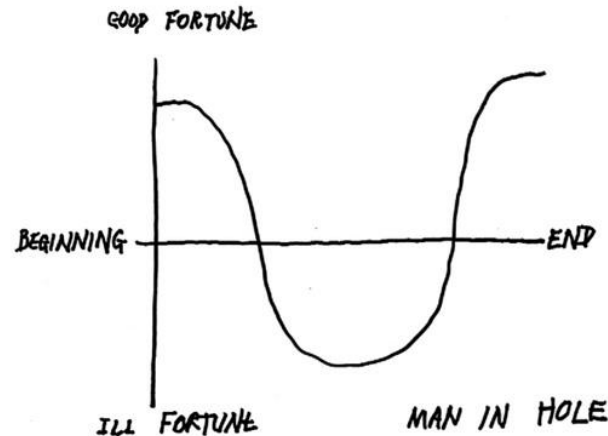


# Plot

## Three-Act Structure



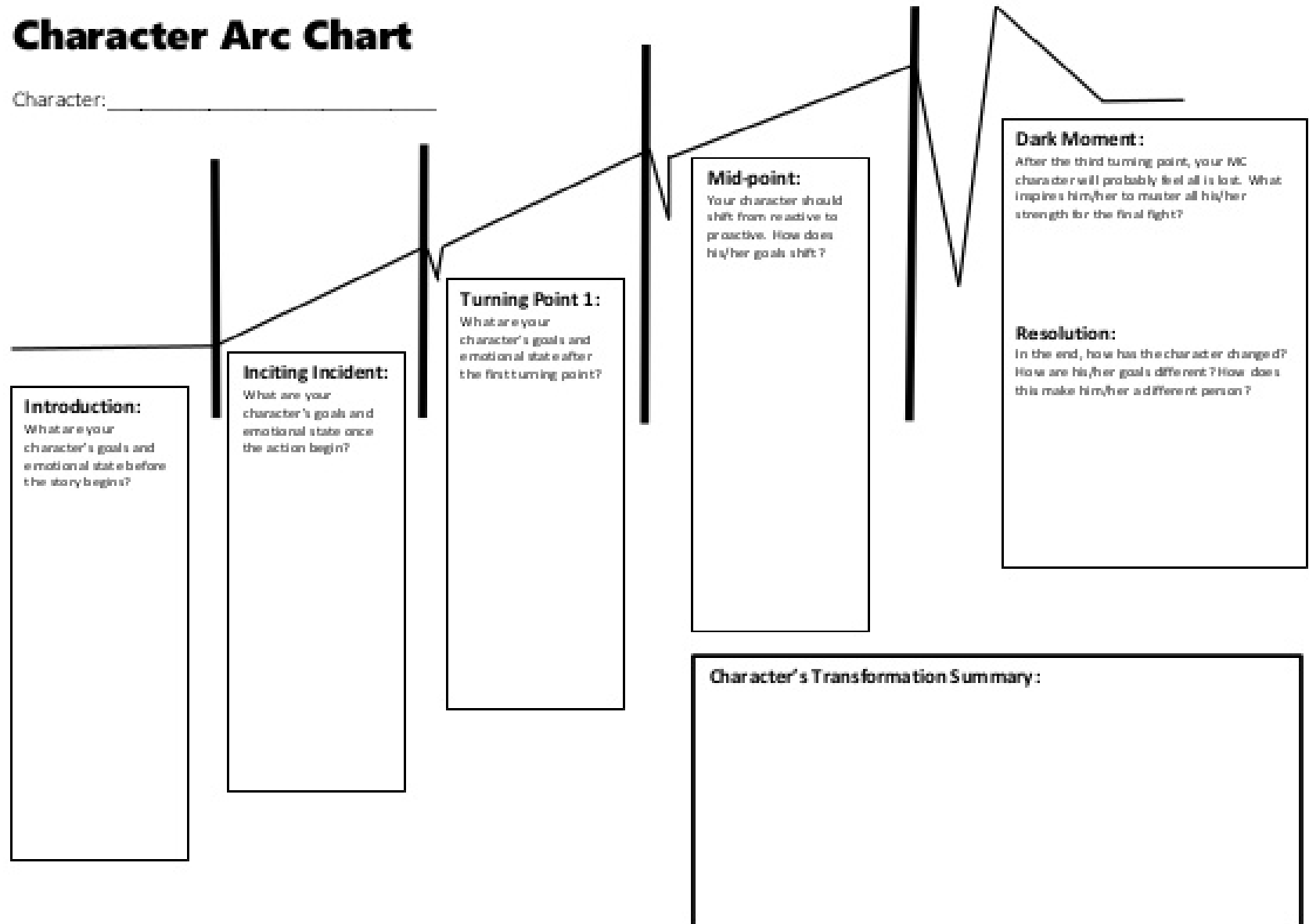
# Emotion





# Character Arc Chart

Character: \_\_\_\_\_



# SECOND ACT TIMELINE

(reaction)

25%-37%

After the First Plot Point, the protagonist scrambles to understand obstacles thrown in his way by the antagonist.

1ST PINCH POINT

37% mark

A reminder of the antagonist's power, which provides new clues about the nature of the conflict.

(realization)

37%-50%

Protagonist's realization grows and his reactions become more informed.

MIDPOINT

50% mark

The Moment of Truth when the protagonist realizes the central truth about the nature of the conflict.

(action)

50%-62%

Thanks to his new understanding, the protagonist makes headway against antagonist.

2ND PINCH POINT

62% mark

Foreshadows Third Plot Point and serves to remind the protagonist what is at stake.

(renewed push)

62%-75%

Protagonist renews attack upon the antagonist. He reaches a seeming victory.

CHARACTER	El Cuervo	The Frenchman	One Eyed Jack	The Beard	Big M	Paloma (young)
Full Name	Eduardo Vargas 'Eddie'	Gerard LeRondeau	Giacomo Marino	Jimmy Barbada	Marco Sant' Angelo	Paloma Pavlak
Role/Purpose	Protagonist, drives the story through his actions. Hired assassin, highly skilled and efficient.	Serves as El Cuervo's assistant. Fields all inquiries into his services. Prepares his missions with briefings and sets up covers.	The acting boss for the Camorra crime family in the Met.	A wiseguy in the Marino family, looking to be promoted to Capo. Henchman assigned to eliminating El Cuervo.	A henchman in the Marino family. Works in Jimmy the Beard's crew as his right hand man.	The daughter of DA Alex Pavlak. El Cuervo's unplanned hostage.
Age/Sex/Ethnicity	35/M/Latin	33/M/French	87/M/Italian-American	30/M/Italian-American	27/M/Italian-American	9/F/American
First Appearance	Book One	Book One	Book One	Book One	Book One	Book One
Main Goal	Revenge on those who betrayed him	Assist El Cuervo in his missions	Dodge sentencing in his RICO trial	Kill El Cuervo.	Kill El Cuervo	Stay Alive
Occupation	Hired Assassin	Assistant/Liaison	Mob Boss	Henchman	Henchman	Student
Motivation	Retirement, Obscurity	Financial Gain	Stay out of prison	Become a made man and a Capo.	Respect of the family	See her dad again.
Inner Need	Redemption, Ease of Conscience	Respect	To die in peace surrounded by family	Respect of the family.	Emerge from his brother's shadow	Needing protection.
Flaw	Guilt	Greed	Paranoia	Impatience	Self-Doubt, Inexperience	Fear.
Backstory	An orphan from Spain, he was recruited into a guild of assassins posing as missionaries at a young age. Was schooled and trained by the guild for 8 years. At the age of 21, he worked under the employ of a number of sub-bosses for the Italian Camorra. He eventually started to work more freelance jobs for some terrorist organizations – ETA, IRA, etc. His work takes him all over the globe to eliminate high-profile targets. Has a task force dedicated to his activities in INTERPOL. Currently working in the Met for Giacomo Marino, a boss in the stateside operation for the Camorra.	Was a personal assistant for Paul Auroux, a wealthy French businessman who was marked for death. El Cuervo was dispatched to complete the deed and as a bonus, he cleaned out his entire support staff with the exception of Gerard. In exchange for his life, Gerard is under El Cuervo's employ as his assistant.	Giacomo Marino is the acting boss of the Marino family in the Met. He is currently being tried in a RICO case which could end his reign as the family patriarch. His wish is to escape incarceration and live out his remaining years at home surrounded by family and not to die in a prison cell. He contracts El Cuervo to dispatch all of the leading names associated with his trial, then turns on him in order to be rid of all things that could implicate him in those actions.	Jimmy the Beard has been a wiseguy in the Gigliotti crew. Upon Gigi's death, Jimmy has been elected to become the newest Capo IF he manages to get rid of El Cuervo; no easy task. His desire for respect amongst the family drives him to get the job done as quickly and as brutally as possible.	Marco Sant' Angelo is the younger brother of Old Joe Sant' Angelo a trusted Capo in the Marino family. Often chided for his soft behaviour, Marco is looking to make a name for himself by using his large frame and strength as hired muscle for strongarm tactics. He has aligned himself with Jimmy the Beard, as the two have known each other since they were children. He is currently on assignment to eliminate El Cuervo and help Jimmy become a made man.	Paloma Pavlak is the young daughter of DA Alex Pavlak. Marked as one of El Cuervo's targets, she witnesses his death at the assassin's hands. She is traumatized by the event – in a moment of weakness, El Cuervo decides to take her to a relative's house for protection. She is brought to her aunt's home where she is kidnapped once again by the Italian and sold in a Human Trafficking ring. El Cuervo is unable to free her in time. She uses her time in captivity overseas to fuel her revenge as she gets older.
Core Trait	Cool, level-headed	Analytical, prepared	Good judge of character, confident	Uncaring, sadistic.	Sense of realism, astute	Innocence
Good/Bad Habits	GOOD - Works quickly, efficiency. BAD – Smokes, second guessing	GOOD – thorough and methodical BAD – keeps odd hours, gullible	GOOD – covers all angles, delegates BAD – assumes everyone is after him	GOOD – is always ready and willing to work for the family BAD – acts first, thinks later	GOOD – keeps quiet and works hard BAD – dwells on the negative, soft	GOOD – knows when to speak and when not to BAD – childlike naivete
Secret	Killed his father.	Kept in contact with his wife	Doesn't want to die alone	Self-loathing sado-masochist	Has never killed anyone himself.	Hated her father.
Skills, Knowledge, Props	Well versed in workings of assault weapons and pistols. Basic knowledge of hand-to-hand combat. Mastery of disguise and forgery. Strong preparation skills, pathfinding and secondary contingency planning.	Powerful financial network and suspicious investment activities at his disposal. Has good contacts with private air carriers and has financial backing for arms dealers. He also has connections with a hackers network to grant him access to targets for handsome rewards. Smooth talking and charismatic, he provides the personality for El Cuervo's services.	Strong network of all criminal activities in the Met, ranging from prostitution, extortion, armed robbery, kidnapping, drug smuggling and trafficking, human trafficking and grand larceny. Has an army of soldiers at his disposal to do his bidding.	Is well versed in hand weapons, particularly knives. Runs a small crew within his crew, very charismatic. Able to handle small handguns. Accurate shooter. Well versed in Aikido.	Strong upper body, fleet of foot for a large man. Great overall strength. Has background in wrestling and jiu-jitsu. Has measurable skills with handguns.	Perceptive and intuitive. Has a eidetic memory.
Quirks	Doesn't talk much.	Keeps odd hours. Does not drink.	Does not like to go out of his house.	Wears glasses to hide his eyes.	Inquisitive.	Reads and memorizes everything.
Attitude	Indifferent, cold.	Snobbish, refined.	Intimidating, tough around the edges.	Chip on his shoulders. Sadistic.	Subdued and quiet. Passive.	Cheery, persistent.
Dialogue Style	Calm.	High level of diction, educated.	Uneducated, gruff.	Berating, bullying. Loud and brash.	Soft-spoken.	Childlike.
Celeb Lookalike	Javier Bardem	Matt Damon	Danny Aiello	Sage Stallone	Ethan Suplee	

Page Count (assumes Times New Roman):   400					
ACTS & BEATS	DESCRIPTION	PAGE (approx.)		WORD COUNT	
<b>Act One</b>	Introduce protagonist, hook the reader, and setup the story conflict (foreshadowing, establishing stakes)	1	100	1	27500
Inciting Incident	What event launches the characters toward their first dilemma?	1	79	1	21725
End of the Beginning	What event forces characters to make a choice?	80	100	22000	27500
<b>Act Two</b>	The protagonist reacts to the new goal/stakes/obstacle, but suffers from one step forward and two steps back	101	300	27500	82500
Pinch Point #1	What events add more conflict?	150		41250	
Midpoint	What event can reinforce the story's goals and stakes?	200		55000	
Pinch Point #2	What events add more conflict?	250		68750	
Crisis	What event strips the characters of hope?	273	300	75075	82500
<b>Act Three</b>	The protagonist summons the courage to overcome inner obstacles and conquer the antagonistic force	301	400	82500	110000
Climax	What event pushes the characters to change?	301	396	82500	109010
Resolution	What event shows the characters as their changed selves?	397	400	109010	110000





# Game of Thrones character arc generator

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choose one from each column

Dist. by Universal Uclick

insufferable

king

dies

at a wedding

beloved

guy with a beard

dies

in battle

overzealous

queen

dies

by decapitation

random

hooker

dies

from poison

promiscuous

squire

dies

sort of

annoying

sorceress

dies

by burning alive

naked

"who's that again?"

dies

fighting dragons

scheming

knight

dies

just because



# “What a character!”

The role of the character arc in  
building stories that matter

By Craig DiLouie

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