32 PAGES OF VINTAGE DRAMATICIA!

SCREENPLAY SYSTEMS
Presents

THE SECRET OF:
GREAT STORIES

Based On Materials Developed By Melanie Anne Phillips & Chris Huntley
WE ALL THINK WE KNOW HOW STORIES WORK. WE SEE THE DARNED THINGS EVERYWHERE: MOVIES, BOOKS, TV, COMICS. THOSE WHO ACTUALLY SIT AND WRITE, HOWEVER, KNOW THAT WHAT STORY REALLY IS... UH... GEE, WELL IT'S COMPLICATED! READ ON, AS SCREENWRITER PENN WRIGHT GETS (WITH THE HELP OF DRAMATICA) A FASCINATING ANSWER TO THAT EVER-LOVIN' QUESTION:

ISN'T THIS GREAT SO FAR?

SO, THEN OUR HERO SEES THE TERRORISTS HAVE A BOMB! STILL DRESSED LIKE A WOMAN, HE LEAPS INTO ACTION... CINDY, I DON'T HEAR YOU CHEERING.

PENN, THIS IS JUST LIKE ALL YOUR OTHER STORIES! THERE'S NO DEPTH! YOU DON'T EVER OPEN UP, IN YOUR WRITING OR WITH ME.

NO DEPTH? I'VE SOLD THREE SCRIPTS! YOU DON'T GET IT.

YOUR STORIES AREN'T YOU. THEY TELL ME YOU'RE A PRETEND ARTIST.

I'M AFRAID WE'RE AT A DEAD END AND I NEED A RELATIONSHIP THAT GROWS WITH ME. I NEED TIME TO THINK.

PENN! WHAT'S UP, ROMEO?

LET ME HELP. I'M A DEVELOPMENT EXEC., YOU KNOW!

...HEYYYY! IF I PUT DEPTH INTO THIS SCRIPT, I CAN SHOW HER WHO I AM! MAYBE I CAN GET HER BACK!

HI DAMIEN, CINDY JUST LEFT ME 'CAUSE I'M NOT OPEN WITH HER.

SKETCH!
LET'S GO!

HELLO, WHAT'S THIS? A TINY LIGHT FOLLOWS PENN, MENACINGLY.

I KNOW WHAT CINDY'S SAYING: WRITE FOR THE AUDIENCE!

O.K., IF FORMULA CAN ADD DEPTH, I WISH THERE WAS ANOTHER WAY, THOUGH.

WHO'S THAT?

I'VE GOT A GOOD STORY IDEA, BUT IT NEEDS "HEART." I CAN'T TELL WHERE TO ADD STUFF AND WHAT TO LEAVE ALONE.

I USED TO GIVE ELIXIRS TO ANCIENT GREEK POETS...

I THOUGHT MUSES DISAPPEARED IN THE WRITER'S STRIKE!

NOT TRUE, AND BE GLAD 'CAUSE YOUR STORY'S IN TROUBLE.

TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT AND I CAN HELP.

...BUT YOU MAY WANT A WHOLE NEW APPROACH.

“CREATIVE WRITING PARTNER?”

DRAMATICA WON'T WRITE YOUR STORY, IT HELPS YOU GET YOUR STORY RIGHT!

SOUNDS LIKE GOOD AD-COPY TO ME.

WHAT WRITER NEEDS COMPUTERS TO WRITE FOR HIM?

DRAMATICA'S A TOOL BASED ON A NEW THEORY OF STORY. BY ANSWERING ITS QUESTIONS, YOU GUIDE DRAMATICA TO CREATE A "STORYFORM" - THE BLUEPRINT OF YOUR STORY.

A STORYFORM HAS EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO MAKE YOUR STORY COMPLETE. IT WILL HELP YOU GET THAT EMOTIONAL SIDE FULLY DEVELOPED.
COMPUTERS CAN'T DEVELOP STORIES. HOW COULD THEY? I JUST GOTTA WORK ON THIS FORMULA SOME MORE!

WATCH IT! THESE THINGS AREN'T FREE! DRAMATICA WORKS USING THE STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS INHERENT IN ALL STORIES. YOU CAN'T JUST THROW IN EMOTIONAL "STUFF" TO FIX YOUR SCRIPT.

Pshaw! Pshaw! Pshaw! Pshaw! Pshaw! How could they? I just gotta work on this formula some more!

Watch it! These things aren't free! Dramatica works using the structure and dynamics inherent in all stories. You can't just throw in emotional "stuff" to fix your script.

Story is like an argument: every part relates to all the others. Yeah?

Creating a storyform is like drawing a circle by using the points along its edge.

After you set a few points in place, you can see where the rest have to fall.

Stories work the same way. Anything you put in affects how the rest will have to work out.

Like when everything falls into place - when you get a sense of closure.

Pretty much. When you think of it, what do we really know about stories - about how they work?

I know story, I've studied all the gurus! It has character, plot, theme, and narrative drive!

And it works when you sell one!
BUT WHAT EXACTLY IS A STORY?
I DON'T HAVE AN EXACT DEFINITION. I JUST KNOW WHEN I SEE ONE.

WELL, THAT'S WHERE DRAMATICA BEGAN, BY TRYING TO EXPLAIN STORY COMPLETELY.

HOLD ON, DARLINGS!

ONE CONCEPT THAT SETS DRAMATICA APART IS CALLED THE "STORY MIND."

THIS IS THE IDEA THAT A COMPLETE STORY IS THE MODEL OF A SINGLE MIND AT WORK FINDING THE SOLUTION TO A SINGLE PROBLEM.

YOUR STORY'S CHARACTERS, PLOT, THEME, AND GENRE ARE LIKE THE THOUGHTS COMING OUT OF THIS MIND AS IT WORKS.
THAT'S STORY? IT'S JUST A BIG BRAIN! WHERE'S THE STRUCTURE IN THAT?

THIS IS THE BIG PICTURE...

THAT'S STORY? IT'S JUST A BIG BRAIN! WHERE'S THE STRUCTURE IN THAT?

IT'S JUST A BIG BRAIN! WHERE'S THE STRUCTURE IN THAT? THIS IS THE BIG PICTURE...

PRETTY CEREBRAL.

...FOR STRUCTURE WE'LL HAVE TO GO INSIDE.

THIS IS WHERE STRUCTURE COMES FROM. THESE DOORS LEAD TO THE FOUR PERSPECTIVES...

THE FOUR THROUGHLINES

1. OVERALL STORY
2. MAIN CHARACTER
3. IMPACT CHARACTER
4. MAIN VS IMPACT

... WHICH YOU FIND IN ANY STORY. THE STORY MIND EXPLORES THESE IN LOOKING FOR THE PROBLEM AT ITS CENTER.

TAKE DOOR #1, PENN. LET'S GET THE HECK OUT OF HERE!

OVERALL STORY

“BE CAREFUL IN THERE…”

“THAT'S THE OVERALL STORY VIEW!”

“THAT'S THE OVERALL STORY VIEW!”

“BE CAREFUL IN THERE…”

“THAT'S THE OVERALL STORY VIEW!”

“BE CAREFUL IN THERE…”
"These four perspectives create the thoughts of the story mind as it works out its problem."

"The overall story view sees the entire story from a distance..."

"As if the story was a battle which the overall story view watches from a hill. It sees everything that happens, but is not really involved."

"The main character view is the first person, "I" perspective of one special soldier in that battle."

"Through him we experience how it feels to go through the story, as if we were the main character."

"There's one other special character in every story, forcing the main character to face his personal problems. This is the Impact Character."

"Isn't that just a fancy name for the antagonist?"

"The Impact Character has the strongest personal impact on the main character - making him question his deepest beliefs."

"The main character and Impact Character are characters whom we deal with emotionally."

"This relationship between the main and Impact Character is the emotional heart of your story. These two argue about some personal issue until one of them changes at the end."

"The Impact Character's impact on the main character creates an argument between them, which is the story mind's fourth point of view: the main vs. impact story."

"No! Those are two different kinds of character seen from two different points of view. The antagonist and protagonist are overall story characters, seen by their function in the overall story."

"You fancy-maht!"
THESE FOUR PERSPECTIVES STRETCH FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY TO THE END. THEY ARE ITS FOUR STRUCTURAL THROUGHLINES.

OVERALL STORY
MAIN CHARACTER
IMPACT CHARACTER
MAIN VS. IMPACT STORY

BEGINNING

CAN I SEE AN EXAMPLE?
SURE.

REMEMBER HARPER LEE’S TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD? THE MAIN CHARACTER IS A GIRL NAMED SCOUT.

THE OVERALL STORY THROUGHLINE FOLLOWS THE TRIAL OF A WRONGLY ACCUSED MAN. THE ANTAGONIST IS HIS ACCUSER, BOB EWELL.

TO SCOUT, THOUGH, LOCAL BOOGEY-MAN, BOO RADLEY IS HER IMPACT CHARACTER.

IN THE MAIN VS. IMPACT STORY, BOO EVENTUALLY FORCES SCOUT TO CHANGE HER PREJUDICE ABOUT HIM.

YEAH, I SEE THOSE THROUGHLINES. I’M WRITING A SCRIPT THAT I CALL “EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF.”

I’VE NEVER HEARD OF THE IMPACT CHARACTER BEFORE, AND I DON’T HAVE ONE.

MY MAIN CHARACTER IS IRVING RICHTER, EX-NAVY SEAL WHO IS NOW WRITING A “LOVE” COLUMN USING A WOMAN’S NAME. WHEN HIS WRITING PERSONA IS HIRED AS SPOKESWOMAN FOR A CRUISE-LINE, HE’S FORCED TO DRESS AS A WOMAN TO PROTECT HIS IDENTITY.

HE’S CAUGHT THIS WAY WHEN TERRORISTS ATTACK THE CRUISE. TO SAVE THE DAY, HE HAS TO FIGHT AS A WOMAN. THE IMPACT CHARACTER WOULD PUSH HIM TO DO THIS—THAT SHOULD BE HIS WIFE!

CAN SHE IMPACT HIM EMOTIONALLY ACT BY ACT THROUGH THE STORY?

YEAH! SHE COULD PUSH HIM TO TAKE THE CRUISE JOB AND THEN GO ALONG WITH HIM ON THE TRIP. DEVELOP HER, THEN TIE HER TO THE BOMB. WE CAN GET THIS FROM ONE HARD! LET’S GET OUT OF HERE.

A MISSING IMPACT CHARACTER CAN HAMSTRING A STORY’S EMOTIONAL INVOLVEMENT.

SURE.

WE SEE EVERYTHING THROUGH HER EYES, BUT THE PROTAGONIST OF THE OVERALL STORY IS HER FATHER, ATTICUS.
THIS IS DIFFERENT FROM ANYTHING YOU'VE EVER HEARD ABOUT STORY."

"SYMBOLIZING YOUR STORY FORM GETS YOU TO FULLY KNOW YOUR STORY."

"THEN COMES STORY WEAVING DECIDING HOW TO PRESENT THIS STORY TO AN AUDIENCE—WRITING YOUR FIRST DRAFT!"

"THE 12 ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS COME IN THREE GROUPS: THE FIRST FOUR QUESTIONS SET UP THE MAIN CHARACTER, THEN FOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT PLOT, AND FINALLY FOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE OVERALL STORY THROUGHLINE."

"THESE ANSWERS GET YOU A SINGLE STORY FORM, DETERMINING YOUR STORY'S STRUCTURE."

"THE NEXT STEP IS TO WRITE EXAMPLES OF HOW THAT STRUCTURE PLAYS OUT IN ILLUSTRATING."

"SYMBOLIZING YOUR STORY FORM GETS YOU TO FULLY KNOW YOUR STORY."

"DRAMATICA HELPS YOU THROUGH THESE STAGES SO YOUR STORY ENDS UP COMMUNICATING EXACTLY THE FEELING YOU INTEND."
Alright, I'll look at your questions. Cindy would want me to.

First, what do we know about your main character?

Great!

I know everything about him: where he was trained, what kind of gun he uses, the dresses he wears...

UH...

Good. Well...

**Question #1 Main Character Resolve**

This first question sets up where this guy is going in your story. "Main Character Resolve" asks "Will your main character ultimately change or remain steadfast?" Every main character is either the same at the end of the story as when he started out, or he's changed. Dramatica asks you to determine this right up front.

That's Ebenezer Scrooge and his impact character, the Ghost of Christmas. Will he change or remain steadfast?

Scrooge changes, duh!

All characters change, or else there's no growth or development.

In my story, Irving saves the cruise and walks into the sunset still dressed as a woman.

I love it! What an image!

But what does it mean? He's saved the day, but what happened to his character?

I guess he's changed, right? He's reached his "sensitive side."

Well, what about Dr. Richard Kimble in *The Fugitive*, or James Bond in most James Bond movies—these are steadfast main characters who force their impact characters to change.

"Resolve" shows how this will work for your story.
How about this: he gets on the boat hating his pen-name. Then through his relationship with his wife he ends up giving a press conference and happily explaining about the terrorists dressed as his pen-name. Now he sees “her” as part of him.

Wow, that’s way more clear!

So this is about “character arc.” Don’t baffle Penn with your developmental terms. I’m asking whether the main character ends up driven by his original motivation or not.

So steadfast characters keep the same motivation. Do they grow?

**Question #2: Main Character Growth**

All main characters grow, either to hold out more steadfastly or to change. The next question deals with this too. Main character growth asks, regarding his growth, is the audience waiting for something to start or stop?

This always refers to main character growth. A “change” character will grow either by starting a new characteristic or stopping an old one.

Start or stop? That’s like asking if a glass is “half full or half empty.” What’s the point?

The point is to clarify whether the main character’s problem is because of what is there that shouldn’t be, or because of what is missing.

Scrooge is a change-start character. He’s stingy, not aggressively mean. Which is the argument that gets him to change.

In the 80s they rewrote Scrooge as extra mean—to do this right would mean rewriting the argument to make him change.

But they kept the “start giving” argument and the story suffered.

I guess Irving starts to like his pen-name and stops worrying about his machismo.

Yeah. He does both!

You can write it either way. But picking one direction makes the whole story clearer. Should it feel like he’s causing his personal problems and has to stop, or that he’s letting problems go too far and has to start dealing with them?

He’s too committed to his “tough-guy” image. He’s already a successful love columnist, he just has to stop being ashamed of it.

Then pick stop. Now we’re getting to know who Irving is.

I know another character that I wish would stop.
WHOA! WHAT'S GOING ON? THIS MAN WILL HELP DEMONSTRATE THE NEXT QUESTION.

WHAT'S YOUR MAIN CHARACTER'S APPROACH—DO-ER OR BE-ER?

I CAN'T TAKE IT

YOU'RE A DO-ER! YOU DIDN'T EVEN TRY TO COPE WITH HIS NOISE. DO-ERS PREFER TO PROBLEM-SOLVE EXTERNALLY.

IF PENN WAS A BE-ER, HE'D JUST TAKE IT?

NOT NECESSARILY. A BE-ER PREFERENCES TO PROBLEM-SOLVE INTERNALLY.

QUESTION #3 MAIN CHARACTER APPROACH

DO-ER/BE-ER DOES NOT MEAN ACTIVE/PASSIVE. EITHER APPROACH MAY WORK TO SOLVE A PROBLEM. EVERYONE HAS A PREFERENCE. THIS YOGI IS AN "ACTIVE" BE-ER. HIS POWERFUL PRESENCE CAN WORK LIKE A PUNCH IN THE MOUTH.

LET'S WATCH A BE-ER AT WORK.

HERE, LET'S WATCH DIRTY HARRY...

DO-ER.

I GUESS IRVING IS A BE-ER AND A DO-ER. HIDING AS A WOMAN, HE COPIES WITH A LOT OF SEXIST TREATMENT. BUT HE'S VERY WILLING TO KICK TERRORIST BUTT WHEN HE HAS TO.

GREAT! MIX IT UP SO HE'S UNPREDICTABLE.

IRVING SUPPORTS LIKE A DO-ER. HIDING AS A WOMAN IS A HANDS-ON APPROACH TO TRYING TO SOLVE HIS PROBLEMS, AS IS TAKING ON THE TERRORISTS.

YOU'RE RIGHT, HE'S A DO-ER. HE SHOULD HATE COPIES WITH BEING TREATED LIKE A LADY.

HOW DOES THAT FEEL?

LIKE IRVING'S BECOMING A LOT MORE REAL.

BEING BOTH A BE-ER AND A DO-ER IS UNPREDICTABLE BECAUSE IT'S UNREALISTIC. CHARACTERS MAY HAVE TO USE BOTH APPROACHES IN THEIR STORIES, BUT THEY ALWAYS PREFER ONE APPROACH IF GIVEN A CHOICE.
FINE. NOW THE LAST MAIN CHARACTER DYNAMIC: PROBLEM SOLVING STYLE.

Hey Lady! I'm styling here...

One style is intuitive.

I was gonna say that!

The other is logical.

That makes sense, like, "He's from Mars, she's from Venus?"

Question #4: Main Character Problem Solving Style

How intuitive of you! Let me explain!

What's my style?

Huh?

Like do-er/be-er, problem solving style is a tendency.

What kind of problem solving does your main character use: logical or intuitive?

How does your main character see problems? There are two ways: logical style sees problems in terms of cause and effect, seeking linear explanations. Intuitive style sees problems in terms of the relationships involved, how they balance as a whole.

For example, let's look at your first kiss with Cindy - you both saw this differently.

You were there?

You saw your flowers, then the money you spent, the good food, and the time together all adding up to the point where you felt you deserved a kiss.

From her holistic point of view, it was the combination of music, atmosphere, your behavior, and conversation that finally shifted into creating a good moment for a kiss. That's the difference between seeing things logically and intuitively.

Neither point of view is right or wrong, but one carries more weight for your main character and affects how he perceives or decides anything.

It's not as fun as it sounds.
Won't logical style characters all be men and intuitive style characters all be women?

No, it's independent of gender.

Ripley, open the hatch!

I can't do that. If we break quarantine we could all die.

Open it, Ripley! That's a direct order!

For example, Ripley in the movie Alien uses a logical style. She thinks of everything linearly.

Ripley, open the hatch!

I can't do that. If we break quarantine we could all die.

Open it, Ripley! That's a direct order!

If she was looking at the “big picture,” Ripley would probably have realized sooner that the company was betraying her.

I have to bring that alien home, Ripley. Killing you if necessary!

Jack Ryan in The Hunt for Red October uses intuition. His holistic impressions of the Russian captain allows him to see that the man wants to defect -- which none of the others can understand.

...there is another possibility. I think he's trying to defect.

These are ways that problem solving differences affect your main character.

I have a scene where Irving changes his problem solving style.

Good! Probably both men and women will dig a character like that.

Waivering on problem solving style will not create variety, but muddiness. Ask yourself: does Irving see everything as cause and effect or does he pay more attention to the shifting relationships around him?

He clearly believes his female persona has caused his success. He's pretty oblivious to the downside this has on his relationships.

Sounds like logical problem solving, he thinks linearly. This won't make him blind to holistic thinking. He'll just have a bias not to see it when you need him to get the big picture, have someone help him put it together.

Like his wife.

That'll work.
"That completes the main character dynamics, how he thinks, acts, and grows through your story. Later, Dramatica will tell a lot more about your main character -- based on the rest of these questions."

...now, let's shift gears. The next four questions are about plot. For example, story driver asks what drives your story, actions or decisions?

Penn's story's got actions and decisions! That's what makes it so good. All stories have both, but one always forces the other. Story driver asks which comes first in your story.

Football games provide a good example for this. When you're on offense, is football driven by actions or decisions?

No, the offense makes its plans in the huddle. So... for them it's driven by decisions!

Right! Their actions all follow careful deliberations.

Football's driven by salaries!

On defense, the players follow that ball wherever it goes. To them, the game is driven by actions.

Right again. Every story is driven in one of these two ways. Choosing sets up the story's inciting incident...

...concluding incident, and every act break.

Right! A main character's approach mixes with "story driver" and he may or may not find that mix comfortable.

Shh.

Story driver also affects the main character. Hamlet's story is driven by actions--beginning with the appearance of a ghost.

...but Hamlet tries to solve things through deliberations.

That's because he is a be-er!

John McClane in Die Hard is a do-er, suited to his action driven story.

I think my story's driven by actions too--the job on the cruise and the terrorist attack come out of nowhere to push the story along.

Put some unforced decisions in there too. Twice the obstacles makes twice the suspense.

Just picking doesn't say how much action or deliberation there'll be, just which forces the other.

The Fugitive has lots of action, but it's a decision driven story...

While being there is quite subdued, yet it is a story driven by actions.

I think my story's driven by actions too--the job on the cruise and the terrorist attack come out of nowhere to push the story along.

Put some unforced decisions in there too. Twice the obstacles makes twice the suspense.

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IF IT ONLY WORKED THAT WAY. USING UNFORCED DECISIONS AND UNPLANNED ACTIONS MAKES A STORY FEEL OUT OF CONTROL. TROUBLES IN A STORY SHOULD COME FROM ONE SOURCE. PENN MADE A GOOD ARGUMENT FOR ACTIONS. JUST FOLLOW IT THROUGH SO THAT ACTIONS DRIVE AND END THE STORY.

THAT'S WHY IRVING'S COMFORTABLE SOLVING THE TERRORIST PROBLEM -- HE'S A DO-ER IN AN ACTION STORY.

WHAT ABOUT CREATING MORE CONFLICT? THAT'S ALL DRAMA IS, YOU KNOW, CONFLICT.

A STORY IS MORE THAN JUST DRAMA, THOUGH.

MUCH MORE. FOR EXAMPLE, STORY LIMIT HAS A STRONG IMPACT ON THE CONFLICT IN YOUR STORY.

THE KILLER IS SOMEONE IN THIS ROOM!

...RUNNING OUR OF TIME, LIKE HIGH NOON?

...OR RUNNING OUT OF OPTIONS LIKE IN A "WHO-DONE-IT?"

WHAT WILL RAISE TENSION AND BRING YOUR STORY TO AN END?

I HADN'T CONSIDERED IT. I GUESS THE HOSTAGE SITUATION COULD GO ON FOREVER.

I BET YOU DON'T WANT YOUR AUDIENCE TO FEEL LIKE THEY COULD BE WATCHING YOUR STORY FOREVER.

THEY WILL FEEL TENSION RISE IF THE END IS LIMITED BY A TIMELOCK OR AN OPTIONLOCK.

FOR EXAMPLE, IMAGINE YOU HAVE TO SEARCH A MANSION FOR CLUES TO A MYSTERY. A TIMELOCK WOULD BE IF YOU ONLY GET FIVE MINUTES TO SEARCH AS MANY ROOMS AS YOU LIKE.

AN OPTIONLOCK WOULD BE IF YOU ARE ONLY ALLOWED TO CHOOSE FIVE ROOMS TO LOOK IN. CONFLICT RISES AS YOUR STORY EITHER RUNS OUT OF TIME, LIKE EDDIE MURPHY'S 48 HRS., OR OUT OF OPTIONS LIKE ALADDIN AND HIS THREE WISHES.

I COULD HAVE THE TERRORISTS DEMAND SAFE PASSAGE WITHIN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, OR ELSE THEY'LL BLOW UP THE SHIP.

THAT'S A TIMELOCK. SET UP THE AMOUNT OF TIME YOUR CHARACTERS HAVE RIGHT UP FRONT...

...THEN CHECK THE CLOCK AT LEAST THREE MORE TIMES AS THE STORY HEADS TOWARD ITS CLIMAX.

HEY, THAT DOES TIGHTEN THINGS UP.
We'll find the final two dynamics at the story's end.

First off, story outcome asks simply, "Do the characters achieve the common goal they set out for, or not?"

If the goal is achieved, it's "success." If it isn't (even if it's close) then it's "failure." The outcome will be one way or the other.

This does not, however, say how much of a success or failure your characters will experience. It doesn't have to be great to succeed or be the worst thing in the world to fail.

I think he's a do-er!

The audience just has to know if the original goal was reached or not.

Outcome is a cold look at the story goal. The next question, story judgment, is much more emotional.

Pardon me.

Excuse me.

Man! What a sore loser.

Finish line.
STORY JUDGMENT ASKS, “DOES YOUR MAIN CHARACTER RESOLVE HIS PERSONAL PROBLEMS OR NOT?”

IF HE’S FREE OF HIS EMOTIONAL ANGST IN THE END, THE JUDGMENT IS “GOOD.”

OUTCOME AND JUDGMENT COMBINE TO CREATE FOUR KINDS OF ENDINGS.

...TRAGEDIES, WHICH END IN FAILURE/BAD LIKE HAMLET.

...PERSONAL TRAGEDIES, ENDING IN SUCCESS/BAD WHERE THE MAIN CHARACTER REMAINS TROUBLED IN SPITE OF SUCCESS--LIKE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS.

...PERSONAL TRIUMPHS WHICH HAVE FAILURE/GOOD, LIKE RAIN MAN, WHERE CHARLIE BABBITT GIVES UP HIS GOAL IN ORDER TO BECOME A HAPPIER PERSON.

...AND FINALLY THERE ARE TRIUMPHS--SUCCESS AND GOOD ENDINGS--LIKE CASABLANCA.

MY STORY’S A FULL BLOWN TRIUMPH TOO! IRVING SUCCEEDS IN CAPTURING THE TERRORISTS AND HE EVENTUALLY FEELS GREAT ABOUT MAKING HIS PEN-NAME A PART OF HIMSELF.

GREAT! HAPPY ENDINGS SELL!

THIS COULD BE THE BEGINNING OF A BEAUTIFUL RELATIONSHIP!

IF HE’S STILL PLAGUED BY IT IN THE END, THE JUDGMENT IS “BAD.”

MY STORY’S A FULL BLOWN TRIUMPH TOO! IRVING SUCCEEDS IN CAPTURING THE TERRORISTS AND HE EVENTUALLY FEELS GREAT ABOUT MAKING HIS PEN-NAME A PART OF HIMSELF.

GREAT! HAPPY ENDINGS SELL!

THIS COULD BE THE BEGINNING OF A BEAUTIFUL RELATIONSHIP!
I LIKE THESE QUESTIONS. MY CHARACTERS AND PLOT ARE STRONGER, BUT MY ANSWERS HAVEN'T REALLY STRUCTURED MY STORY. I NEED AN EMOTIONAL POWERHOUSE TO GET CINDY BACK.

YEAH. I CAN ASK PENN A BUNCH OF QUESTIONS TOO--WITHOUT DRAMATICA!

THE STORYFORM IN ROMEO AND JULIET FOR EXAMPLE COULD BE SET AS SHAKESPEARE DID IT--IN OLD ITALY...

...OR THE SAME STORYFORM COULD BE SET IN NEW YORK CITY. THE STORY-TELLING WOULD CHANGE, BUT ALL THE CONCEPTS OF PREJUDICE AND LOVE WOULD STILL BE THERE.

AFTER THAT COMES STORY-WEAVING: DECIDING HOW TO PRESENT THOSE DETAILS TO AN AUDIENCE. LIKE, WHAT WILL BE ON PAGE 1? DO YOU START NEAR THE END AND FLASHBACK THROUGH THE STORY AS IN REMAINS OF THE DAY?

THE EIGHT QUESTIONS WE'VE ANSWERED SET UP YOUR STORY'S DYNAMICS. NEXT WE'LL SET UP ITS STRUCTURE. THEN, ONCE YOU'VE ARRIVED AT A SINGLE STORYFORM, WE'LL MOVE ON TO ILLUSTRATING AND STORYWEAVING.

WELL, DARLING. MORE IS HAPPENING THAN JUST YOU ANSWERING QUESTIONS. DRAMATICA'S USING YOUR ANSWERS TO CREATE THE STORYFORM FOR YOUR STORY.

THAT'S HOW WEST SIDE STORY WAS WRITTEN: SAME STORYFORM--DIFFERENT SYMBOLS OR ILLUSTRATING. YOUR STORY HAS A STORYFORM AND DESIGNING IT UP FRONT WILL HELP GUIDE YOU THROUGH YOUR STORY'S DEVELOPMENT.

A STORYFORM LISTS ALL THE DYNAMIC AND STRUCTURAL PARTS OF YOUR STORY: THE INTRICACIES OF ITS ARGUMENT. IT WON'T SAY HOW TO WRITE IT--JUST WHAT YOU'LL HAVE TO COVER TO MAKE THE STORY COMPLETE.

THEN YOU'LL COME TO ILLUSTRATING--SYMBOLIZING YOUR STORYFORM. ILLUSTRATING GETS YOU TO VISUALIZE THE DETAILS OF YOUR STORY.

THEN LET'S KEEP GOING, GET OUT OF THIS LIBRARY AND LOOK AT STRUCTURE!

THIS IS WILD! THESE STAGES ARE TAKING ME DEEPER INTO MY STORY THAN I'VE EVER BEEN BEFORE.
THERE’S A PROBLEM AT THE HEART OF YOUR STORY. THAT’S WHERE STRUCTURE COMES FROM. UNTIL YOU SEE IT CLEARLY AS THE AUTHOR, YOUR STORY WILL REMAIN A SNARLED JUNGLE OF IDEAS.


RIGHT. THOSE FOUR PERSPECTIVES ARE THE WAYS TO SEE INTO YOUR STORY. YOUR STORY IDEA GIVES THEM SOMETHING TO LOOK AT.

THE AUDIENCE follows the four throughlines which explore the problem at the heart of your story. To get meaning out of them, the throughlines need something specific to explore.

STORIES MATCH THEIR FOUR PERSPECTIVES WITH THESE FOUR BROAD CLASSES OF STORY PROBLEMS: FIXED ATTITUDES, MANIPULATION, SITUATIONS, AND ACTIVITIES.

WHAT IS THIS, A VULCAN CROSS-WORD PUZZLE?

THIS IS OUR MAP THROUGH THIS JUNGLE—THE DRAMATICA STRUCTURAL CHART. MARKING ONE OF YOUR STORY’S THROUGHLINES HERE, USING DRAMATICA, WILL MAP OUT THE OTHER THREE THROUGHLINES AS WELL.

THE SITUATION CLASS DESCRIBES A STATIC EXTERNAL PROBLEM

THE ACTIVITY CLASS DESCRIBES A CHANGING EXTERNAL PROBLEM

THE MANIPULATION CLASS DESCRIBES A CHANGING INTERNAL PROBLEM

THE FIXED ATTITUDE CLASS DESCRIBES A STATIC INTERNAL PROBLEM
AUDIENCE!

THEY ARE MATCHED TO THE FOUR THROUGHLINES IN THE MOST IMPORTANT STRUCTURAL CHOICE AUTHORS FACE IN DRAMATICA.

BUT PENN'S STORY DEALS WITH ALL FOUR KINDS OF PROBLEMS.

SURE, TAKE CASABLANCA. ITS OVERALL STORY THROUGHLINE IS AN "ACTIVITY"—WHERE EVERYONE'S TRYING TO OBTAIN "EXIT VISAS" TO ESCAPE GROWING NAZI CONTROL.

CAN I HAVE AN EXAMPLE?

"RICK IS A MAIN CHARACTER WHOSE "FIXED ATTITUDE" IS THAT..."

"BUT HE'S FORCED TO RECONSIDER HIS WAYS BY HIS IMPACT CHARACTER, ILSA, WHOSE IS STUCK IN A "SITUATION" SHE IS CAUGHT IN CASABLANCA AND MARRIED TO A FREEDOM FIGHTER.

THE MAIN VS. IMPACT STORY EXPLORES THE "MANIPULATIONS" BETWEEN RICK AND ILSA AS THEY MANIPULATE EACH OTHER OVER THEIR LOVES AND LOYALTIES.

THE PROBLEM AT THE HEART OF YOUR STORY IS SOMEWHERE OUT THERE. BY ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT IT, DRAMATICA WILL LEAD US TO SEE EXACTLY WHAT IT IS.

YOUR CHOICE WILL FLAVOR THE STORY YOU TELL. YOUR OVERALL STORY MAY FALL INTO ANY ONE OF THESE CLASSES. LET'S LOOK AT SOME "WAR" STORIES TO SEE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM.

A SITUATION OVERALL STORY WOULD DEAL WITH A FIXED STATE OF WAR, SUCH AS THE GREAT ESCAPE. THESE CHARACTERS ARE IN A PRISON CAMP...

AN OVERALL STORY CENTERED ON FIXED ATTITUDES IS LIKE PATTON WHERE EVERYONE'S INFLEXIBLE AGENDAS CREATE MORE TROUBLE THAN THE ENEMY.

AN OVERALL STORY CENTERED ON MANIPULATIONS IS LIKE PATHS OF GLORY WHERE THE OFFICERS MANIPULATIVE "TRIAL" LEADS TO INJUSTICE IN THE NAME OF JUSTICE.

THE FIRST STRUCTURAL QUESTION ASKS YOU TO CHOOSE YOUR OVERALL STORY THROUGHLINE.

AN ACTIVITY OVERALL STORY WOULD EMPHASIZE THE ACTIVITIES OF WAR, LIKE THE GUNS OF NAVARONE. WHAT BRINGS EVERYONE TOGETHER HERE IS A SCHEME (ACTIVITY) TO BLOW UP A CERTAIN TARGET.

THESE CHARACTERS ARE IN A PRISON CAMP...

...DEALING WITH THE SAME SITUATION FROM BEGINNING TO END.
WHICH KIND OF PROBLEM BRINGS YOUR OVERALL CHARACTERS TOGETHER?

I DON'T KNOW. I SEE THEM ALL.

FIRST, IRVING'S RUNNING AROUND ACTING LIKE A WOMAN....

THE CRUISE IS STUCK IN A HOSTAGE SITUATION....

...THERE'S CONFLICTING ATTITUDES OVER IRVING'S PEN-NAME, AND THERE'S THE MANIPULATIONS IRVING'S WIFE PUTS HIM THROUGH.

ALL FOUR, THAT'S WHAT I SAID.

THAT WAS GREAT, PENN.

YOU'VE ACTUALLY JUST DESCRIBED ALL FOUR THROUGHLINES IN YOUR STORY.

THE OVERALL STORY HAS EVERYONE DEALING WITH THE SITUATION OF BEING HELD HOSTAGE ON A BOAT.

THE MAIN CHARACTER IS A NAVY SEAL TRYING TO WRITE—A PERSON DEFINED BY HIS ENDEAVOR TO BECOME A WRITER.

AND THE MAIN VS. IMPACT STORY EXPLORES THE FIXED ATTITUDES IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP—ESPECIALLY REGARDING WHAT IT MEANS TO 'BE A MAN.'

I SEE. EACH PERSPECTIVE (E.G. OVERALL STORY) GETS MATCHED WITH THE TYPE OF STORY (E.G. SITUATION) THAT IT EXPLORES.

WAIT! WHAT'S THE OVERALL STORY THROUGHLINE OF DIE HARD?

DIE HARD IS AN OVERALL STORY OF A 'SITUATION' WHERE ALL THE CHARACTERS DEAL WITH BEING CAUGHT IN A SKYSCRAPER.
THE NEXT QUESTION ABOUT STRUCTURE ASKS: WHAT'S YOUR OVERALL STORY CONCERN?
WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT TO THE CHARACTERS IN YOUR STORY? YOUR OVERALL CHARACTERS MAY HAVE DIFFERENT CONCERNS, BUT THEY WILL ALL SHARE THE SAME NATURE.

THE NEXT QUESTION ABOUT STRUCTURE ASKS: WHAT'S YOUR OVERALL STORY CONCERN? WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT TO THE CHARACTERS IN YOUR STORY? YOUR OVERALL CHARACTERS MAY HAVE DIFFERENT CONCERNS, BUT THEY WILL ALL SHARE THE SAME NATURE.

THE VERDICT HAS AN OVERALL STORY CONCERN AS WELL, THE VERDICT'S CONCERN IS "THE FUTURE"—

...THE LAWYER FIGHTS FOR THE FUTURE OF HIS CAREER.

...AND THE TREACHEROUS ASSISTANT IS TRYING TO SECURE HER FUTURE IN THE LEGAL WORLD.

...HIS CLIENTS WORRY ABOUT THEIR SISTER'S FUTURE AND WHETHER THEY WILL BE ABLE TO SUPPORT HER.

...THE CHURCH IS WORRIED ABOUT ITS FUTURE REPUTATION ONCE IT'S SUED.

...ALL THESE DIFFERENT CHARACTERS SHARE THE COMMON THEMATIC CONCERN.

PLOT IS STRONGEST IN THIS PART OF DRAMATICA STRUCTURE. THE STORY GOAL IS DESCRIBED BY THE OVERALL STORY CONCERN. THE GOAL CAN BE AN OBJECT, A STATE OF MIND, DEGREE OF KNOWLEDGE, OR A CERTAIN FEELING—ANYTHING SO LONG AS IT'S UNDERSTOOD TO BE THE GOAL. DEFINING THE GOAL CAN HELP YOU PICK THE CONCERN.

IN FACT, YOU MIGHT CATEGORIZE STORIES QUITE MEANINGFULLY BY THEIR OVERALL STORY CONCERN. KIND OF LIKE HOW THEY CATEGORIZE VIDEOS IN A VIDEO STORE.
WELL NONE OF THESE WORDS CAME TO ME WHEN I MADE UP THE STORY. THE CHARACTERS ARE STUCK ON THE BOAT. THE PRESENT'S A MESS, THEIR FUTURE'S IN JEOPARDY... HOW DO I PICK?

ALL FOUR CHOICES WILL BE IN YOUR OVERALL STORY. BUT WHICH CONTAINS THE ISSUES THEY'RE ALL CONCERNED WITH?

FIRST, ANY TERM CAN BE SEEN IN THE POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE SENSE. FOR EXAMPLE, A CONCERN OF 'OBTAINING' DEALS WITH GETTING STUFF... AND LOSING STUFF.

SECONDLY, VOCABULARY IN DRAMATICA HAS VERY PRECISE DEFINITIONS. FOR AUTHORS TO BE ABLE TO NAME THE THEMATIC PIECES OF THEIR STORIES, NO TWO TERMS CAN MEAN THE SAME THING.

THAT'S MORE GROUND THAN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE USUALLY HAS TO COVER, SO DRAMATICA COMES WITH ITS OWN DICTIONARY.

OF MOST CONCERN TO THESE PEOPLE STUCK ON THE BOAT IS WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN. THE CRUISE GUESTS, THE AUTHORITIES, AND EVEN THE TERRORISTS ARE ALL FIGHTING FOR THEIR FUTURE. THAT'S MY OVERALL STORY CONCERN.

BUT IRVING IS ALSO WORRIED ABOUT LOSING HIS MANLINESS. IS THAT MORE LIKE A 'MAIN CHARACTER CONCERN?'

YES, ACTUALLY. THE MAIN CHARACTER THROUGHLINE HAS A CONCERN ALSO. EVERY THROUGHLINE HAS A CONCERN. FOR EVERY QUESTION IN THE OVERALL STORY, THE SAME QUESTION EXISTS IN THE OTHER THROUGHLINES. DRAMATICA WILL PROVIDE THE ANSWERS BASED ON HOW YOU ANSWER THE 12 ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS.

NOW LET'S START HIKING.

AW, MAN!
WE'RE MUCH CLOSER TO THE PROBLEM NOW. NEXT WE FACE THE CHOICE OF OVERALL STORY ISSUE. YOUR PREVIOUS CHOICES HAVE LED US TO THESE FOUR OPTIONS:

- Future
- Commitment
- Preconception
- Openness
- Delay
- Choice
- Preconception

WHAT THE HECK IS AN "ISSUE"?

EACH THROUGHLINE HAS A THEMATIC ARGUMENT. THE ISSUE IS THAT ARGUMENT'S TOPIC. EVERY THROUGHLINE HAS ITS OWN ISSUE OR THEME. EXPLORE THE ISSUE THROUGH DIALOGUE, IMAGES, AND OTHER THEMATIC MATERIAL. THE ISSUES OF THE FOUR THROUGHLINES KEEP YOUR THEMES TIED TO YOUR STORY'S MEANING.

THE FUGITIVE HAS AN OVERALL STORY ISSUE OF "PRECONCEPTION." EVERYONE'S PROBLEMS ARE DEEPENED BY PRECONCEPTIONS REGARDING DR. KIMBLE'S GUILT OR INNOCENCE.

FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL HAS AN OVERALL STORY ISSUE OF "COMMITMENT," EXPLORING THIS THROUGH THE RELATIONSHIPS OF ALL THE CHARACTERS.

"ISSUES FROM ALL FOUR THROUGHLINES CREATE A TAPESTRY OF THEMES, ALL TIED TO THE STRUCTURAL MEANING OF YOUR STORY."

ALL FOUR OF THESE ARE IN MY STORY: THE TERRORISTS PRECONCEPTIONS ABOUT WOMEN HELP THE WRITER SAVE THE DAY; OPENNESS TO RESISTANCE HELPS THE WOMEN JOIN THE WRITER; BAD CHOICES BY THE CRUISE LINE AND THE TERRORISTS LEAD TO BOTH OF THEIR UNDOING; DELAYS IN THE RESCUE PLANS GIVE THE WRITER AND THE WOMEN TIME TO FREE THEMSELVES.

WHICH IS YOUR CENTRAL TOPIC? WHAT HAVE YOU GOT THE MOST TO SAY ABOUT? THEMES AREN'T JUST RECURRING IDEAS, BUT PERSPECTIVES. WHAT IS YOUR STORY TRYING TO SAY?

WELL, THE IDEA WAS TO MAKE AN "ACTION MOVIE" ABOUT BEING A WOMAN. I WAS GETTING AT "PREJUDICE."

EACH THROUGHLINE HAS A THEMATIC ARGUMENT. THE ISSUE IS THAT ARGUMENT'S TOPIC. EVERY THROUGHLINE HAS ITS OWN ISSUE OR THEME. EXPLORE THE ISSUE THROUGH DIALOGUE, IMAGES, AND OTHER THEMATIC MATERIAL. THE ISSUES OF THE FOUR THROUGHLINES KEEP YOUR THEMES TIED TO YOUR STORY'S MEANING.
These elements are the structural heart of your overall story. One of them is the "problem," the source of all the inequities troubling your characters. Its opposite is the "solution."

There's also the overall story symptom and overall story response.

The problem is like a disease in the story. If everyone could see the problem clearly, they'd solve it. But they don't because they're busy with the symptoms of the problem—that's the overall story symptom. They try to treat these symptoms with the overall story response. Only the overall story solution can do that.

These four elements are constantly at work in your story. They bring specific shading to the most minute difficulties your characters face.

The problem is finally recognized some time near the climax. "Success" replaces the problem with the solution. "Failure" doesn't.
YOU MEAN THOSE BORING TERMS ARE THE "HEART" OF PENN'S STORY?

DRAMATICA DOESN'T SAY HOW TO FEEL ABOUT THE PROBLEM, JUST WHAT IT IS.

TAKE "TEMNATION" FOR EXAMPLE. THINK HOW MANY WAYS THIS "BORING" TERM MIGHT BE PROBLEMATIC IN A STORY...

...A SINGLE KIND OF PROBLEM FEELS CONSISTENT. AS MANY WILD THINGS HAPPEN, THEY'LL ALL BE THEMATICALLY LINKED BY THE PROBLEM.

I'VE GOT ABOUT 500 DIFFERENT PROBLEMS MY CHARACTERS DEAL WITH.

DO THEY SHARE ANY COMMON THEME?

WELL, YEAH. YOU COULD SAY MY STORY'S PROBLEM IS "CONTROL," WHICH IS MOST OBVIOUS WHEN THE TERRORISTS REVEAL THEY'VE HAD CONTROL OF THE CRUISE SINCE IT LEFT PORT.

I COULD TAKE THIS FARTHER-- SYSTEMS DESIGNED TO CONTROL SHIPPING TRAFFIC MIGHT MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO SAFELY RESCUE THE HOSTAGES...

AND THE WAY THE HOSTAGES APPEAR TO BE EASILY CONTROLLED KEEPS EVERYONE UNDER WRAPS UNTIL EVENTUALLY THE SOLUTION OF BEHAVING UNCONTROLLED ALLOWS THE WOMEN TO OVERTAKE THE TERRORISTS.

SOUNDS GOOD! CONGRATULATIONS...
...YOU’VE GOT A SINGLE STORYFORM.
NOW THIS GETS FUN.
THAT ANSWER TOOK DRAMATICA
TO A SINGLE STORYFORM, DETAILING
ALL FOUR OF YOUR STORY’S THROUGH-
LINES IN GREAT DEPTH.

NOW WE’LL SEE
HOW TO STRUCTURE THE LOGICAL
AND EMOTIONAL PARTS
OF YOUR STORY

WE’LL FIND A PLOT
OUTLINE IN HERE TOO.
OF HOW EACH THROUGH-
LINE WILL PROCEED
ACT BY ACT

THERE ARE A NUMBER
OF WAYS TO DEAL WITH THIS
INFORMATION IN THE SOFTWARE. ONE
WAY IS THROUGH THE REPORTS
ABOUT YOUR STORY THAT DRAMATICA
IMMEDIATELY COMPOSES WHEN YOU
FINISH STORYFORMING.

Characters
Several tools that aid in
creating and developing
characters.

Reports
Various output formats for
examining your story’s
dramatics.

Brainstorming
Short of ideas? We’ve got you.

CONGRATULATIONS! You’ve answered enough questions to get
down to one storyform!

However, this may NOT be the best storyform for the story you
want to tell. Even experienced Dramatica users need to
close 2 or 3 different storyforms before settling on one
that feels right. It’s better to take the time to get it right now,
then to go ahead and illustrate a story that you’ll probably be
dissatisfied with later.

For this reason, we recommend that you save this storyform,
then clear the decisions you made in the Storyforming
section and redo those essential storyforming questions. Don’t worry, you won’t lose any of the writing you did in the
Getting Started section. To do this:
1. Under the File menu, select Save, then name the file and
save it.
2. Under the storyforming menu, click on “Clear Storyform”.
3. In the Storyguide path, click on the “Storyforming” topic,
4. Redo the storyforming questions. Experiment!

Save your new (and different!) storyform as a different
version.

“THE
STORYENGINE
SETTINGS
REPORT?”

“POOF!”

“IT IS THE
SKELETON OF YOUR
STORY. EACH THROUGH-
LINE HAS A CONCERN, ISSUE, PROBLEM,
solution, symptom, and re-
sponse. -- NOW DRAMATICA SHOWS
YOU WHAT THOSE ARE.

That report lists
every single story
point in your
storyform.

NOW WE’LL SEE
HOW TO STRUCTURE THE LOGICAL
AND EMOTIONAL PARTS
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...THE MAIN VS. IMPACT THROUGHLINE IS A CLASH OF FIXED ATTITUDES OVER WHETHER IT'S O.K. TO BE LIKE A WOMAN, HUH? THAT FITS. AND THE CONCERN IN IRVING'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS WIFE/IMPACT CHARACTER...

...IS THEIR "INNERMOST DESIRES" -- WHICH IRVING'S FAME AS A WRITER CAN EITHER MAKE REAL OR POSTPONE FOREVER DEPENDING ON HOW IRVING LOOKS AT IT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact Character</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>The area of the Impact Character's greatest impact as it concerns a decision to stick with something regardless of the consequences.</td>
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WRITE THOSE DESCRIPTIONS INTO THE "STORY POINTS" WINDOW. HERE, YOU WRITE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF HOW THESE POINTS WILL APPEAR IN YOUR STORY.

IT SAYS MY IMPACT CHARACTER ISSUE IS "COMMITMENT." THAT DESCRIBES THE THEMATIC IMPACT OF IRVING'S WIFE THAT WILL HELP CONVINCE IRVING TO CHANGE, RIGHT?

SO IRVING'S WIFE SHOULD SEE HER COMMITMENT TO IRVING AND HIS COMMITMENT TO WRITING AS THE REASONS WHY THEY HAVE TO GO ON THE CRUISE. IN HER OPINION, IRVING SHOULD GET INTO THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING SEEN AS A WOMAN, SO HE CAN FULFILL HIS COMMITMENTS TO HIS READERS AS THE AUTHOR OF THEIR "LOVE COLUMN."

THAT WILL WORK, FOR A START.

I SEE WHAT WAS MISSING IN MY STORY, NOW THAT I'M PUTTING THIS IN HERE. WITHOUT A DEVELOPED IMPACT CHARACTER, IRVING WOULD HAVE NO REASON TO CHANGE.

THIS IS THE SIDE OF THE STORY I WASN'T LOOKING AT BEFORE.

GREAT, NOW ALL WE NEED IS SOME QUIRKY DIALOGUE LIKE "RESERVOIR DOGS"
WAIT A MINUTE! I ONLY COUNT TWO CHARACTERS IN THIS "STORYFORM." THE MAIN AND IMPACT CHARACTERS. WHAT ABOUT EVERYONE ELSE? DON'T THEY COUNT?

LEOT ME REFRESH YOU ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OVERALL AND MAIN VS. IMPACT CHARACTERS. OVERALL CHARACTERS ARE SEEN BY THEIR FUNCTION IN THE STORY...

OVERALL CHARACTERS

MAIN VS. IMPACT CHARACTERS

...NOT THEIR EMOTIONAL IMPACT, LIKE MAIN VS. IMPACT CHARACTERS.

OH YES! VERY MUCH. THOSE ARE THE OVERALL CHARACTERS AND THEY CAN MAKE OR BREAK A STORY AS EASILY AS ANYTHING ELSE.

THE IMPORTANT THING IN DEVELOPING OVERALL CHARACTERS IS THAT THEY SERVE A PURPOSE TO THE STORY. A GOOD WAY TO GET A FEEL FOR THIS IS BY LOOKING AT ARCHETYPES.

EXAMPLES FROM GEORGE LUCAS' STAR WARS WILL DEMONSTRATE THE VARIOUS CHARACTERISTICS THAT MAKE UP ARCHETYPAL CHARACTERS.

THE PROTAGONIST CONSIDERS THE PROBLEM AND PURSUES THE SOLUTION, LIKE LUKE SKYWALKER IN STAR WARS.

THE ANTAGONIST BALANCES HIM WITH "RECONSIDER" AND "AVOID/PREVENT" LIKE THE EVIL EMPIRE.

THE SKEPTIC ARCHETYPE REPRESENTS "OPPOSE" AND "DISBELIEF" LIKE HAN SOLO.

THE GUARDIAN ARCHETYPE IS "CONSCIENCE" AND "HELP" LIKE OBII WAN KENOBI IN STAR WARS.

THE REASON ARCHETYPE REPRESENTS "CONTROL" AND "LOGIC" LIKE PRINCESS LEIA.

THE EMOTION ARCHETYPE REPRESENTS "UNCONTROLLED" & "FEELING" LIKE CHEWBACCA.


THESE ARE THE FUNCTIONS PERFORMED IN STORIES BY THE EIGHT ARCHETYPES. THEIR CHARACTERISTICS LEAD TO A COMPLETE EXPLORATION OF THE OVERALL STORY THROUGHLINE.
IN MY STORY, IRVING IS THE PROTAGONIST AND THE TERRORIST LEADER IS THE ANTAGONIST. THE EMOTION CHARACTER IS THIS TOUGH WOMAN IRVING BEFRIENDS AND THE SIDEKICK IS THAT WOMAN'S HANDMAID.

"Pursuit" -- the drive to seek after.

WHAT IF SOME OF PENN'S CHARACTERS AREN'T ARCHETYPAL? PENN WRITES REAL CHARACTERS, YOU KNOW, NOT CARDBOARD CUT-OUTS!

ARCHETYPES ARE JUST THE SIMPLEST KIND OF CHARACTERS.

ANY CHARACTER WHO IS NOT ARCHETYPAL IS CALLED "COMPLEX." BUILDING COMPLEX CHARACTERS IS REALLY WHEN THIS WINDOW BECOMES MOST USEFUL BECAUSE IT PREDICTS RELATIONSHIPS AS WELL AS CHARACTERISTICS.

DIAGONALLY OPPOSED CHARACTERS ARE IN CONFLICT WITH EACH OTHER.
SIDE-BY-SIDE CHARACTERS ARE COMPATIBLE, BECOMING COMPANIONS.
CHARACTERS STACKED VERTICALLY HAVE QUALITIES THAT COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER, MAKING A TEAM.

THESE RELATIONSHIPS REMAIN CONSTANT, ENSURING THAT CHARACTERS STAY CONSISTENT THROUGHOUT THE STORY.
O.K. THIS STUFF IS USEFUL, BUT HOW DO WE GET FROM HERE TO ACTUALLY WRITING? PENN DOESN'T NEED ANOTHER DISTRACTION, HE NEEDS TO WRITE!

OH DAMIEN! YOU ADMIT THIS MIGHT HELP!

DRAMATICA HELPS YOU STRUCTURE YOUR PLOT IN STORYFORMING.

THEN YOU "ILLUSTRATE" STORY POINTS SUCH AS A MAIN CHARACTER'S "ACTIVITY" INTO SPECIFIC EXAMPLES IN YOUR STORY.

LASTLY, "WEAVE" TOGETHER THE ORDER IN WHICH YOU WILL REVEAL YOUR STORY TO THE AUDIENCE BY CREATING SCENES OR CHAPTERS.

VIOLA! DRAMATICA HAS CREATED A STEP BY STEP OUTLINE READY TO BE HONED INTO A KILLER FIRST DRAFT!

FOR WRITERS WHO ARE UNSURE OF HOW TO CREATE A TREATMENT, STRUCTURE TEMPLATES ARE PROVIDED.

DRAMATICA'S STORYGUIDE WILL HELP YOU WITH THIS.

JUST OPEN A TEMPLATE FILE TO WRITE A SCREENPLAY, NOVEL, OR SHORT STORY.

NOW YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY AND HOW YOU'RE GOING TO SAY IT. ALL THAT'S LEFT IS TO POLISH YOUR TREATMENT INTO A FIRST DRAFT.
I USED TO JUST HAVE THIS GUY IN A DRESS FIGHT HIS WAY OFF A SHIP -- NOW HE'S ALSO ON AN EMOTIONAL JOURNEY. MY MAIN CHARACTER IS DRIVEN BY HIS NEED TO CONTROL HIS SELF IMAGE, BUT HIS WIFE SEES THAT IF HE DOESN'T BECOME ONE WITH HIS WRITING PERSONA HE WILL LOSE HIS CHERISHED INTEGRITY. EVERY ACT WILL STRIP AWAY ANOTHER PIECE OF HIS VULNERABLE MACHISMO.

I'M THERE, PENN. I'M CRYIN!

...THIS MAKES HIM RE-THINK HIS WHOLE LIFE AS HE MANEUVERS AROUND THE TERRORISTS UNTIL HE EVENTUALLY REALIZES WHAT HIS WIFE HAS BEEN SAYING...

...IT'S ONLY BY LETTING LOOSE AND REALLY EMBRACING HIS UNINHIBITED AND EMOTIONAL SIDE THAT HE CAN TAKE OUT THE BAD GUYS AND KEEP HIS JOB.

...AND THAT'S HOW IT ENDS.

THAT WAS SO TOUCHING, PENN. WHERE'D THIS PASSION COME FROM? YOU'VE BEEN HIDING IT. LET'S GET THIS STORY WRITTEN!

THE IMPROVED TREATMENT'S ALREADY DONE! SO YOU FEEL IRVING'S PAIN, AND HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS WIFE?

OH, IT'S MY FAVORITE PART. THEY'RE SO DEVELOPED THAT I WAS INTO THEIR LOVE STORY JUST AS MUCH AS THE ACTION!

I'M SORRY ABOUT MY FIRST DRAFT. YOU WERE RIGHT, IT NEEDED WORK.

OH, DO YOU WRITE?

I THINK YOU MAY BE RIGHT.

WELL, LOOK AT THAT. PENN'S A CHANGED MAN, WHETHER HE REALIZES IT OR NOT.

I HOPE HE CAN SPARE SOME OF THAT "CHANGE" WHEN HE SELLS THAT SCRIPT, I'VE GOT SOME DEVELOPMENT COSTS OF MY OWN TO PAY.

SURE, YOU DIDN'T KNOW? YEAH -- I WAS WONDERING, COULD YOU GO OVER THAT "THROUGHLINE" STUFF WITH ME ONE MORE TIME?

I'D BE PLEASED TO.

THIS COULD BE THE BEGINNING OF A BEAUTIFUL RELATIONSHIP.

YEAH, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO TURN INTO A BALL OF LIGHT.

OH, DO YOU WRITE?
Dramatica Pro 4
The Ultimate Creative Writing Partner

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“Dramatica Pro is a true brainstorming partner! No other story software offers this level of involvement and efficiency in the story creation process; what a liberating experience. You guys have built a valuable tool that will continue to inspire for years to come.”

—Shayne Wilson
Associate Producer
SHOWTIME’s Dead Like Me

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—Writer’s Digest

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—Walter S. Mossberg
The Wall Street Journal