**The Six Acts**

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| **Story Title** |  |
| **Character** |  |
| **Story Goal** |  |
| **Run Time** |  |

**Act One: Dealing with an Imperfect Situation**

**A character in an *Imperfect Situation* faces *Oppressive Opposition* as he pursues an *Initial Goal*. But when there is a *Disturbance* to his routine, he faces a *Dilemma* regarding his situation, and must assume a *New Role*.**

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| **The Inciting Incident** | |
| **Something happens, often before the story begins, which if it does not occur would prevent the story as it exists from coming to be.** |  |
| **The Imperfect Situation** | |
| **The character begins the story in a less than ideal situation he would like to change but seemingly cannot.** |  |
| **Initial Desire** | |
| **Deep within himself, the character wants one particular thing more than anything else in the world.** |  |
| **Initial Desire Type** | |
| **The character’s Initial Desire is either for or against changing his situation.** |  |
| **Pre-Existing Conflict** | |
| **When the story begins, the character is already dealing with personal conflicts as well as the conflicts of the world at large.** |  |
| **Likability/Empathy Factors** | |
| **The character is shown to be someone the audience would like to see succeed, or would be willing to follow on the journey of the story.** |  |
| **Initial Goal** | |
| **When the story opens, the character already has a goal he is actively pursuing.** |  |
| **Initial Goal Type** | |
| **The character’s Initial Goal is either a Normal Routine Goal where he is in his regular environment, or a Fish out of Water Goal where he is already in a situation with which he is unfamiliar.** |  |
| **Action Toward Goal** | |
| **The character takes action toward achieving his Initial Goal.** |  |
| **Oppressive Opposition** | |
| **The character’s Initial Desire and/or his Initial Goal are being oppressed by the world around him.** |  |
| **Turning Point Catalyst: The Disturbance** | |
| **An unexpected event with ominous implications occurs, interrupting the character’s normal routine. This event pushes the character toward the Dilemma.** |  |
| **Turning Point One: The Dilemma** | |
| **The character is placed in a position where he must choose between life as he has known it or taking a new course of action.** |  |
| **The New Role** | |
| **If the character takes this new course of action, he will assume a New Role in which he is untested.** |  |
| **Refusal/Interference to the New Role (Optional)** | |
| **The character may be reluctant, unready or unwilling to leave his Imperfect Situation and accept the New Role. Also, the character may want to accept the New Role, but someone else attempts to prevent him from accepting it.** |  |
| **Nudge From Fate (Optional)** | |
| **In instances where the character has every reason to decline the New Role, he may receive influence from an outside force that drives him to accept it.** |  |
| **Accepting The New Role** | |
| **The character makes the decision to take action by accepting the New Role.** |  |

**Act Two: Learning the Rules of an Unfamiliar Situation**

***The character Learns the Rules of an Unfamiliar Situation and faces Incidental Opposition in pursuit of a Transitional Goal. But when he receives a Reality Check, he makes a Commitment to his New Role.***

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| **The Unfamiliar Situation** | |
| **The character now finds himself in a situation unlike anything he’s ever experienced.** |  |
| **The Transitional Goal** | |
| **The character receives a new goal that transitions him out of his initial state of inertia and into the main events of the story.** |  |
| **Action Toward Goal** | |
| **The character takes action toward achieving the Transitional Goal.** |  |
| **Incidental Opposition** | |
| **The character learns there are greater forces of opposition in this new world that may not be out to thwart him specifically, but still stand between him and his new goal.** |  |
| **Turning Point Catalyst: The Reality Check** | |
| **The plan the character had coming into this act hits a major roadblock and either fails completely or has unintended negative consequences.** |  |
| **Turning Point Two: The Commitment** | |
| **The character commits, or finds himself committed, to becoming the epitome of the New Role he accepted at the Dilemma. In doing so, he becomes an active participant in the Central Conflict.** |  |

**Act Three: Stumbling Into the Central Conflict**

***The character Stumbles into the Central Conflict and faces Intentional Opposition in pursuit of a False Goal. But when there is a grave Turn of events, he has a Moment of Truth.***

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| **The Central Conflict** | |
| **The character learns more about the storyworld and develops a new goal that is diametrically opposed to the goal of the antagonist.** |  |
| **The Conflict of Ideals** | |
| **The two sides of the Central Conflict are pursuing opposing ideals of perfection. The Ideal ultimately proven true is the Superior Ideal, while the one proven false is the Inferior Ideal.** |  |
| **The False Goal** | |
| **The character receives a new goal he feels will set everything right in his world. Sadly, this isn’t the case and there is still something bigger he must accomplish.** |  |
| **Action Toward Goal** | |
| **The character takes action toward achieving the False Goal.** |  |
| **Intentional Opposition** | |
| **As a result of his decision at the Commitment, the character comes to the attention of the forces of antagonism. They now begin opposing him with the specific intention of thwarting his plans.** |  |
| **Turning Point Catalyst: The Turn** | |
| **There is a major turn of events that raises the stakes for the character and his allies and makes his situation far more complicated than it had been up to this point. This event is often surprising, coming as a shock to both the character and the audience.** |  |
| **Turning Point Three: The Moment of Truth** | |
| **As a result of the Turn, the character must reevaluate his strategy, analyze who he is, and decide to be truthful with himself about the type of person he must become. In figuring out his true nature, he makes the decision to fight for the things he believes in.** |  |
| **To Change or Not to Change** | |
| **At the Moment of Truth, the character faces the decision to either change his perspective and who he has been, or retain the same outlook in the face of all which has transpired.** |  |

**Act Four: Implementing a Doomed Plan**

***The character Implements a Doomed Plan and faces Self-Inflicted Opposition in pursuit of a Penultimate Goal. But when an unthinkable Lowpoint occurs, he pulls himself together and discovers a Newfound Resolve.***

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| **The Doomed Plan** | |
| **Having made the commitment to fight at the Moment of Truth, the character now devises and implements a plan of action that is destined to fail. It may fail outright or it may seem to succeed only to have grave consequences the character didn’t anticipated.** |  |
| **The Penultimate Goal** | |
| **The character’s goal in this act is one step removed from the Ultimate Goal, but his pursuit of it leads him to realize what he needs to do to end the conflict once and for all.** |  |
| **Action Toward Goal** | |
| **The character takes action toward achieving the Penultimate Goal.** |  |
| **Self-Inflicted Opposition** | |
| **The character makes the conscious decision to go up against the forces of antagonism. Because of this, he is the primary cause of the opposition he faces in this act.** |  |
| **Turning Point Catalyst: The Lowpoint** | |
| **Something unimaginable happens with grave emotional consequences for the character. He looks back on all his actions over the course of the story and feels he has failed.** |  |
| **Turning Point Four: The Newfound Resolve** | |
| **After the Lowpoint, something happens to make the character dig deep within himself and rediscover his resolve. He makes the decision to stop the forces of antagonism at any cost.** |  |

**Act Five: Trying a Long Shot**

***The character Tries a Longshot and faces Ultimate Opposition while trying to accomplish the Ultimate Goal. But just when it seems All is Lost, he makes a Final Push against the forces of antagonism and either succeeds or fails.***

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| **The Long Shot** | |
| **The character is reinvigorated by the revelation he received at the Newfound Resolve, but his only chance of success lies in a plan with a high risk of failure.** |  |
| **The Ultimate Goal** | |
| **The character finally understands what the true goal of the story is. The goal the character has in this act is what the story is all about.** |  |
| **Action Toward Goal** | |
| **The character takes action toward achieving the Ultimate Goal.** |  |
| **Ultimate Opposition** | |
| **The forces of antagonism are now out to destroy the character completely. At this point in the story the antagonist will throw everything he has into eliminating the character.** |  |
| **Turning Point Catalyst: All is Lost** | |
| **The character may experience some initial success, but the forces of antagonism rally, and it seems the character’s Longshot is doomed to fail.** |  |
| **Turning Point Five: The Final Push** | |
| **Faced with his imminent destruction, the character decides to put everything he has into one final endeavor. He uses what little he has left in his stores, or the one trump card he’s been holding, knowing if he fails he will be destroyed.** |  |

**Act Six: Living in an New Situation**

***Having accomplished (or failed to have accomplished) the Ultimate Goal, the character is shown living in a New Situation.***

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| **The New Situation** | |
| **We see the character adapting to the New Situation his actions have created. Whether he is exalted or exiled, this is the new world he helped create.** |  |