

# STORY

## Chapter One A New Hope

STORY is a radical new way of looking at the content and dynamics of story structure. Unlike previous systems, STORY does not treat structure as a fixed skeleton or blueprint but as a network of interrelationships between elements. As long as these interrelationships are not violated, any specific content can be assigned to the elements. In this manner, the dynamics of a story written with the aid of STORY will always function to the greatest potential without limiting the shape of the piece to a fixed format or formula.

Twelve years ago, we had written a screenplay. It had problems. Our initial approach was to look at other movies that were similar to ours to see if we could discover some truisms of structure that we might employ. As our effort progressed, we began to discern a number of recurring patterns, not just in character, but in their actions and decisions as well. As we examined these patterns, we quickly found that they were not independent, but interrelated. We expanded our research to include screenplays that significantly differed from our own. Surprisingly, the same patterns were at work in these as well.

We speculated that if there were structures that transcended genre, perhaps they represented some arrangement that was attractive to an audience at the most basic level. But what did this structure represent? In essence, why do people enjoy stories?

To look for the answer, we organized a chart of the recurrent characters types that seemed to appear in every well written story. Our list had an unexpected balance to it. For every character that expressed an approach or attitude, there seemed to be a counterpart character that expressed the opposite.

But rather than emerging as well-rounded individuals, these conflicting characters seemed "weighted" or one-sided. If, indeed, the characters in a story had specific definable traits, perhaps the essence of these traits would indicate the nature of what audiences are getting out of stories. As we assigned names to the characters' predominant characteristics we were amazed to discover that the list bore a striking resemblance to the kinds of attitudes and processes we all use in making decisions and taking action. From this view, an odd notion developed. What if stories were not just plays about people. What if stories were a map of the mind: a *single* mind with a problem. What if stories provided an external view of the inner workings of the mind, so that we might have a more objective perspective of our own thoughts that could aid us in our own everyday decisions. Every element of a story, every character, action, decision and interaction would be analogous to something inside ourselves.

The concept was fascinating, but, after all, we were trying to write a screenplay. So we took what we had learned, finished the script, and let the idea lay fallow for the next ten years. One morning over breakfast two years ago, having since worked on many projects and developed a lot more depth to our understanding of stories from the

traditional perspectives, we decided to resurrect our story structure concept and see what we could do with it. If we had known then that we were embarking on a two year journey that would require the development of an entirely new psychology to complete the task, we surely would have dropped the idea cold. But we didn't know, and so we diligently organized and reorganized material. We chalked up sleepless nights and frustrating days. But in the end, we had chipped away all the nonessential material and were left with a simple yet variable structure delineating the elements, interrelationships, and dynamics of stories.

Since this approach differs so dramatically from traditional attempts to organize the content of a creative work, there are few touch points with standard story structure dogma. Many of the terms will be familiar, but we may have altered denotative and connotative values in ways that require redefining one's understanding of the elements involved in order to fully appreciate the usefulness of the tool called STORY.

Because this is a system of interrelationships between elements rather than their content, any fixed view of the elements can only be partially correct. Essentially, each view is valid as long as one works within that framework but will be invalid from many other useful perspectives that might be employed. Only the overview - the gestalt of all the interrelationships of all the variables - provides the single perspective that is absolutely correct.

But that holistic global concept cannot be accessed directly from traditional thoughts about story structure since it is in conflict with them. Therefore, we must build a foundation upon which we may build our new view of Story.

To that end, we begin with

## THE EXPLODED MIND

Simply put, stories are representations of a *single human mind* dealing with a dilemma. We relate to stories because we see ourselves not just in a single character, but in the entire work - the mechanism of our own minds exploded or projected outward into an unfamiliar but infinitely more understandable view from the outside.

Looking at our own minds from an outside view is not at all the same thing as looking at someone else's mind from our perspective. When we look at others, our observations are filtered by our own minds, so that we do not see them directly, but only as they appear in reference to our own mental overlay. Only when we take a *completely external view*, not just external to a mind but external to *all* minds, can we clearly see the functioning of a specific mind with a dilemma.

How do we arrive at a completely external view when we are trapped in our own minds? That is the beauty of what stories do for us. Through thousands of years of storytelling, authors have learned what works with their audiences. Quite unintentionally then, through centuries of trial and error, stories have empirically arrived at conventions that reveal the structure and functioning of the inner mind. Characters represent some of these mechanisms, but the dynamics of their interactions and their internal decision making processes describe even more. And

yet, Story is not a transparent analogy that is easily compared directly to our own minds. How can Story both mirror the mind while keeping the mind's structure obscure? This is due to the way we *look* at stories.

## PERSPECTIVES

There are three people looking at a story: the Author, the Character, and the Audience. Each one is afforded a different view. Even though the workings of a story remain constant, each of the three observers will appreciate it in a different way. It requires *all three* views to perceive the relationship between Story structure and the structure of the human mind. So, although each observer can see a system at work, none, in and of himself, can completely see the analogy. By exploring the nature of the differences in these three perspectives, we can begin to uncover our initial glimpse of the *actual* structure.

### THE AUTHOR PERSPECTIVE

In reference to Story, the Author is God. He is the only observer who knows what *will* happen before it does. To the Author, a story is not a mystery unfolding, but a forgone conclusion. He sees the entire work, beginning middle, and end all at once, all in the same moment of time., So although the events of a plot or a character's transition have a specific order, the Author does not see them changing, but rather *arranged*. This effectively affords the Author a fixed view of the story in which he can see potentials, obstacles, the flow of the story, and the conclusion. In this view, nothing moves, but everything is related.

### THE CHARACTER PERSPECTIVE

Unlike the Author, the Character has absolutely no idea of what lies ahead. He may expect that something will occur, but he does not know. As we go through life unsure of the proper course and the accuracy of our knowledge, and suffering from the inability to foresee the unexpected, so the character travels through the story. He knows that to his god, the Author, the die is already cast, but he himself must trudge through to determine what will be. For the character, the structure of the story is a *floating* set of elements that only take on a fixed quality in retrospect, and even then, new information may force the character to re-evaluate what he thought he knew.

## THE AUDIENCE PERSPECTIVE

The Audience is afforded a favored view by the Author. Although he does not divulge his knowledge of the future, he does let the audience in on information the character does not know. We may be told where something is hidden that a character must find, or clued into a danger that awaits around a bend. In this respect, the Audience can empathize with the Character's blind journey through time, while appreciating something of the actuality that lurks in the world beyond the Character's grasp.

To the Audience then, their understanding of a story's structure has an aspect of the Character's view that is floating and an aspect of the Author's view that is fixed. It is only at the conclusion of the story that the Audience may join with the Author in the fixed view of the entire structure.

In this way, the Audience starts at an external view very close to the uniformed Character perspective, and through the telling of the story transcends the limitations of the external view to join the Author in the God's eye view of the story as a fixed structure. Nevertheless, the Audience's experience in appreciating the story is not the same as that of the Author, as the Audience needed to *learn* the structure of the story as it unfolded, while the Author knew it as a whole. Similarly, although the Character has developed a fixed view of the story after its conclusion, he is still not privy to information outside his grasp that is known by the Author and the Audience.

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VIEW FROM INSIDE     ~~SYNTHESIS~~  
BLIND SPOTS     THE FOURTH PERSPECTIVE  
SYNTHESIS

When you sit in the role of Author, you evaluate the relationships between your Character, your Story, and your audience. When you sit in the role of Audience, you evaluate the relationships between the Character, the Story, and the Author. When you sit in the role of Character, you evaluate the relationships between, Story, Audience (how others see you), and Author (the all seeing God).

But there is a fourth perspective, the one we spoke of earlier - the view external to *all* minds. You gain that perspective when you sit in the role of the Story. When you view Character, Audience, and Author all at once from the Story perspective, you can evaluate the relationships between the three observers.

The Author can control the nature of the Character, and the content and storytelling of the Story, but he cannot control the nature of the Audience. But by jumping into the Story perspective, he can look back at his own biases and adjust his own approach so as to have the precise effect he wants on his Audience.

It is this perspective that a critic will take in evaluating a work: not just that the Author created a work meaningful to himself that was structurally sound, but a work that moved the audience as well. And the sophisticated Author will take that perspective as well during the creation of his work.

# THE VIEW FROM INSIDE

## TIME AND SPACE

To the Character, the story unfolds, or more accurately: the Character perceives the story as *progressing* through time. The Audience sees the Character's journey and development as progressing through time, but also sees the nature of stable inequities that exist between Characters or between Characters and their environment. This view allows the audience, for example, to empathize with the stand taken by each of two brothers that hate each other. We see the hate as a potential between them. In this respect, the Audience also has a spatial view of some of the potentials, obstacles, plot flow, and conclusions. The Author, seeing the entire structure as fixed in time, has only the spatial view of the story.

It is important to note that having a linear order to the events of a story does not constitute a temporal view of the structure. The view from time requires the doling out of information, rather than seeing it all at once.

In truth, since all three observers are looking at the same structure, a temporal view and a spatial view are simply ways of seeing it. You can use one or the other or both. When we analyze or construct a structure in story, we view things from both time and space.

## BLIND SPOTS

No matter which observer we are, we judge the relationships between the other three points, but we judge them from our own point of view. In other words, we do not look at our own biases until we step into that fourth perspective. But how can we truly see ourselves from the outside. We would have to cease *being* us to look back at ourselves with objectivity. So when we seek to examine ourselves, it is not the actual view of who we are, but rather the view of who we are, filtered by the biases we cannot see.

Since we can never see ourselves from that actuality view, we must create our best approximation of that view in order to know anything at all about what things look like from there. To this end we look at the three perspectives we can evaluate, and use them to create the one we cannot.

## SYNTHESIS AND ~~THE ACTS~~

By looking at what each of the other three views looks like to us, we can triangulate on the point we are viewing from. In this way, only by first establishing each of the other three, can we establish the fourth. ~~This is what is represented in three act stories: each of the other three perspectives is fixed by the character until he completes the~~

~~third and can then look back at himself and see what changes need be made in himself.~~

## LEAP OF FAITH

LA I EN  
Since the actual perspective of himself is forever hidden, the act of sythesizing that view is the leap of faith a character must make to review the very nature of his mind. In essence, he says to himself, "I cannot see the reality here, but everything that I can see tells me in must be this." He then either makes that leap of faith, accepts his evaluation of himself and changes as required, or he refuses to accept the accuracy of that view and does not change.

## THE FIFTH PERSPECTIVE

When you are looking at a Story from the Author's perspective, you are not the only observer. You share that function with the Character and Audience. And although you can synthesize a view external to all minds by taking the Story perspective and looking back at yourself, this is not the true view of your relationship to the other observers. In fact, your view even from the Author perspective is flawed by your own biases, since you are measuring the others in reference to yourself. You are limited by your own knowledge and awareness.

An actual perspective that would define the true natures of each of the four point of view would require the God's Eye View in *our* world. We would have to be able to step outside ourselves and look back with total and complete objectivity from a fifth perspective. Most would agree that this is not possible.

However, when you look ~~one level down~~ and view Story, Character, or Audience singly, not in relationship to the others, you occupy that fifth perspective of looking inside without being inside. This fifth viewpoint give one an actuality view of the workings inside the Story and Character. It is here we can make completely objective judgements as to whether a Story is properly constructed or a Character is true to form.

Audience and Author sit across the table from each other and view Character and Story. The Author anticipates his effect upon the Audience in terms of Character and Story, and the Audience evaluates the biases of the Author in terms of Character and Story. But neither Audience nor Author may apply the fifth perspective to each other, for they only see each other through the content of the Story and progression of the Character.

## WHERE YOU SIT AND WHERE YOU LOOK

So far, we have looked at each observer being able to see three other observers and sythesize the fourth. But one can also place oneself in the shoes of each of the other

observers by synthesizing each point of view. For example, as Author, you will look at the Character, Audience and Story, and synthesize a view of yourself as Author. But you can imagine yourself in the shoes of the Character and, for the purposes of empathizing with your Character, can limit your own knowledge of things he could not know. Positioning yourself in this new point of view would change the way in which you see the Author, Audience, and Story.

The effect is that when analyzing a Story, you can take any of four positions as a point of view, which will offer four unique views of the other observers. Four different views from each of four different perspectives gives you sixteen possible ways to look at yourself and the other observers.

LATER  
IF AT A QUADS

~~It is convenient to organize these different perspectives in quads. A Quad would be the four observers seen from a single point of view. As long as you don't jump from one Quad (or point of view) to another during the middle of an evaluation, your determination of the relationship between the points in that Quad will be as accurate as possible.~~

For example, if you were to take the Character's point of view, then any relationships between Author, Audience, Story, and Yourself will be as accurate as that point of view can be. But if you were to evaluate Author and Audience from the Character point of view and then evaluate Story and Yourself from the Author point of view, you will have an incompatible Quad, and your appreciation of the relationships between the points of view will be flawed.

In truth, when any of us look at stories, we are constantly shifting perspectives to gain the broadest perspective of all the meaning a work contains. But as an Author, it is important to limit yourself to one point of view at a time, finish all your evaluations from that perspective, then move to the next and start fresh. In this manner, YOUR point of view as the Author is as clear and organized as it can be, and therefore your Characters and Story will be perceived by the Audience with as much understanding as possible. It is the key to successful communication from Author to Audience.

## THE SIXTY FOUR ELEMENT QUESTION

ANOTHER

There is a ~~total~~ level of consideration. As we mentioned, it is our belief that Story is a projection of a single human mind. If this is so, than that mind will have represented within it all sixteen of the possible points of view and objects of view. But this set of sixteen can be seen by the Author, the Audience, the Character, or the by the Story itself. That means that although Story contains only sixteen elements, there are four sets of sixteen elements, when one considers the nuances of who is looking at the Story.

As an Author, you will want to explore the full view of the Story for your Character, your Audience, and Yourself. And the Story looking at the Story will appear to be self-defining, or in essence, the structure of the work. Since an audience will move through each of these perspectives in viewing the Story, and element left out of any set of the four sets of sixteen will leave the Audience feeling as if something has been left out. When you find a whole in a Story's logic, it is created by omission of one of at least one of these elements.

## TWICE SIXTY FOUR

As mentioned earlier, the Author can only see the Audience in terms of the Character and Story. Likewise, the Character and Story are the only information the Audience has to evaluate the Author. Since both Character and Story are under the Author's complete control, he will look into Story, thereby creating a set of sixty four, and will look into the Character, thereby creating a second set of sixty four.

## PROBLEMS AND DILEMMAS

There is the mind and there is the universe. They interact. The universe affects the mind through observation, the mind affects the universe through action. The mind can evaluate: it can look at the universe and determine its arrangement; it can look at itself and determine its arrangement. It can compare the two and determine if they are compatible. If they are, no action need be taken. If they are not, a problem exists and action must be taken to change the state of the universe or the state of the mind and bring them back into balance. Until this occurs, a problem exists.

The mind can anticipate. It can determine the expected state of the universe at a future time. It can determine the expected state of itself at a future time. When the mind anticipates that solving a current problem will create a future problem, it lowers the motivation to act. If the size of the new problem is greater than the current problem, the mind will not act. If the size of the new problem is equal to the current problem, the mind will delay acting until one problem is determined to be greater. This is a dilemma.

So a problem exists when mind and universe are unbalanced. But a dilemma exists when it is anticipated that solving the imbalance will create a new and equal imbalance. To break the deadlock, something must change. Either the universe must alter from influences outside our anticipation, or the mind must alter from observations not anticipated. Either way, time can, but not necessarily will resolve the imbalance and make the decision to act or not act a clear choice.

As long as the dilemma remains, the mind will continually reconsider the imbalance, even though no change is anticipated in the near future. This is a poor survival trait, as valuable mind space that is needed for more pressing decisions is tied up in

reconsidering the nature of the dilemma. When we worry, we are neither solving the dilemma nor attending to other solvable problems. To counter this inefficient functioning of the mind, we create a filter that blinds us to the existence of the imbalance, thereby allowing us to address other issues. This filter is created by Justification.

#### JUSTIFICATION and BALANCED INEQUITY

Justification is the process whereby we create an internal imbalance that mirrors or compliments the nature of the dilemma, thereby "filling it in" by creating a "balanced inequity" internally. Justification allows the mind to stop considering the dilemma in the hope that the dilemma will resolve itself over time. The drawback is that once the

dilemma has become invisible to the mind, the mind is unbalanced internally. Should the original dilemma resolve, we will not be aware. Rather, the new balance will look unbalanced to the mind, since the mind now contains the balanced inequity. The result is that this mind will not be observing the universe that is, but the universe filtered by the balanced inequity. Perception does not match reality, and this mind's reaction to the universe will not be accurate.

This is where a story begins: with a mind containing an internal balanced inequity. This mind contains a potential waiting to be released. Storytelling functions to relate the nature of the specific balanced inequity and follow the course of its dismantling.

This is why stories intrigue us: they give us a method for seeing the balanced inequities in our own minds and learning how to eliminate them. We cannot learn from one kind of inequity how to deal with any other. The variety of stories is due to the variety of possible inequities and the trouble we have with seeing them in ourselves.

### PREMISE

Stories do not deal with multiple dilemmas. Rather, a single dilemma is chosen as the point of discussion. The justification of that specific dilemma determines the premise. Premise is simply a description of the attitude the mind has adopted in dealing with a specific dilemma and whether this is a good or bad thing.

How can an unbalanced mindset be a good thing? Every motivation we have is essentially an imbalance in the mind. It is a refusal to accept things the way they are. Essentially, it is the refusal to change one's attitude. These motivations come from the sub-conscious, the home of balanced inequities. Without an unbalanced mindset we would have no drive to change our environment or ourselves. So for any progress to be made, for any action to be taken, one must have a balanced inequity.

If one is to pursue a goal or achieve a state of being, it can only be driven by the internal sense of inequity. In this respect, an author may want to indicate that adamantness of a particular attitude may be morally correct.

So the second half of premise indicates whether this mindset is a good or bad thing, according to the author. This creates a premise of the form, "Specific Mindset leads to Success/Failure".

Of course a mind may have many imbalances. Although only one will generate the premise, many others may exist. These other imbalances determine the thematics of the story. So how can we tell which of these imbalances is the premise? The premise is indicated by its essential connection to the problem or goal of the plot.

When there is an imbalance between the mind and the universe, it is seen as a mind problem from the universe and a universe problem from the mind. In the telling of story, we select a problem that must be solved in the mind AND a problem that must be solved in the universe. Story unfolds as the exploration of what must be done to solve each problem. By the conclusion of the story, we have learned that what solves one problem will also solve the other. This solution is the intersection point between mind

and universe: the point of imbalance that they both share. It is that point that is described by premise.

One traditional perspective of this is to look at story structure as having three parts: a CHARACTER structure, a DECISION structure and an ACTION structure.

### THE CHARACTER LEVEL - Traditional Views

From this viewpoint, there are eight distinct characters that populate a story. They are: Protagonist, Antagonist, Logical, Emotional, Skeptical, Sidekick, Guardian, and Contagonist. Let us explore what defines each one.

#### PROTAGONIST

The traditional Protagonist is the driver of the story: the one who forces the action and must "change" internally as a person. He is the character we empathize with and hope for his success.

#### ANTAGONIST

The Antagonist is the character directly opposed to the Protagonist. He represents the problem that must be solved or overcome for the Protagonist to succeed, and forces the Protagonist to keep considering the moral issue in regard to which he must change.

#### LOGICAL

This character makes his decisions and takes action on the basis of reason, never letting emotion get in the way of a rational course.

#### EMOTIONAL

The Emotional character responds with his feelings without thinking, whether he is angry or kind, with disregard for practicality.

#### SKEPTICAL

Skeptical doubts everything - courses of action, sincerity, truth - whatever. Further, he opposes all courses of action that lead to trouble.

#### SIDEKICK

Sometimes present, the Sidekick is unfailing in his loyalty to the Protagonist, and acts as a sounding board for the Protagonist's thoughts so that the audience may observe the Protagonist's considerations.

## GUARDIAN

The Guardian is a teacher and helper who aids the Protagonist in his quest and offers a moral standard.

CONTAGONIST hinders and deludes the Protagonist and tempts him to take the wrong course and/or approach.

You may be comfortable with these terms, except for the Contagonist, a character often confused with the Antagonist. They can be clearly seen as separate entities for while the Antagonist is in direct opposition to the Protagonist, the Contagonist merely hinders him. Further, the Contagonist always represents the Temptor.

All these characters are present in a well conceived *simple* story. And even at this simplistic level, they can be seen to interrelate in very specific ways.

## THE PROTAGONISTIC GROUP

These characters have certain interrelationships that never change from story to story. When dealing with a problem, the mind makes decisions based on internal elements it evaluates. The problem itself is seen as external to the mind.

The protagonistic group then, is the Internal Group and consists of the Protagonist himself, who represents the drive to solve the problem, The Skeptic who is the desire not to address the problem, Logical who represents reasonable considerations, and Emotional, representing how the decision affects our feelings.

Taken as a whole, this group is identifiable as a unit that holds together in the quest to resolve the problem. In essence, they all hope for the same thing. Even the Skeptic wants the problem resolved. He just doesn't want to do it himself.

The External Problem is embodied in the Antagonist, who is opposed to the Protagonistic Group and **diametrically** opposed to the Protagonist himself. In balance is the Sidekick, who is invariably supportive of the Protagonist. Notice that the Sidekick takes no action on his own, but merely acts in support. Further, Guardian and Contagonist influence the Protagonist's process of Decision as well as his ability to complete the Quest.

The overview of this perspective describes a mind that is trying to solve a problem. The mind would rather not have to solve the problem, but it won't go away. The mind will use logic and feelings to determine a proper solution, and will be influenced by Helpful Conscience and Hindering Temptation. The Sidekick really represents the audience, and may or may not be present in the story itself.

## DECISION LEVEL - Traditional Views

The Decision Level is where consideration of the Moral Question takes place. Essentially, in many stories there is a question of morality that is considered by the Protagonist. He grapples with the issue internally, and comes into conflict with other characters over it. Ultimately, he must make a choice between one course of action or

another, based upon his decision on the Moral Question. In this manner, the Author is able to convey his own view of morality to the audience, thereby convincing them of his position.

### ACTION LEVEL - Traditional Views

The Action Level is the framework of physical interactions that occur between the motivation of the Protagonist and various resistances in his quest to solve The Problem. The Antagonist is the chief resistance to the successful completion of the Protagonist's quest. Another form of resistance comes from the Contagonist, who hinders the Protagonist's efforts during the Quest, whereas help comes by the hand of the Guardian.

### CHARACTER, DECISION, & ACTION - "Story" View

You will find that throughout STORY, elements will be grouped in fours. If we mention three things, you can anticipate that a fourth is just around the corner. The first example of this is our initial list of three traditional elements of structure: Character, Decision, and Action. In STORY, "Character" is actually two different levels: Internal Nature and External Affectation.

Now we have four levels that more closely approximate the workings of the mind. Internal Nature describes the attitude we take in approaching a dilemma. External Affectation is the methodology by which we employ that attitude in the outside world. Decision remains as the *process* whereby we determine what to do, and Action is the doing.

### SPLIT PERSONALITIES

Looking into the two levels of Character, let us explore what each contains.

#### INTERNAL NATURE

The Internal Nature of Character is the level at which motivation is born. It is the entirely self-contained platform upon which all decisions are contemplated. In STORY each CHARACTER's INTERNAL NATURE represents one aspect of a single human mind in considering a moral decision or a tangible problem. When we address a decision or problem, there are a limited number of processes and influences that come into play. FAITH that a decision can be found keeps us motivated to continue pondering the issue. DISBELIEF in the existence of a solution motivates us to give up and leave the solution unfound. TEMPTATION urges us to give up the quest as the cost is too great. CONSCIENCE urges us on to continue until the goal is achieved. LOGIC determines the most reasonable approach. FEELING touts the most desired. SIDEKICK represents the author's perspective, reflecting the process of considering the problem or decision in a bias balanced to his point of view. ANTAGONIST keeps the problem under consideration.

Altogether, in the INTERNAL LEVEL these aspects of character deliberate the morality of the story according to the author's intent.

## EXTERNAL AFFECTATION

Each character has an External Affectation that corresponds to his Internal nature. FAITH is linked with PURSUE. Essentially, the character that works toward the decision also drives the action. SKEPTICISM corresponds to AVOID. This character not only wants to cease evaluating, but give up the quest as well. TEMPTATION also HINDERS the pursuing character at the action level. CONSCIENCE HELPS the pursuing character in balance to the hinderer. LOGIC implements his plans with CALM. FEELING responds with FRENZY. SIDEKICK supports the pursuing character immutably. ANTAGONIST opposes the pursuing character immutably.

When combined, the Internal and External aspects of character create the Simple Characters we often see in action oriented films: The Faithful Pursuer *or* Protagonist, the Disbelieving Avoider *or* Skeptic, the Tempting Hinderer *or* Contagonist, the Helpful Conscience *or* Guardian, the Calm Intellectual *or* Logic, the Frenzied Emotional *or* Feeling, the Supportive Sidekick, and the problematical and Opposing Antagonist.

## MIX AND MATCH

This is one perspective, and from this viewpoint these relationships hold true. But Internal and External aspects need not be combined in such a direct manner. Suppose the morality of a story suggests that TAKING action would be the IMPROPER response. In that case, Avoid would be matched with Faith, as this character must attempt to find a solution while avoiding action. In this case, the Temptation character would Help the avoiding character to take the action he wants to avoid, at the same time tempting him to cease consideration of the moral issue.

In fact, each of these characters can be matched with the opposite pairing to create much more interesting and dynamic characters. The Faithful Avoider struggles with deliberation while trying not to take action. The Skeptical Pursuer does not believe a solution can be found, and strives to take action. Temptor attempts to dissuade Faithful from continuing deliberation and makes the unwanted action ever so easy. Conscience supports the deliberation and throws obstacles between the Avoider and the action. Logic implements his plans in a Frenzy. Feeling implements his responses in utter calm. Sidekick supports the inaction and keeps the Faithful character considering the problem. Antagonist offers a reflection of the deliberation and is in direct opposition to the inaction.

This set of characters is much more interesting from a perspective of potential dynamics. When they come into conflict, multi-level sparks fly.

So far we have explored how characters relate as individuals, but how do they relate in groups?

## QUADS

Again, in STORY, all good things come in fours, and characters are no exceptions. You may have noticed that we delineated eight Internal Natures (two sets of four) and eight External Affections (another two sets of four). Altogether, there are four sets of four which completes a Quad of Quads. We group the characters in this manner:

The Internal Quad, the External Quad, the Internal/External Quad, the External/Internal Quad. When we split the Characters into these groups, some of them are best understood with different names.

Before we describe the characters in the Quads, we should define exactly what we mean by Internal/External. As previously mentioned, STORY deals with items in groups of four. And since STORY is based on a science of interrelationships, each of the four items in any Quad are defined by this interrelationship. There are several perspectives from which to view the generic Quad interrelationships, and as STORY develops, some perspectives offer a better understanding than others AT THAT LEVEL. At another level, an entirely different perspective may be more useful. In dividing characters we have found that viewing characters as grouped into Quads dealing with internal and external elements of the single human mind to be the most understandable approach.

So, Internal means elements that don't relate directly to the physical universe. External means elements that don't relate directly to the mind. Internal/External describes the view of the physical universe from the mind's point of view. External/Internal describes the view of the mind from the outside universe.

#### INTERNAL QUAD

The Internal Quad contains the characteristics that are wholly within the mind: CONSIDERATION, NON-CONSIDERATION, LOGIC, EMOTION. These are the deliberations that go on in our minds when presented with an issue of moral import or the approach to solving a problem. The only outside influence they require is additional information. Since that is not a direct relationship with the substance of the Physical universe, we consider these characters as Internal.

#### INTERNAL/EXTERNAL QUAD

Our Internal/External characters (representing this view) ,PURSUE, AVOID, FRENZY and CALM are the application of internal motivation to the external world. These are the potentials and the modifiers of the course of action.

#### EXTERNAL/INTERNAL QUAD

The External/Internal perspective of the mind contains those characters outside the mind that represent the external world's impact on the internal mental process. They are: CONSCIENCE, TEMPTATION, AUTHOR, and AUDIENCE.

It is quite a departure to include Author and Audience as *characters* actually within the story itself. But as we shall see, since STORY is based on Mental Relativity, the

12

structure created by an Author contains its own moral bias beyond his conscious design. Further, the Audience is not neutral, but comes to the work with preconceived notions of morality. Therefore, the interrelationship between the Author's bias and the Audience's preconceptions affects the relationships between characters as much as the characters themselves. In this sense, Author and Audience are indeed part of STORY

## EXTERNAL QUAD

Each of us has a mind and a body. The external characters represent those aspects of the external world that directly influence the body. More precisely, External/Internal characters affect the Mind's decision process through communication, whereas External characters affect the ability of the Mind to manipulate it's environment by interacting in a physical manner.

The characters within this realm are SUPPORTER, OPPOSER, HELPER, and HINDERER. The differences between a supporter and a helper are subtle but important, as are the differences between an opposer and a hinderer. A Supporter is dedicated to the Pursuing character succeeding in the quest whereas the Helper contributes assets. The Opposer is dedicated to stopping the Pursuing character, the Hinderer merely deters him.

Collectively, all four Quads represent all the ways in which a single mind can relate to itself and it's environment.

## DECISION STRUCTURE - "Story" View

In CHARACTER we defined four quads representing the four elements of the Internal world, the four elements of the External world the four ways in which the Internal world affects the External world, and the four ways the External world affects the Internal world. The purpose of Decision Structure is to illustrate the manner in which these elements interrelate in the process of reaching a conclusion.

Since the interaction of elements takes place over time, Decision Structure represents a *process*. As with Character, this process can be divided into four quads. Each of these four types of processes is represented in a single "act". In STORY, structure is seen as containing four acts, not three. From the Decision perspective, these acts are seen as DEDUCTION, INDUCTION, REDUCTION, and PRODUCTION. These are the four ways in which a mind can process the four quads of elements illustrated in Character.

DEDUCTION determines the way elements interrelate in the present. REDUCTION determines the way elements will interrelate in the future, if not interfered with. INDUCTION determines the alternative ways elements might interrelate in the future if their current course is changed. PRODUCTION determines the way in which current interrelationships must be altered to achieve each of the induced possibilities.

A more conversation explanation would describe DEDUCTION as the way things are. REDUCTION is the way things are headed. INDUCTION are alternative futures. PRODUCTION is the likelihood of the various alternative futures

When one Deduces, Induces, Reduces, and Produces, and THEN considers the results, the likelihood of alternative futures is applied to the motivation to expand one's self and one's holdings, creating a goal, and thereby sparking motivation for an altered course of the process.

## PROCESS VERSUS OUTCOME

Deduction, Induction, Reduction, and Production have been described as the processes by which the mind comes to a decision. Naturally, each process results in an outcome that represents a value that has been determined.

The Decision Line then, follows the Considering Character's mental journey through the four processes of looking at a problem until he ultimately elects to let things continue the way they are or to alter the process to head toward an alternative future.

## ACTION LINE - Story View

As the Decision Line can be seen as four processes that lead to conclusions, the Action Line can be seen as four processes that lead to goals. One may interact with the physical universe in the following ways: One might respond with INACTION to a changing universe by allowing oneself to be changed by it. The next most active interaction would be to PRESERVE one's original state, by taking equal and opposite actions to counter the effect of the changing universe. Up another step, one might attempt to force the universe into change by "over-preserving" or RE-ACTING. Finally, we might launch a preemptive "first strike" on the universe by taking unprovoked "ACTION".

Just as the Decision Line represents four acts, the Action Line represents four acts as well. The Pursuing Character will take each of these approaches to solving the physical problem. When all have been explored, he will take the "author approved" method and achieve his goal, or take one of the other three and fail. Either way, the author makes his point.

## A QUICK RECAP

We have explored how STORY takes a different approach to structure than traditional tools. In STORY, all useful perspectives can be seen as "quads" of four elements. Each of these elements represents a variable, and the way in which the variables interrelate is the heart of the system. In this manner, structure may be defined without formula.

Many different perspectives are available with which to view the workings of a story. Each, however, is only valid from that point of view. The interrelationships between perspectives can only be seen from the global perspective. Since the overview varies

so dramatically from traditional ideas, it can only be approached slowly through progressively more encompassing perspectives.

To this end, we have explored "Character" as the variable elements which become fixed once a value is assigned. These elements then move through the story in both a Decision Line and an Action Line. These Lines represent the Internal and External processes available to each human mind in dealing with Problems.

## Chapter Two From the Top Down

Now that we have explored some common touch points between STORY structure and traditional structure, let's start at the top with the purely STORY view.

### STORY Structure

Story structure is a finite matrix representing the functioning of the human mind. Much like a Rubik's cube, it contains only 64 elements, but the rearrangement of these 64 elements within the matrix can create an almost unlimited number of specific story structures. This is why STORY allows structure without formula.

The entire system begins in equilibrium. An author simply moves elements to create an unbalanced matrix, thereby determining a specific structure. Story-telling is the process of relating the arrangement of these elements to the audience.

Because STORY is based on a perfect balance of psychological elements, at the highest level both the Author's and Audience's biases affect how a specific imbalance will be perceived. Although we will address this issue in a later chapter, for now let us assume that both Author and Audience share an unbiased view of reality. With that out of the equation, a specific successful structure is only dependent upon an understanding of the matrix, and the proper manipulation of it.

Let us begin with a discussion of the nature of the matrix itself.

### STORY STRUCTURE MATRIX

Simply put, there is only one equilibrium of the elements of structure. By themselves no story structure can exist. It is only through the creation of an imbalance that the potential exists to drive a story forward. It is the dismantling of this Imbalance that constitutes the specific structure.

### IMBALANCE

IMBALANCE is an arrangement of elements where the potential exists to change that arrangement. Only when there is no potential for change has equilibrium been restored and imbalance eliminated.

## WHERE IMBALANCE COMES FROM

There is the Universe and there is the Mind. Imbalance can exist in the Universe as seen from the Mind. And Imbalance can exist between Mind and Universe, as seen from the Mind. But an imbalance in the Mind cannot be seen from the mind, but only from the external perspective of the Universe.

Essentially, one may become aware of an imbalance in their Mind by circumstantial evidence of the reactions of others or the failure to change the environment, but one may never view the internal imbalance directly.

Stories deal with this Imbalance. The progression of a story defines the nature of the imbalance. The climax of a story is the process of addressing that imbalance. And the conclusion of a story is the proof of the correctness or incorrectness of the way in which the imbalance was addressed.

Remember that in STORY, both Decisions AND Actions are parts of the *internal* efforts of the Mind to resolve Imbalance.

### TWO POINTS OF VIEW

An Actuality point of view can see imbalance wherever it may reside. Actuality is only visible to the Author. It is his understanding, his *creation* of the imbalance that sets the potentials to drive the story. Then, there is the subjective point of view. This is the Character point of view and usually the starting perspective for the Audience. Audience begins at the subjective view and ends up at the Author's Actuality view at the end of the story, if the Author has successfully designed his structure. Essentially, the Author narrows the gap between himself and the Audience through Structure.

### ELEMENTS OF STRUCTURE

The relationships between Mind and Universe are represented in structure. There are four elements of Universe: mass, energy, space, and time. There are four elements of Mind: knowledge, thought, ability, and desire. These eight elements can be combined in 64 ways. This creates a periodic table of the 64 Elements of Psychology.

(Table of 64 Elements goes here)

It is the arrangement of these elements that creates structure and reflects the Author's point of view. When we divide the overall structure of a story into four parts, we create four subsets, each containing 16 elements from the chart. These four subsets can be viewed as Potential, Resistance, Current, and Outcome.

### POTENTIAL

(Quad of Perspectives goes here)

These are the perspectives or yardsticks that can be used to measure balance. Each of these sixteen elements can be paired with another to give a polar set, where each

item is mutually exclusive of the other. For example. Reality cannot exist as Perception, nor can Perception exist as Reality. Order can never be Chaos, and vice versa. Author's point of view or Potential is an expression of which of these sixteen elements is not considered in the Primary Character's decision process. Essentially, it is the only one of the available perspectives he refuses to evaluate from. This creates the opportunity for Potential to build, and thereby create unbalance.

If the Author were to choose Reality as the element not considered, then the Primary Character would make all his decisions and travel through the story on the basis of his Perceptions, assuming them to be real. The moment of decision would come when the difference between Reality and his Perception is made clear to him. He will then elect to consider Reality, or to continue to ignore it. Either way, the Author's point is made.

Of note is that eight of the elements may be seen as Internal Perspectives and eight as External Perspectives. There will be an imbalance in each, one represented as the focus of the Action Line, one as the focus of the Decision Line.

## RESISTANCE

(Quad of Characters goes here)

These elements represent the approaches a Mind may take in response to imbalance, and the reaction the Universe may take to us: in essence, the Resistance of the Mind to the Universe and the Resistance of the Universe to the Mind. These are Resistances because they all manipulate the internal or external world without their own nature being changed.

One resistance will be represented by the Primary Action Character from the External list, and One as the Primary Decision Character, from the Internal list.

## CURRENT

(Quad of Process/Outcome goes here)

These are the processes and outcomes that are employed to create action or consider decision.

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