Pages & Platforms

PRESENTS

GET YOUR STORY UNSTUCK

Using

The 7 Essential Story Types

With certified developmental editors

&

Rachelle Ramirez

Anne Hawley

- Use the chat room to talk with other attendees.
- Put questions in the Q&A box. We'll answer them at the end of the session.

Before we start:

Visit *storypath.me* to get your copy of our Guide to the Seven Essential Story Types.

storypath.me

Today, we're going to show you four steps on the path to finishing your story.

Five Essential Elements for Your Professional Draft.

The Seven Story Types.

Marketing Categories & Setting Types.

Putting It All Together.

A caveat...

Tools

Tools,
not
rules.

So let’s get started.

Five Essential Elements for Your Professional Draft.

You probably know this, but…

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This isn't a one-draft process.

Zero Draft

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Professional Draft:

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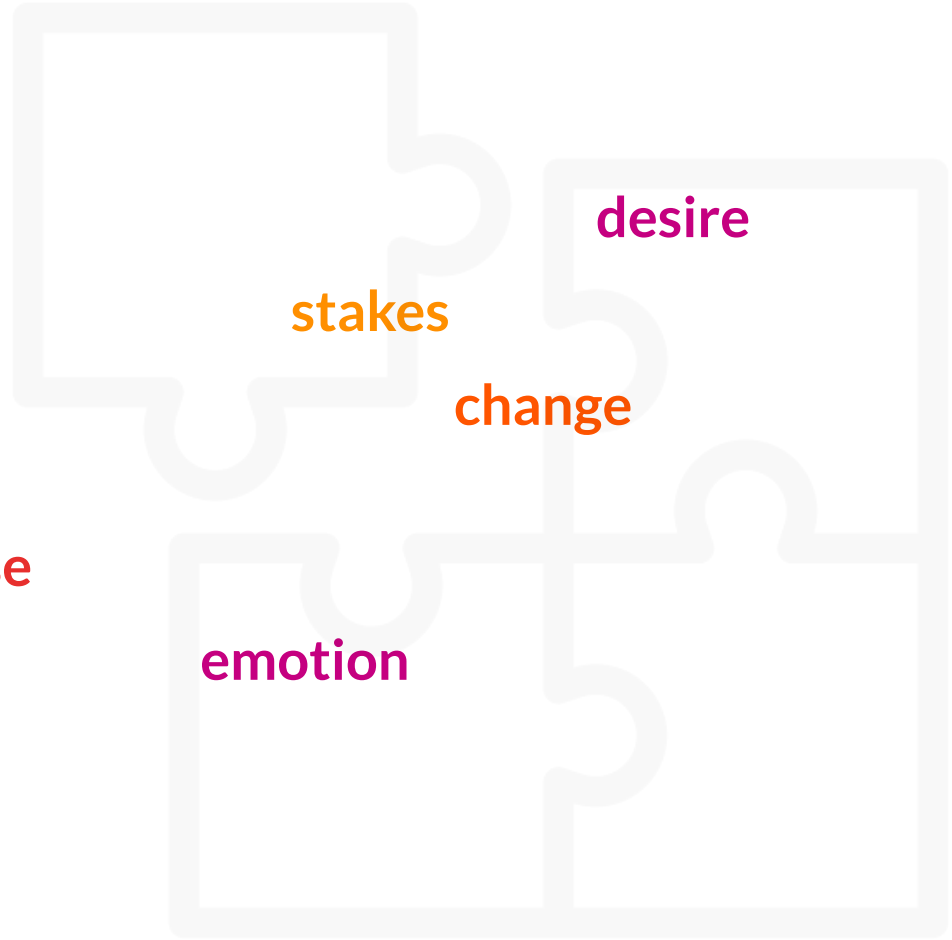
- …which establishes clear **stakes**…
- …and causes them to undergo a **change** as they pursue their desire.
- Has a **premise** that's reflected in every scene.
- Is driving toward the **emotion** your reader expects to feel.


desire
stakes
change
premise
emotion

When all these are clear...

Desire

Stakes

Change

Premise

Emotion

...revisions can begin.

But how do you get there...

when “butt in chair” isn’t enough?

This brings us to...

The Seven Story Types.

Story Type is:

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- A way to understand the kind of story you're telling.

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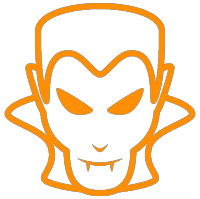
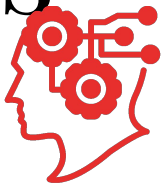
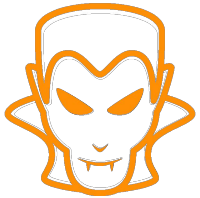
- A way to understand the kind of story you're telling.
- Your key to the essential elements
- For writers and editors.
- Not necessarily for readers.

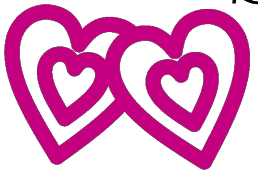
The Seven Story Types

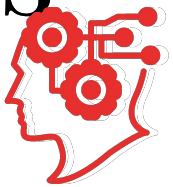




The Seven Story Types







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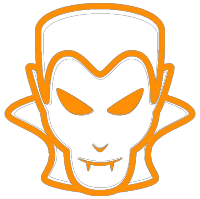

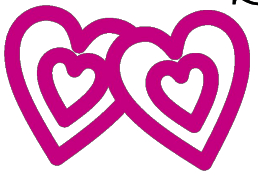

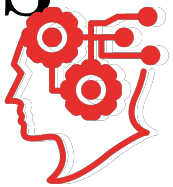

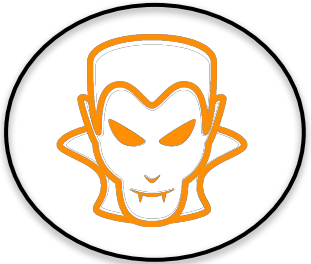

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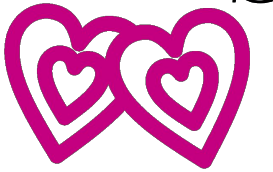

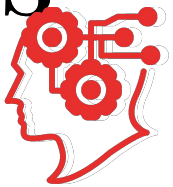

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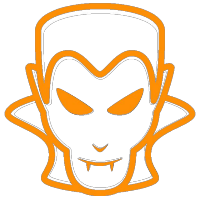

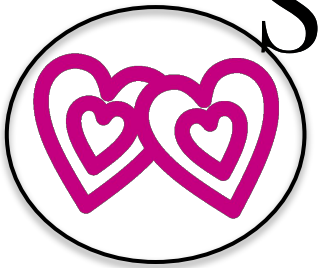

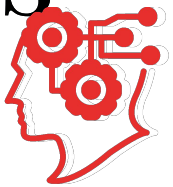

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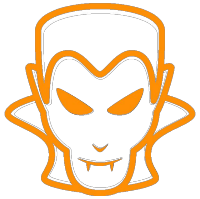

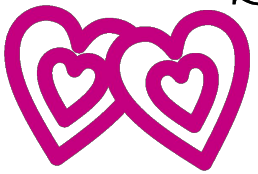

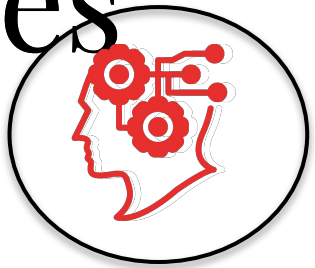

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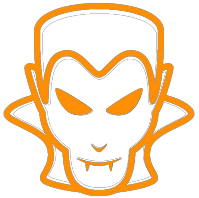

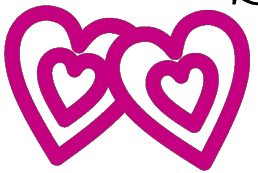

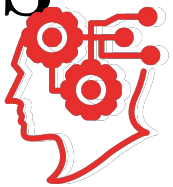

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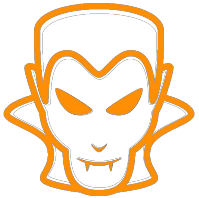

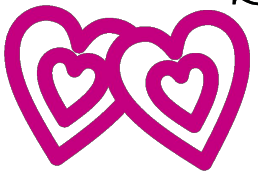

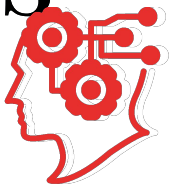

Let’s look at them one by one.

Action

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- Action **stakes** involve safety, life, danger, & death.
- The Action reader wants to feel **emotions** of excitement and bravery in the face of danger.

Story Premise (all Story Types)

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- “Controlling idea” or “theme”

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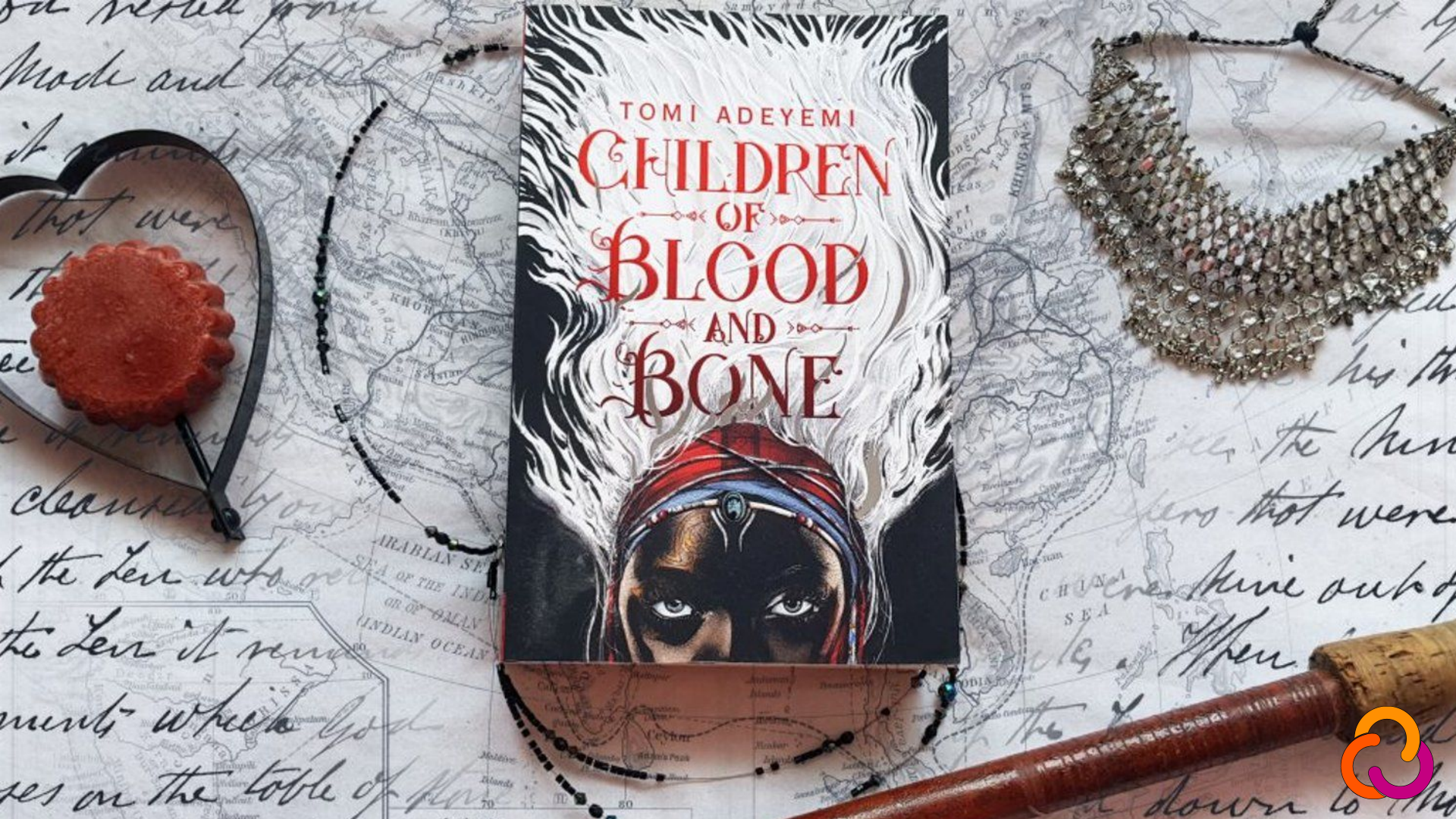
- Describes the climactic value change
- Gives the cause of that change
- Names primary event, what happens, and why
- Is specific to your story

Action's Essential Premise

Heroic action against villainous behavior leads to saving lives, whereas failure to act heroically leads to loss of life and moral failure.

Action Examples


TOMI ADEYEMI
CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE

"Terrific."
—Barack Obama

"An American masterpiece."
—NPR

WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE

COLSON WHITEHEAD

The

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

#1 *New York Times* Bestseller

"A triumph."
—*The Washington Post*

"Stunningly daring."
—*The New York Times Book Review*

A Novel

WINNER OF THE NATIONAL BOOK AWARD

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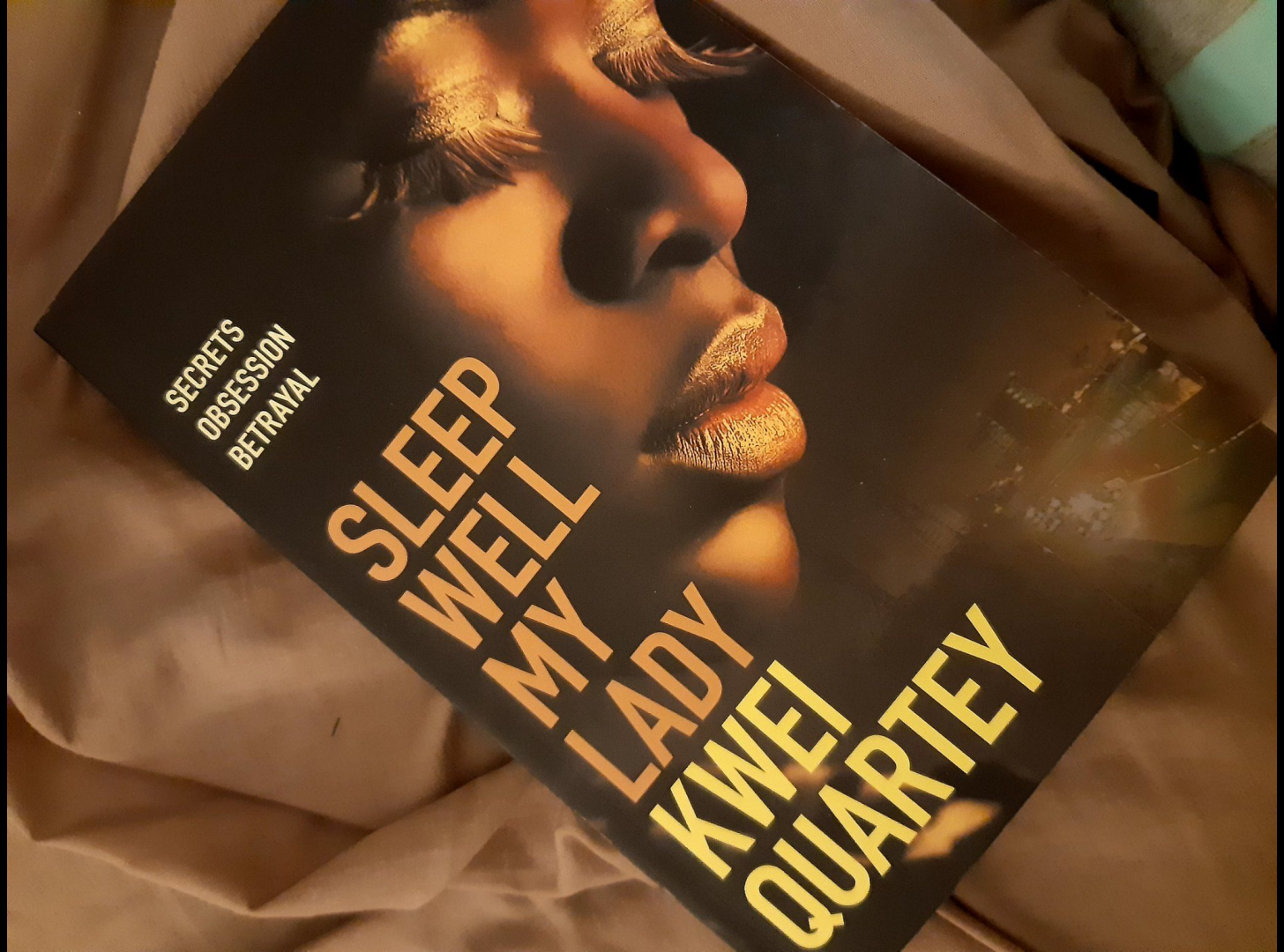
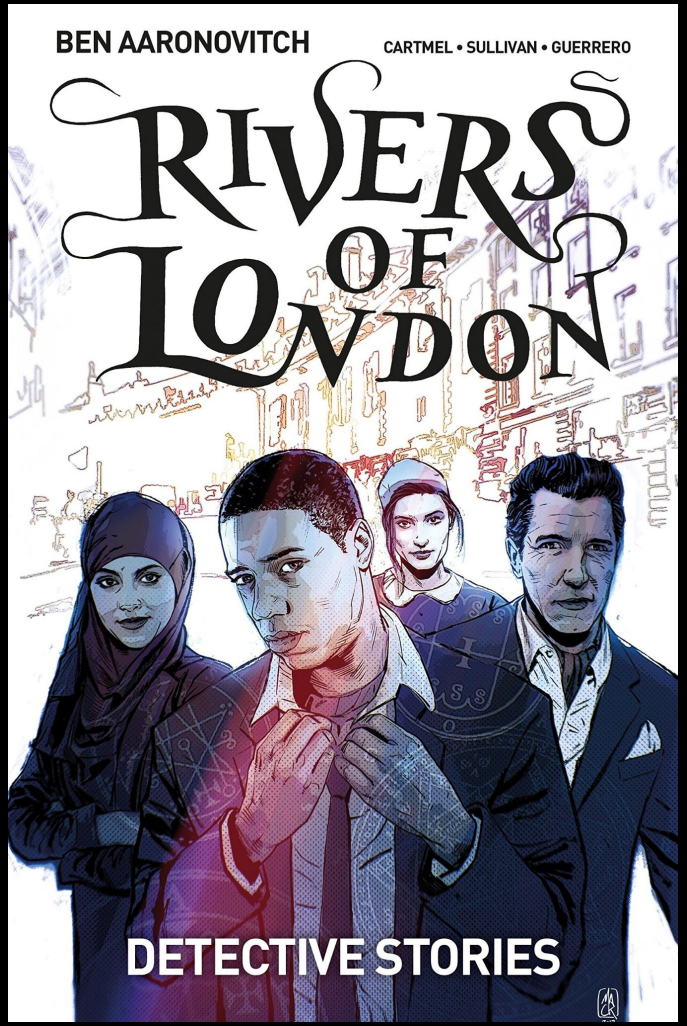
- The Crime protagonist is motivated by the **desire** to solve a puzzle or restore order.
- Crime **stakes** involve justice and injustice.
- The Crime reader wants to feel **emotions** of intrigue, or the safety of seeing justice prevail.

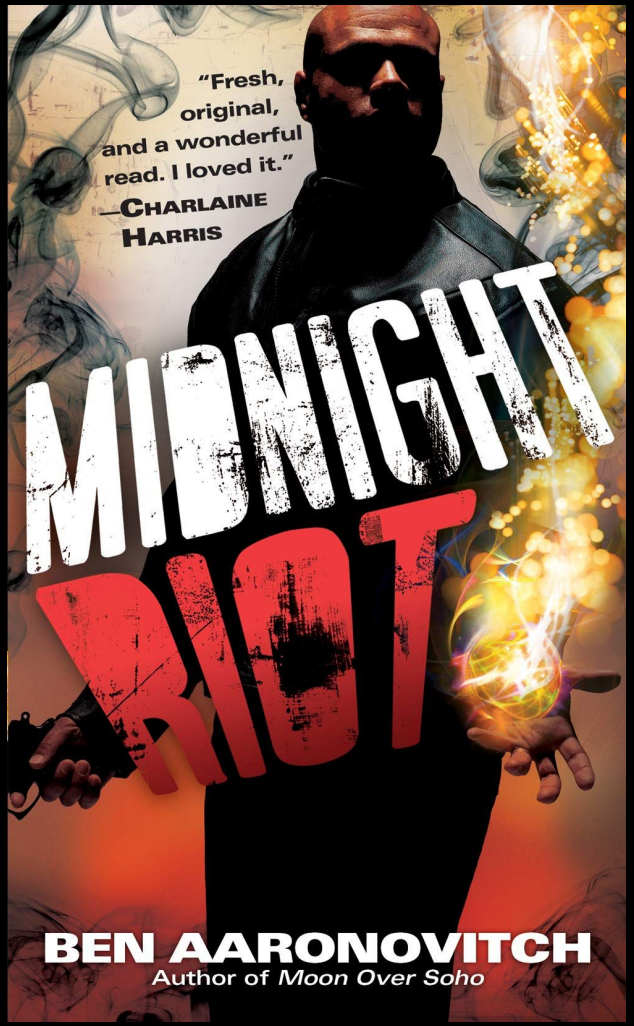
Crime's Essential Premise

Criminal activity results in chaos, whereas pursuit of justice restores social order.

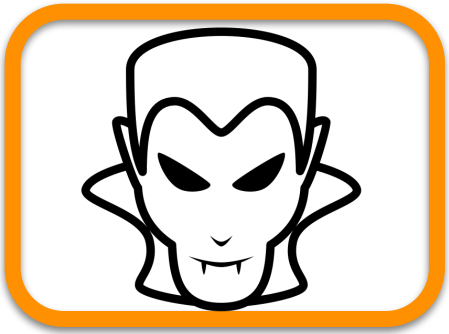
Crime Examples


SECRETS
OBSESSION
BETRAYAL
SLEEP
WELL
MY
LADY
KWEI
QUARTEY

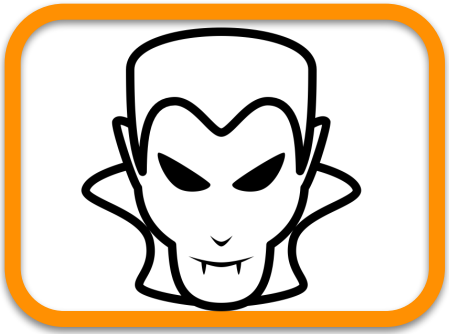

BEN AARONOVITCH
CARTMEL • SULLIVAN • GUERRERO
RIVERS OF LONDON
DETECTIVE STORIES


"Fresh, original, and a wonderful read. I loved it."
—CHARLAINE HARRIS
MIDNIGHT RIOT
BEN AARONOVITCH
Author of Moon Over Soho

Horror



Horror



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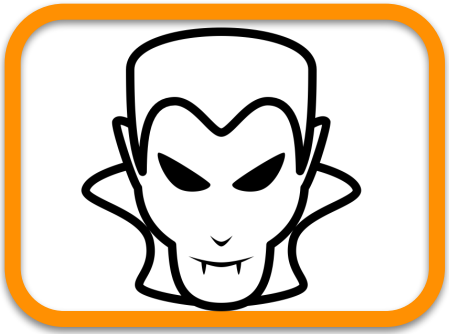
Horror



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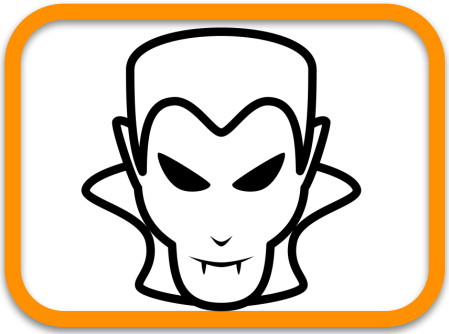

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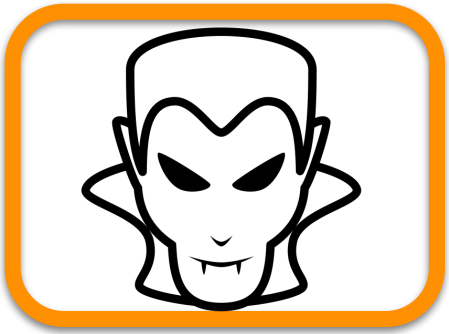

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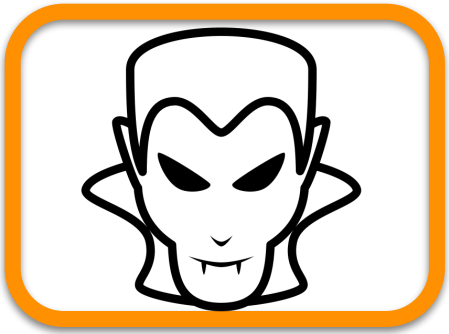
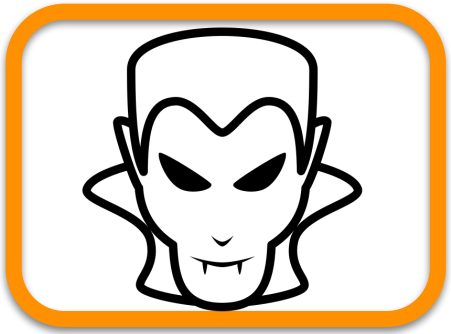
- Horror **stakes** involve life, escape, and torment.
- The Horror reader wants to feel the **emotion** of terror and imagine their bravery in facing a monster.

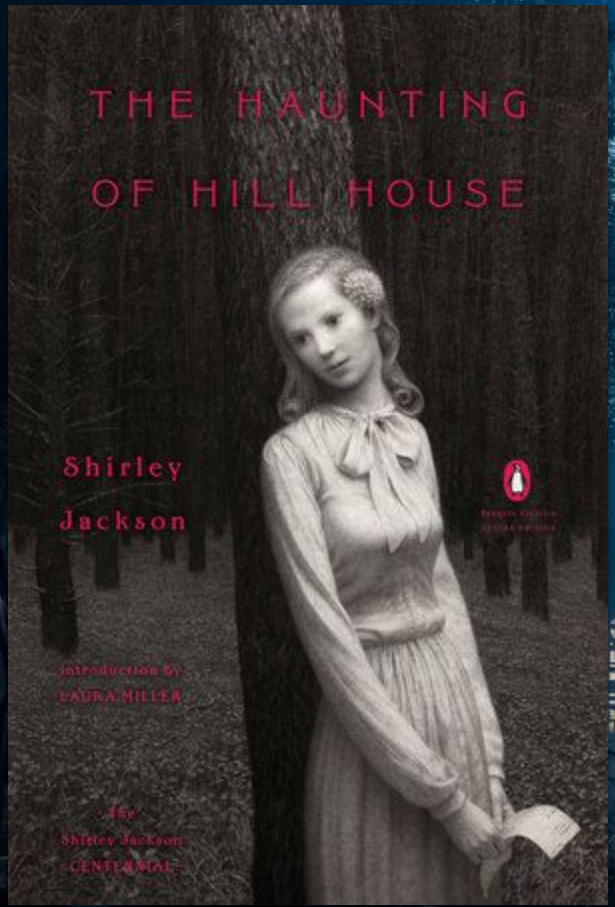


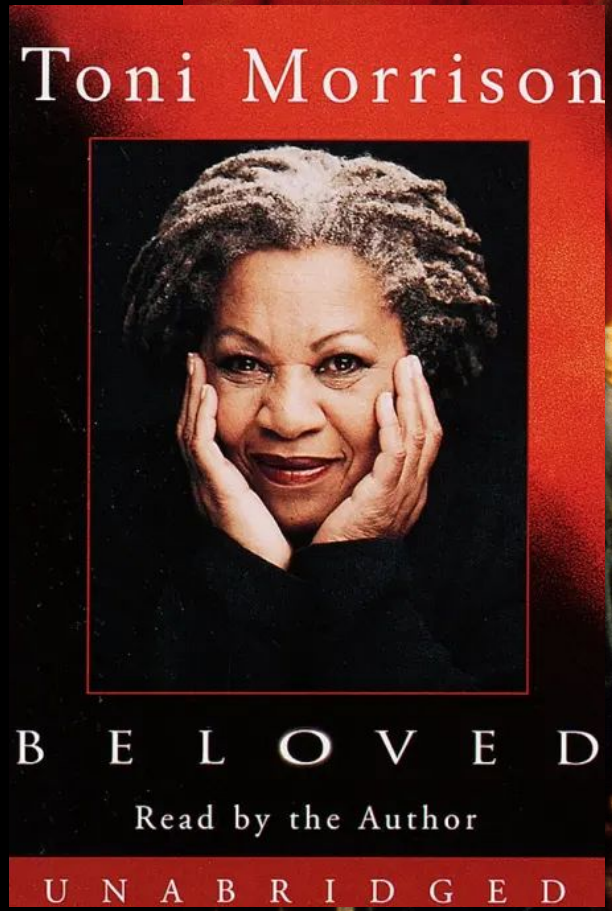
Horror's Essential Premise

Vigilance by ordinary people can keep evil at bay, whereas cowardice allows the monster to win.

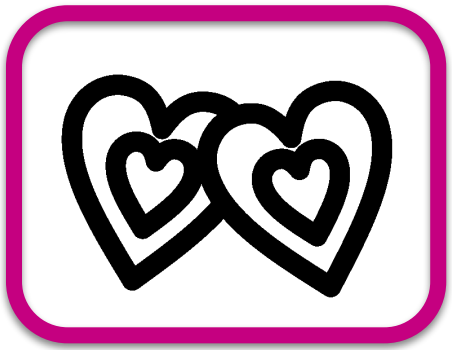


Horror Examples


THE HAUNTING
OF HILL HOUSE
Shirley
Jackson
Introduction by
LAURA MILLER
The
Shirley Jackson
CENTENNIAL


Toni Morrison
BELOVED
Read by the Author
UNABRIDGED

Love



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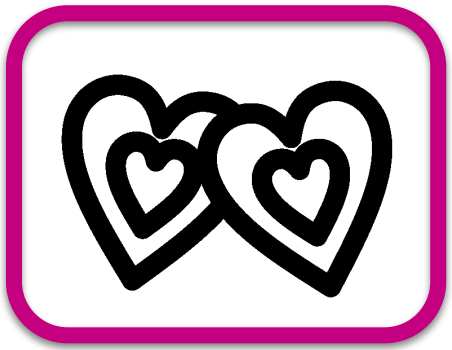

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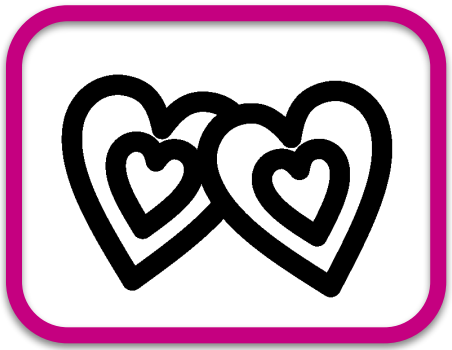

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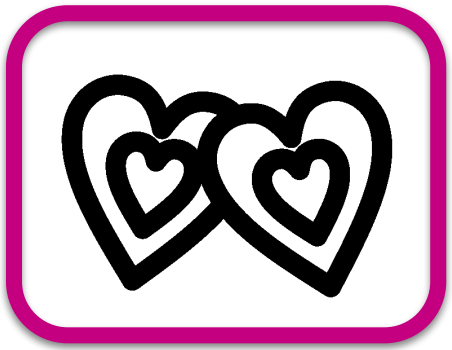

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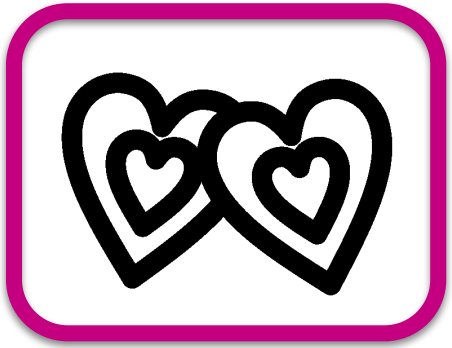
- Love **stakes** involve rejection, vulnerability, and intimacy.

Love



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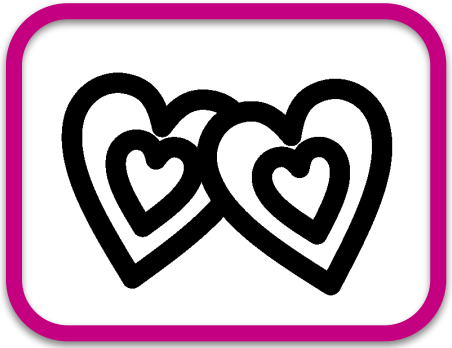
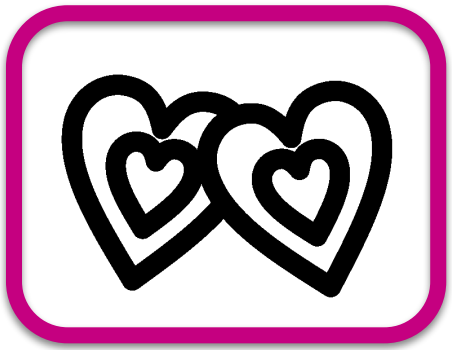
- Love **stakes** involve rejection, vulnerability, and intimacy.
- The Love reader wants to feel the **emotion** of anticipation, intimacy, and vulnerability without risk.

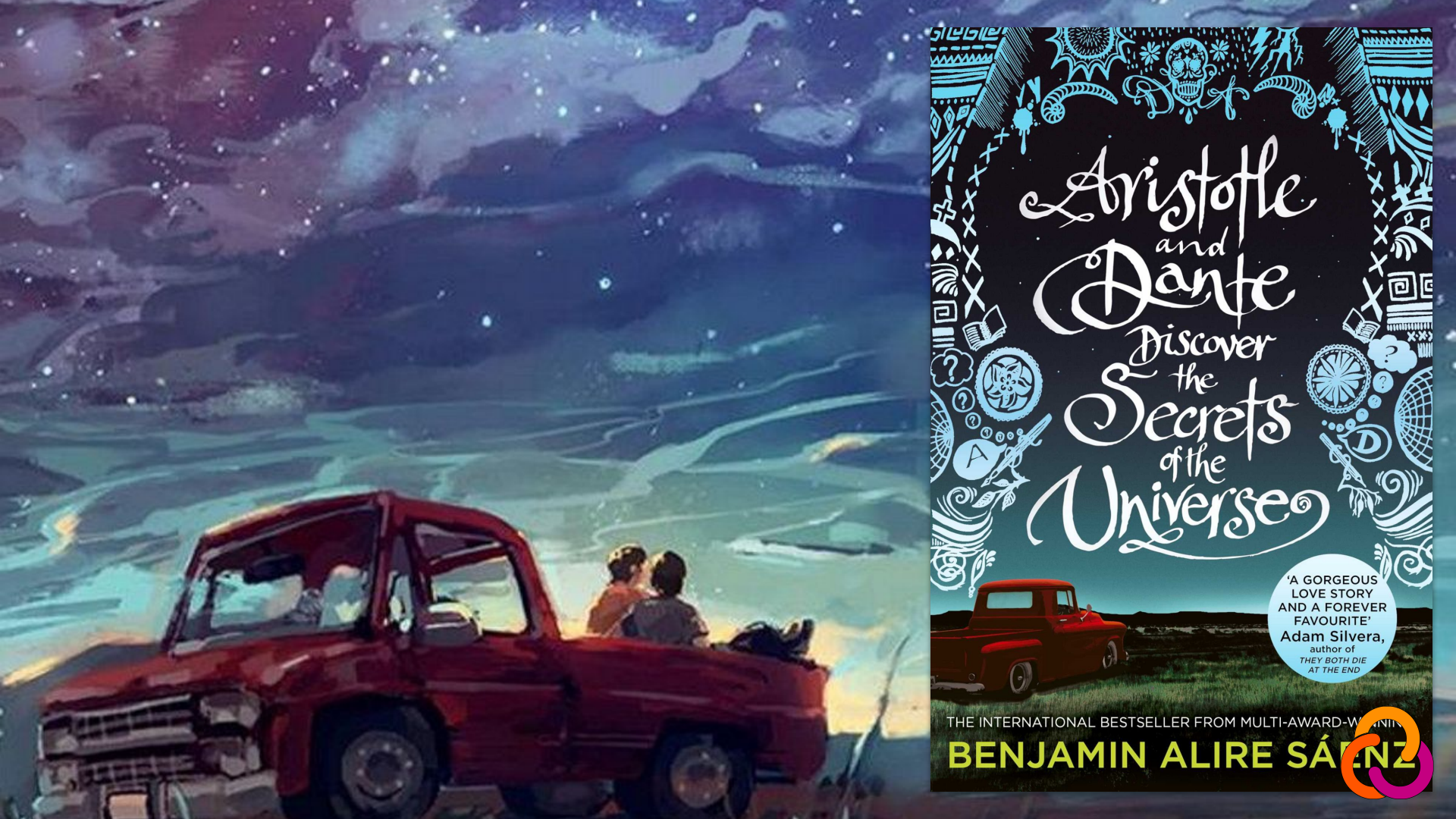


Love's Essential Premise

Vulnerability leads to love, whereas an unwillingness to risk rejection results in loss of love.

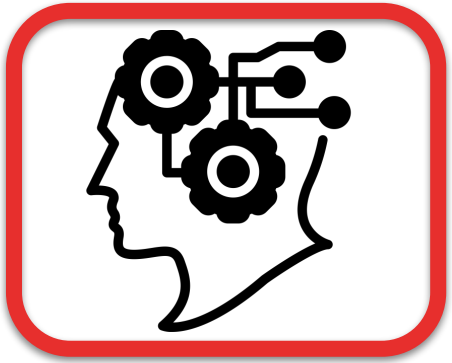


Love Examples

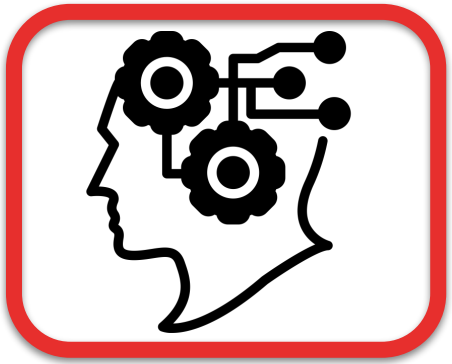

Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe
'A GORGEOUS LOVE STORY AND A FOREVER FAVOURITE'
Adam Silvera, author of THEY BOTH DIE AT THE END
THE INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER FROM MULTI-AWARD-W
BENJAMIN ALIRE SÁENZ

RESTRAINT
A NOVEL
ANNE HAWLEY

Worldview

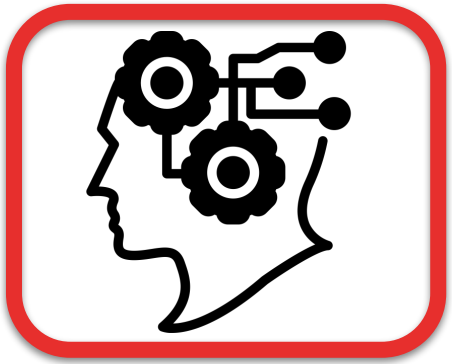


Worldview



- Worldview stories are *character-driven*, and involve naivete, disillusionment, and meaning.

Worldview



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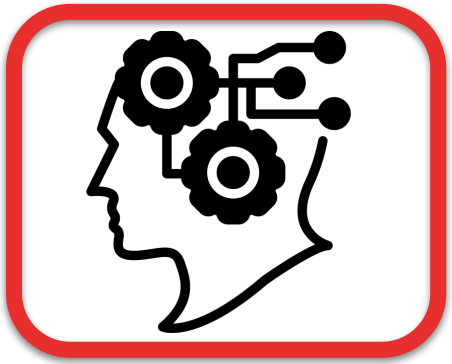
Worldview



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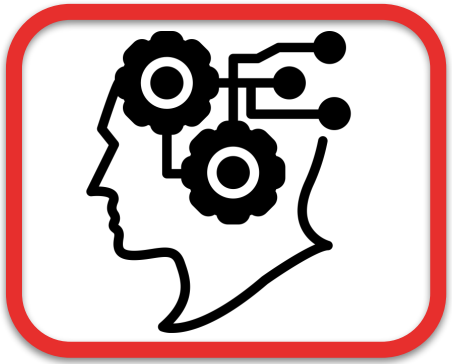

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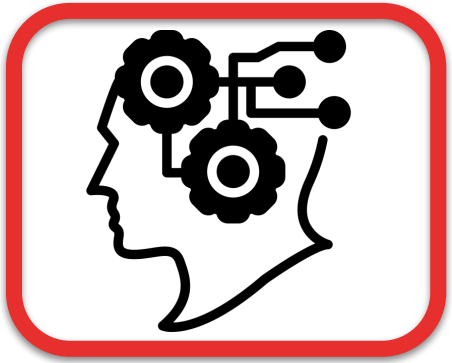
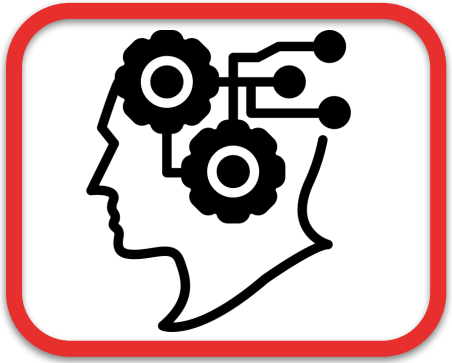
- The Worldview protagonist is motivated by a **desire** for knowledge or to avoid the truth.
- Worldview **stakes** involve ignorance and beliefs vs knowledge and wisdom.
- The Worldview reader wants to feel **emotions** of empathetic satisfaction or pity, and enjoys feeling comparatively wise and mature.

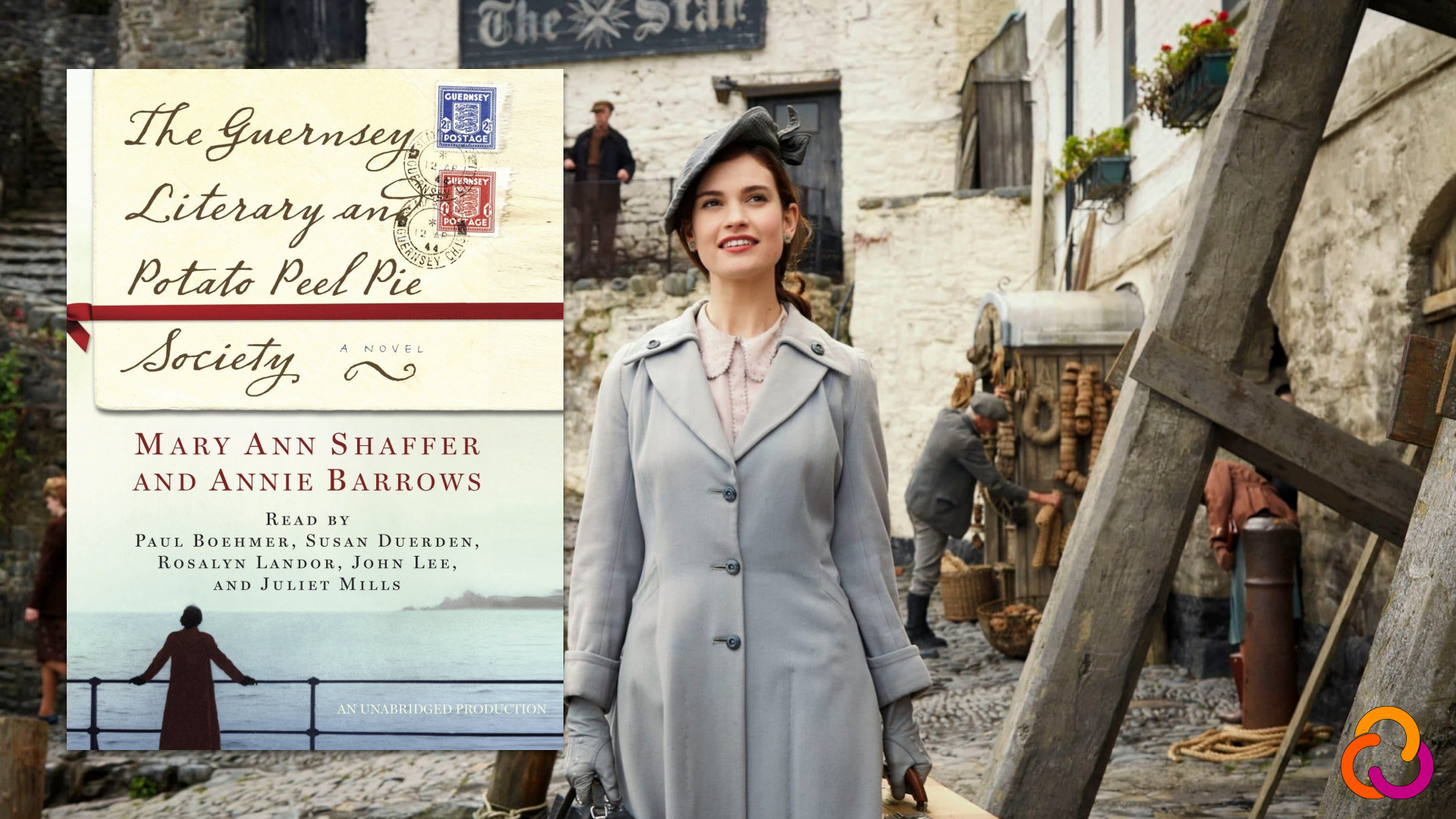


Worldview's Essential Premise

Open-mindedness leads to wisdom, whereas avoiding the truth results in self-deception.



Worldview Examples


The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society
A NOVEL
GUERNSEY POSTAGE
GUERNSEY POSTAGE
MARY ANN SHAFFER
AND ANNIE BARROWS
READ BY
PAUL BOEHMER, SUSAN DUERDEN,
ROSALYN LANDOR, JOHN LEE,
AND JULIET MILLS
AN UNABRIDGED PRODUCTION

A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
THE SECRET LIFE of BEES
a novel
SUE MONK KIDD
"A wonderful novel about mothers and daughters and the transcendent power of love."—Connie May Fowler

Validation

Validation

- Validation stories are *character-driven* and involve the search for success and esteem.

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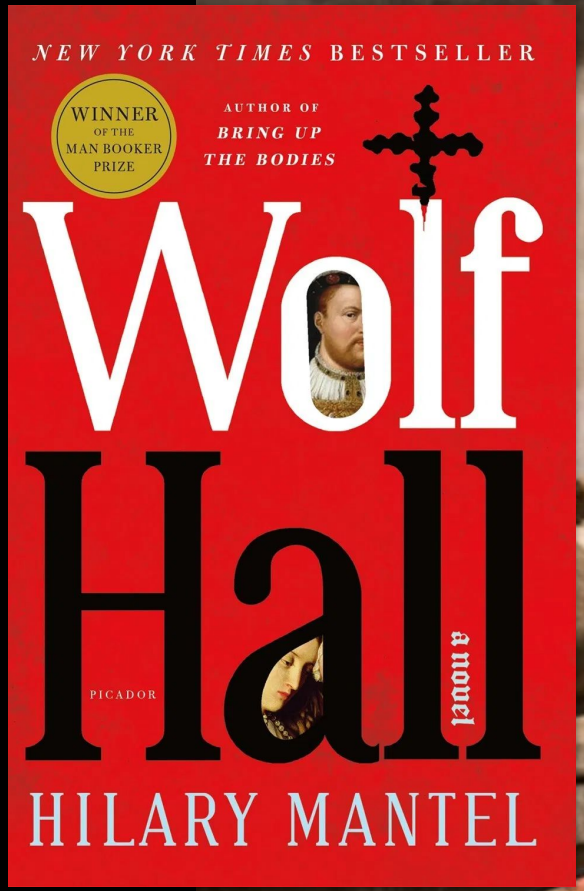
- The Validation protagonist is motivated by a **desire** to attain success and honor.
- Validation **stakes** involve success, failure, and selling out.
- The Validation reader wants to feel **emotions** of admiration or pity, and enjoy a sense of moral superiority.

Validation's Essential Premise

Ethical choices create true success, whereas choices made solely for external success lead to a betrayal of one's values.

Validation Examples


NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
WINNER OF THE MAN BOOKER PRIZE
AUTHOR OF BRING UP THE BODIES
Wolf Hall
a novel
PICADOR
HILARY MANTEL

'Spectacular' ZADIE SMITH

HOMEGOING

Yaa Gyasi

Redemption

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- Redemption **stakes** involve selfishness, altruism, and sacrifice.
- The Redemption reader wants to feel **emotions** of satisfaction, pity or contempt, and moral superiority.

Redemption's Essential Premise

Altruistic action results in redemption, whereas selfishness leads to moral failure.

Redemption Examples

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
THE KITE RUNNER
A NOVEL
"Powerful...Haunting."
—The New York Times Book Review
WITH A FOREWORD BY THE AUTHOR
KHALED HOSSEINI
Author of A Thousand Splendid Suns and And the Mountains Echoed

And there you have them:

And there you have them:

The Seven Story Types.

If a non-writer asks you:

“What kind of story are you writing?”

What do you say?

“What kind of story are you writing?”

Maybe you say

“YA” or “Women’s Fiction”

Maybe you say

“Fantasy” or “Dystopian”

This brings us to...

Marketing Categories & Setting Types.

Marketing categories & settings

Marketing categories & settings

- Help *publishers* direct *readers'* attention.

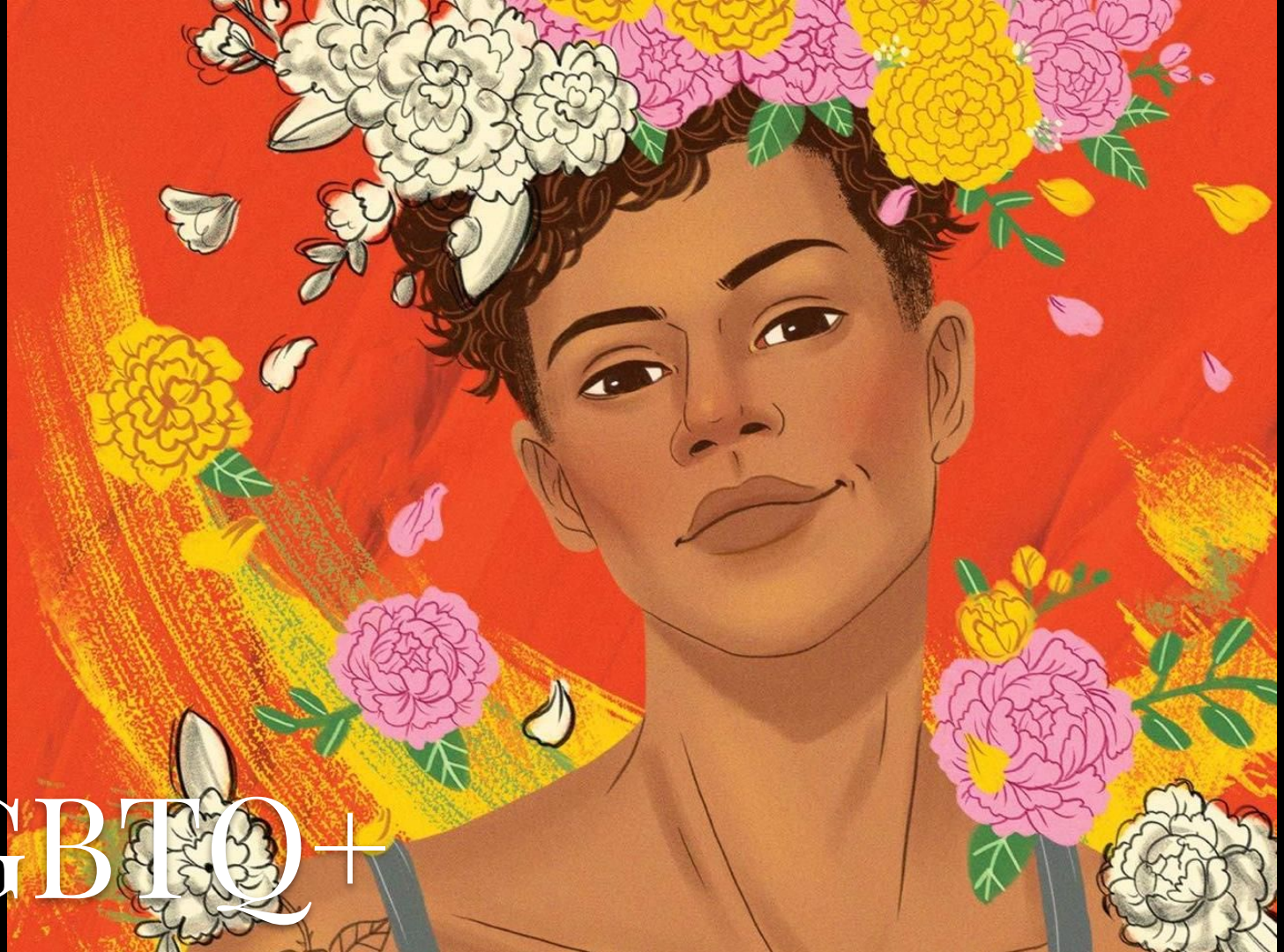
Marketing categories & settings

- Help *publishers* direct *readers'* attention.
- Are less valuable to you as the *writer*.

They go by demographics:

Children's, Middle Grade, YA

Women's, Romance



LGBTQ+

Literary

And according to setting:

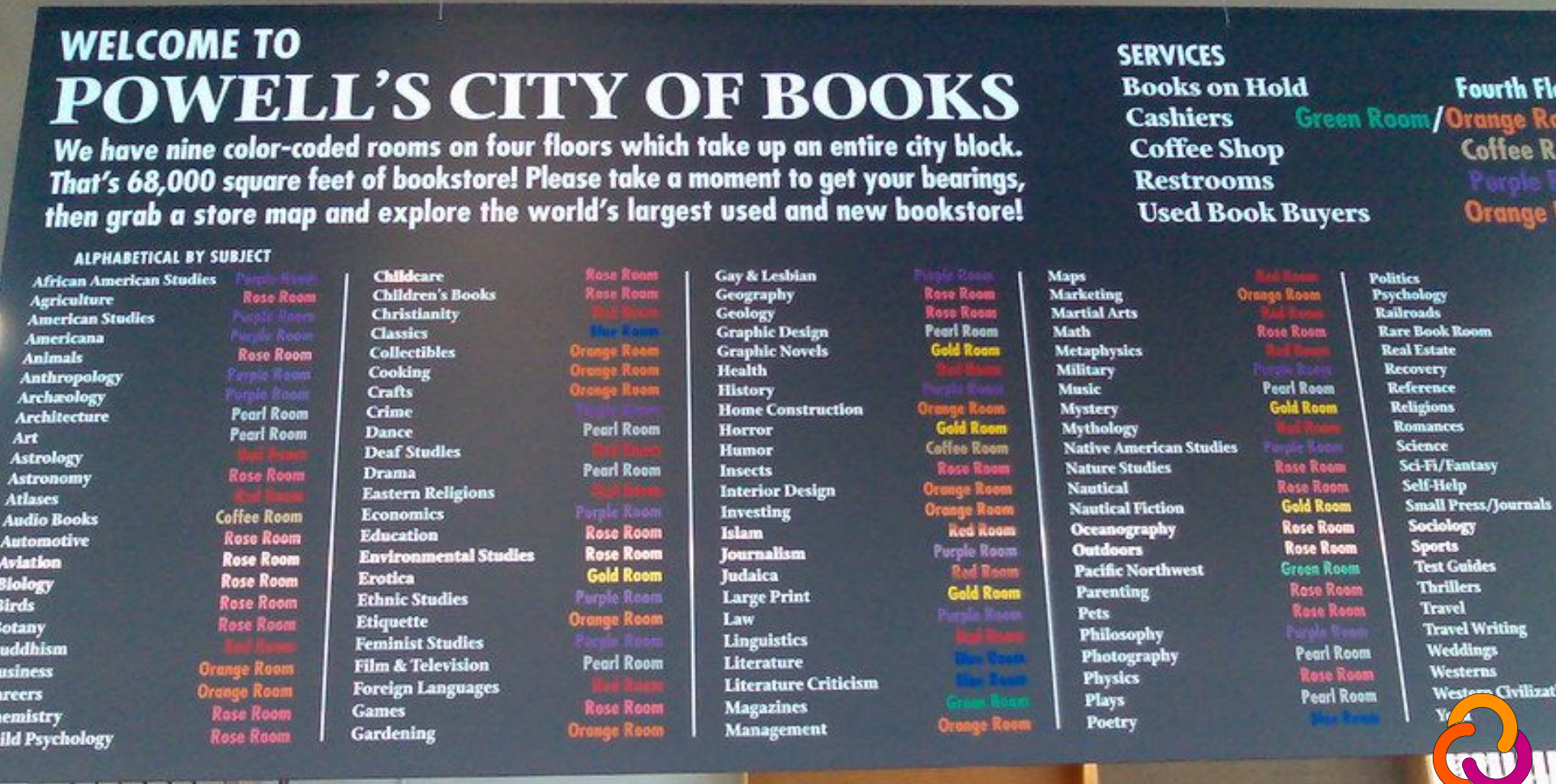
Fantasy

Science Fiction

Dystopian

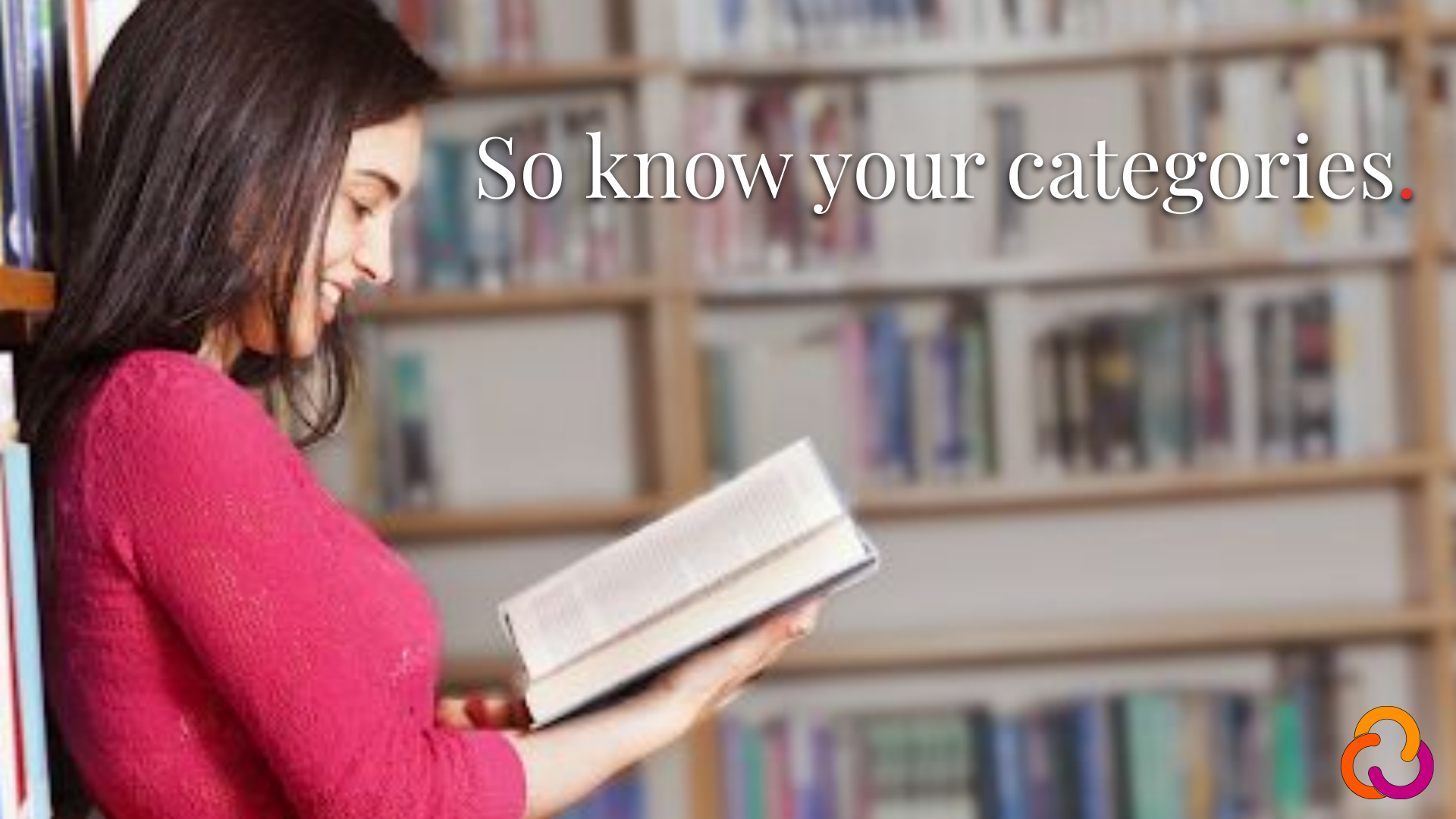
SNOW
EMERGENCY
STREET
NO STANDING
DURING EMERGENCY
VEHICLES TOWED
DONT
WALK
CE

Historical


WELCOME TO
POWELL'S CITY OF BOOKS
We have nine color-coded rooms on four floors which take up an entire city block. That's 68,000 square feet of bookstore! Please take a moment to get your bearings, then grab a store map and explore the world's largest used and new bookstore!
SERVICES
Books on Hold
Cashiers
Coffee Shop
Restrooms
Used Book Buyers
Green Room
Fourth Fl
Orange R
Coffee R
Orange
ALPHABETICAL BY SUBJECT
African American Studies
Agriculture
American Studies
Americana
Animals
Anthropology
Archæology
Architecture
Art
Astrology
Astronomy
Atlases
Audio Books
Automotive
Aviation
Biology
Birds
Botany
Buddhism
Business
Careers
Chemistry
Child Psychology
Rose Room
Coffee Room
Orange Room
Pearl Room
Childcare
Children's Books
Christianity
Classics
Collectibles
Cooking
Crafts
Crime
Dance
Deaf Studies
Drama
Eastern Religions
Economics
Education
Environmental Studies
Erotica
Ethnic Studies
Etiquette
Feminist Studies
Film & Television
Foreign Languages
Games
Gardening
Blue Room
Gay & Lesbian
Geography
Geology
Graphic Design
Graphic Novels
Health
History
Home Construction
Horror
Humor
Insects
Interior Design
Investing
Islam
Journalism
Judaica
Large Print
Law
Linguistics
Literature
Literature Criticism
Magazines
Management
Gold Room
Red Room
Green Room
Maps
Marketing
Martial Arts
Math
Metaphysics
Military
Music
Mystery
Mythology
Native American Studies
Nature Studies
Nautical
Nautical Fiction
Oceanography
Outdoors
Pacific Northwest
Parenting
Pets
Philosophy
Photography
Physics
Plays
Poetry
Politics
Psychology
Railroads
Rare Book Room
Real Estate
Recovery
Reference
Religions
Romances
Science
Sci-Fi/Fantasy
Self-Help
Small Press/Journals
Sociology
Sports
Test Guides
Thrillers
Travel
Travel Writing
Weddings
Westerns

Marketing categories are important.

They may greatly influence a reader's decision to read your story.


So know your categories.

So know your categories.

- Know the trends.

So know your categories.
Know the trends.
Read widely & deeply.

So know your categories.
Know the trends.
Read widely & deeply.
Know what readers expect.

So know your categories.

- Know the trends.
- Read widely & deeply.
- Know what readers expect.
- Do your research.

BUT…

BUT...

These categories can't
tell you how to *construct* your story.

These categories don’t tell you:

These categories don’t tell you:

- What your protagonist wants and needs (**desire**).

These categories don't tell you:

- What your protagonist wants and needs (**desire**).
- What they have to lose or gain (**stakes**).

These categories don't tell you:

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- How they **change** under pressure from the antagonist.

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- The **premise** or message of the story.

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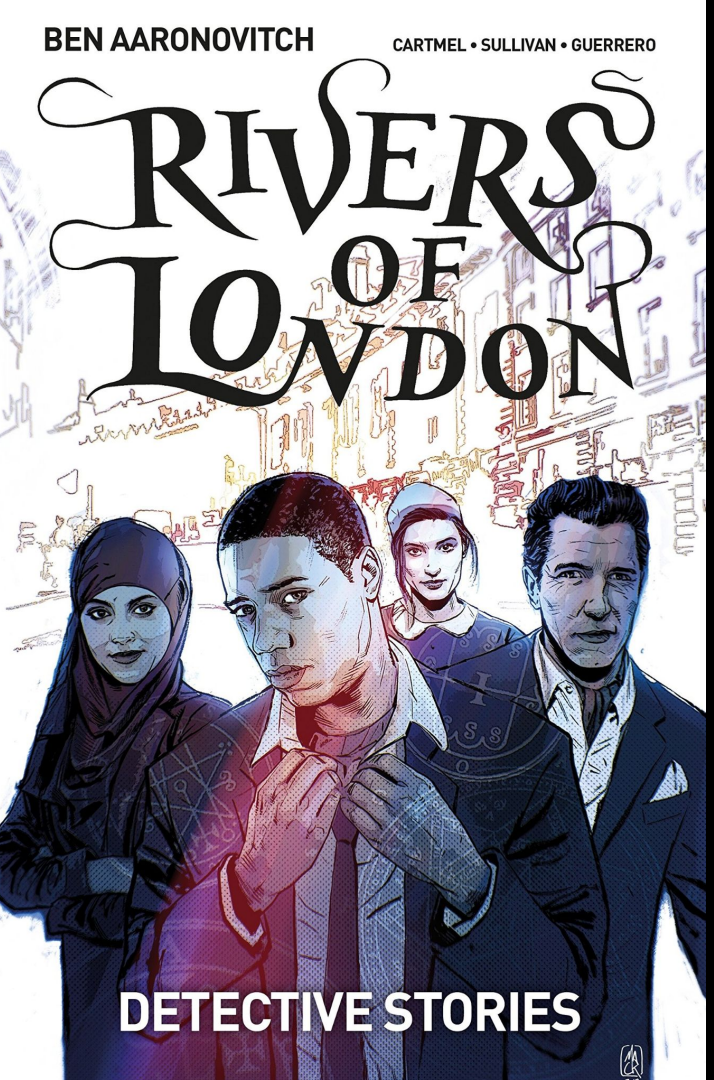
- How they **change** under pressure from the antagonist.
- The **premise** or message of the story.
- The **emotion** the reader expects to feel.

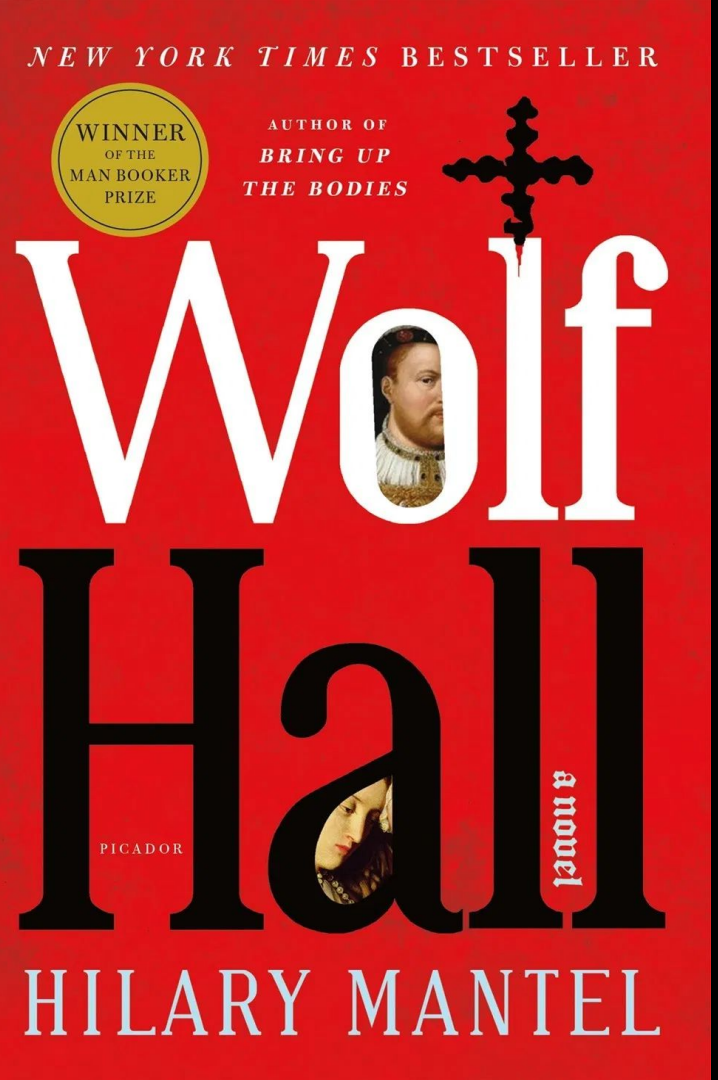
That’s what Story Types are for.

Think about these stories:



Crime in an urban fantasy setting

Redemption in a comedic fantasy setting



Literary Validation in a historical setting

Knowing your Story Type is just the first step.

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But it’s a giant step.

WHY?

Putting It All Together.

Focusing on Story Type rather than setting or marketing category will help you:

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1. Craft your story's beginning, middle, and end.

Focusing on Story Type rather than setting or marketing category will help you:

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2. Meet reader expectations.

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3. Define the want & need that drive your protagonist.

Focusing on Story Type rather than setting or marketing category will help you:

1. Craft your story's beginning, middle, and end.
2. Meet reader expectations.
3. Define the want & need that drive your protagonist.
4. Finish your draft.

1

You can craft the beginning, middle and end of your story by:

1

You can craft the beginning, middle and end of your story by:

- Putting your protagonist through the **changes** dictated by their **desire** and **stakes** inherent in your Story Type.

1

You can craft the beginning, middle and end of your story by:

- Putting your protagonist through the **changes** dictated by their **desire** and **stakes** inherent in your Story Type.
- Letting the **premise** of your Story Type define what your protagonist must overcome as they move from beginning to end.

2

You can meet reader expectations for your Story Type by:

2

You can meet reader expectations for your Story Type by:

- Breaking free from trying to fit your story to a marketing category that isn't right for it.

2

You can meet reader expectations for your Story Type by:

- Breaking free from trying to fit your story to a marketing category that isn't right for it.
- Writing towards the **emotion** your Story Type promises its reader.

3 You can define your character arc by:

3

You can define your character arc by:

- Establishing what your protagonist has to lose and gain (the **stakes**) because of what they want.

3

You can define your character arc by:

- Establishing what your protagonist has to lose and gain (the **stakes**) because of what they want.
- Causing your protagonist to **change** by challenging them with specific pressures appropriate to the Story Type.

4

You can finish your draft because:

4

You can finish your draft because:

- Story Type clears away the clutter of story elements you don’t need.

4

You can finish your draft because:

- Story Type clears away the clutter of story elements you don’t need.
- It reveals elements that are missing.

4

You can finish your draft because:

- Story Type clears away the clutter of story elements you don't need.
- It reveals elements that are missing.
- It ties together the character **change**, the **premise**, and the **emotion** your reader expects to feel, to result in a satisfying story experience.

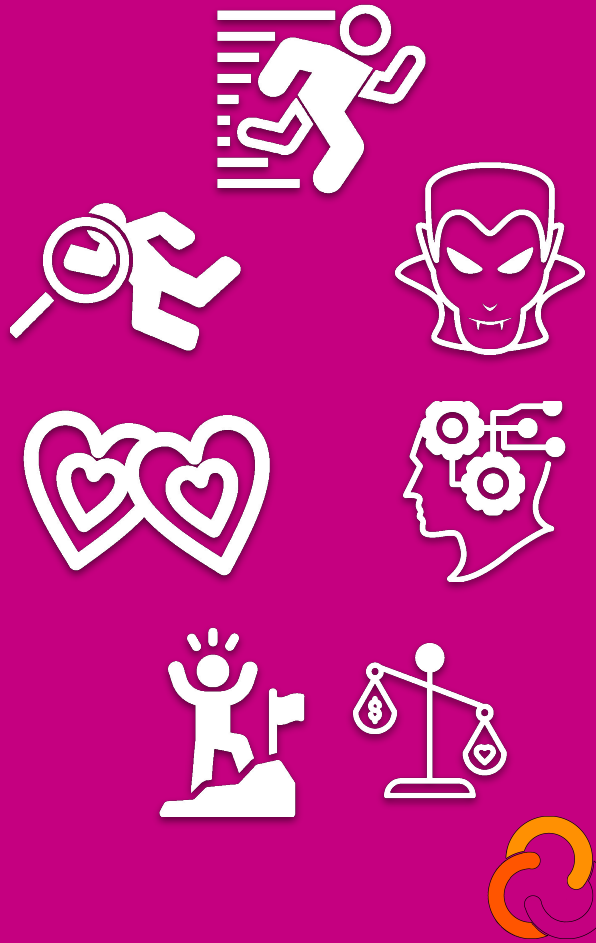
This is a lot to absorb.

So let's RECAP...

Today you've learned:

The 5 essential elements a professional draft should contain.

The seven Story Types and their importance for writers.



The difference between marketing categories & Story Types.

How Story Types help you finish your professional draft.

And now you're ON THE PATH

To your professional draft.

Free for you!

The Pages & Platforms Guide to the 7 Essential Story Types

storypath.me

Need an editor?

rachelleramirez.com

Questions & Responses