

FOOLSCAP GLOBAL STORY GRID – © Shawn Coyne

GLOBAL STORY GRID					
GLOBAL STORY	GLOBAL GENRE: Horror > Ambiguous				
	External Genre: Horror > Ambiguous				
	External Value at Stake: Life > Death > Damnation				
	Internal Genre: Worldview/Disillusionment				
	Internal Value at Stake: Sophistication > Disillusionment				
	<p>Obligatory Scenes: The Protagonist or first victim starts a new job or assignment that seems normal at first (Marlow takes a job commanding a steamboat); The first subtle clue that something is off (Marlow feels uneasy when meeting with the company's CEO); A speech in praise of the monster (there are a number of such speeches); Protagonist at the mercy of the Monster (when Marlow follows Kurtz away from the steamboat); Protagonist becomes the final victim (Marlow confesses to his friends that he has been tainted by Kurtz and, more importantly the darkness); False ending (the danger doesn't end when Kurtz dies)</p>				
	<p>Conventions: The Monster cannot be reasoned with, It is possessed by the spirit of evil and is resent to devour and annihilate (The "Darkness" in the titled has completely possessed Kurtz); Conventional settings with fantastical worlds (Marlow's riverboat is conventional, but the jungle is almost otherworldly); Labyrinths ... settings are claustrophobic, concealing the dangers within (The winding river enclosed by thick jungle); Perpetual discomfort, conceal the Monster, attack randomly, never let the audience settle. (The discomforting attitudes and actions of the Company employees reveal/conceal the Darkness.); Mask the power of the Monster ... progressively reveal more and more levels of power (The Darkness is encountered in stages from Marlow's first contact with the Company to its ultimate revelation in Kurtz); Sado-masochistic flip-flop ... let the reader experience the power of the monster while empathizing with the victims. (Even as we empathize with the victims, it is clear that the Darkness resides within us as well); Keep the monster off-screen for as long as possible. (The real Monster is invisible); Have the audience experience the horrific at a remove. (Kurtz's "unspeakable rites" are left to our imaginations.)</p>				
	Point of View: The framing device is in the first person of a unnamed narrator; the bulk of the story is told in the first person by Charlie Marlow				
	Objects of Desire: External/Conscious: to do his job and rescue Kurtz. Internal/Subconscious: to keep the Darkness outside himself.				
	Controlling Idea/Theme: In the absence of social norms, a person with high ideals and intelligence must also have strength of character; otherwise, they may indulge their primal urges, leading to their ultimate ruin.				
BEGINNING HOOK			External Charge	Internal Charge	
	Inciting Incident (causal/coincidental): Charlie Marlow is captivated by the idea of commanding a steamboat on the Congo river when he happens to see a map in a shop window (Coincidental)	+	+		
	Turning Point Progressive Complication (Act/Rev): Observing the lack of value placed on human life at the Base Station, as well as the general disorder and lack of purpose, Marlow foresees an encounter with "a flabby, pretending, weak-eyed devil of a rapacious and pitiless folly." (Revelation)	-	-		
	Crisis (BBC/IG): "For a moment I stood appalled, as though by a warning." What to do about the warning? (BBC-ish: Though twice immobilized by what he sees, no choice other than continuing on is on the table)	?	?		
	Climax: Marlow continues to the station, where he meets the Accountant; it is the Accountant who first mentions and praises Kurtz.	-	+		

	Resolution: Marlow spends ten days at the Base Station, then finally heads toward the Central Station.	+	+
MIDDLE BUILD		External Charge	Internal Charge
	Inciting Incident (causal/coincidental): Marlow learns Marlow learns that his steamboat is at the bottom of the river, sunk near the south bank. (Causal – “I did not see the real significance of that wreck at once. I fancy I see it now, but I am not sure—not at all. Certainly the affair was too stupid—when I think of it—to be altogether natural.”	-	-
	Turning Point Progressive Complication (Act/Rev): After an arduous voyage up the river to the Inner Station, a grievously ill Kurtz is brought onboard the boat. However, Marlow awakens in the night to find that Kurtz has slipped away, and is returning to the station. (Revelation)	-	-
	Crisis (BBC/IG): Marlow has a number of decisions to make – alert the others, or go after Kurtz on his own; on finding Kurtz, risk him alerting his worshippers, or kill him; battle with the Darkness, or join Kurtz.	?	?
	Climax: Struggling, as he says, with Kurtz’s soul (and his own), Marlow returns Kurtz to the boat. On discovering this, his worshippers gather at the boat, but Marlow scares them off with the boat’s steam whistle – saving them from being shot by the “pilgrims”.	+	+
	Resolution: They head back down toward the river, Marlow listening to Kurtz’s discourse along the way. Kurtz entrusts his papers to Marlow and dies shortly thereafter.	-	-
ENDING PAYOFF		External Charge	Internal Charge
	Inciting Incident (causal/coincidental): After a near-fatal illness, Marlow returns to Europe, disgusted with and contemptuous of the people he sees there. (Causal)	+	-
	Turning Point Progressive Complication (Act/Rev): When Marlow visits Kurtz’s “Intended”, she asks him what Kurtz’s last words were. (Causal)	+	-
	Crisis (BBC/IG): Should Marlow tell her the truth (that his last words were “The horror! The horror!”) and render Kurtz “that justice which was his due”, or should he spare her (and in a sense Kurtz) and lie? (IG)	?	?
	Climax: Marlow lies (which he has told us he “hates, despises, and can’t bear”) and tells her that Kurtz’s final word was her name.	+	-
	Resolution: We return to the Frame story, where Marlow lives with the taint on his soul that is his loyalty to Kurtz and the lure of the Darkness.	+	-