

THE TRUTH IS

1. Leveling up your craft to write a story that lives long after you've left the planet is what some might call a ridiculous goal.
2. You know that you will not tell that story after reading just one how-to-write book.
3. You know that you will not tell that story as the result of taking one seminar.
4. You know that creating a timeless work of art will require the dedication of a world-class athlete. You will be training your mind with as much ferocity and single-minded purpose as an Olympic gold medal hopeful. That kind of cognitive regimen excites you, but you just haven't found a convincing storytelling dojo to do that work.
5. The path to leveling up your creative craft is a dark and treacherous course. You've been at it a long time, and it often feels like you're wearing three-dimensional horse blinders. More times than you'd wish to admit, you're not sure if you are moving north or south or east or west. And the worst part? You can't see anyone else, anywhere going through what you're going through. You're all alone.

WELCOME TO THE STORY GRID UNIVERSE. HERE'S HOW WE CONTEND WITH THOSE TRUTHS:

1. We believe we find meaning in the pursuit of creations that last longer than we do. It is *not* ridiculous. Dedicating our work to seizing opportunities and overcoming obstacles as we stretch ourselves to reach for seemingly unreachable creations is transformational. We believe this pursuit is the most valuable and honorable way to spend our time here. Even if ... especially if ... we never reach our lofty creative goals.
2. Writing just one story isn't going to take us to the top. We're moving from point A to Point A⁵⁰⁰⁰. We've got lots of mountains to climb, lots of rivers and oceans to cross, and many deep dark forests to traverse in our way. We need topographic guides on demand, and if they're not available now, we'll have to figure it out and write them ourselves.
3. While we're drawn to seminars to consume the imparted wisdom from an icon in the arena, we leave with something far more valuable than the curriculum. We get to meet the universe's other pilgrims and compare notes on the terrain.
4. The Story Grid Universe has a virtual dojo, a university to work out and get stronger—the place to stumble, correct the mistakes, and

stumble again until the moves become automatic, lethal, and mesmerizing to outside observers.

5. The Story Grid Universe has a performance space, a publishing house dedicated to leveling up the craft with clear boundaries of progress, and the ancillary reference resources to pack for each project mission. There is an infinite number of paths to where you want to be with a story that works.

Seeing how others made it down their own private yellow brick roads to release their creations into the timeless creative cosmos will help keep you on the straight and narrow path.

All are welcome—the more, the merrier. But please abide by the golden rule:

Put the work above all else, and trust the process.

THE HOBBIT BY J.R.R. TOLKIEN

A STORY GRID MASTERWORKS ANALYSIS GUIDE

SHAWN COYNE

Edited by
LESLIE WATTS



STORY GRID



STORY GRID

Story Grid Publishing LLC
223 Egremont Plain Road
PMB 191
Egremont, MA 01230

Copyright (c) 2020 Story Grid Publishing LLC
Cover Design by Magnus Rex
Edited by Leslie Watts

All Rights Reserved

First Story Grid Publishing Paperback Edition December 2020

For Information About Special Discounts for Bulk Purchases,

Please visit www.storygridpublishing.com

ISBN: 978-1-64501-055-5
Ebook: 978-1-64501-050-0

For

All Past, Present, and Future Story Nerds

HOW TO READ THE HOBBIT BY J.R.R. TOLKIEN: A STORY GRID MASTERWORKS ANALYSIS GUIDE

There are two ways to read this book.

1. Buy a copy of the novel and enjoy it without worrying about any of the Story Grid stuff.
2. Then, read each scene thinking about the Story Grid principles. Each scene is identified by the phrase that begins the scene and the phrase that ends the scene.
 - a) At the conclusion of each scene is a section entitled “Analyzing the Scene.” By answering four Socratic questions, I’ll walk you through how to determine the critical information for the Story Grid Spreadsheet—*Story Event* and *Value Shift*.
 - b) Another section I’ve included at the end of each scene is “How the Scene Abides by the Five Commandments of Storytelling.”

For each and every scene in *The Hobbit*, I indicate the Inciting Incident, Turning Point Progressive Complication, Crisis, Climax, and Resolution.

For those unfamiliar with Story Grid's Five Commandments of Storytelling, you can read about them in the book *Story Grid 101* (free download on the Story Grid site), in *The Story Grid: What Good Editors Know*, or in articles about them on the site. Just access the “start here” or “resources” section of <https://www.storygrid.com/> to read at your leisure.

c) In addition to the Story Grid Spreadsheet for *The Hobbit*, you can view the Story Grid Foolscape and the actual Story Grid Infographic at <https://www.storygrid.com/masterwork/The-Hobbit/>.

A WHOLE GREATER THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS

If you want to write stories that sell, one of the best things you can do is study stories like *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien, which continues to sell and delight readers more than eight decades after it was published. It's what we in the Story Grid Universe call a masterwork.

What do we mean by that?

Masterworks are stories readers come back to again and again because *they get it right*. They're at the top of their particular genre, but more important, masterworks stick with us because their whole is far more potent than the sum of their three macro storytelling parts.

What are those three parts? A primal Action Story, a transformational Worldview Story, and a transcendent Heroic Journey 2.0 story.

What about these parts attracts readers to a wide variety of stories? Each component generates emotion in the audience by setting up and ultimately paying off a fundamental question.

1. With its on-the-surface, life-and-death stakes for its primary and secondary characters (Bilbo, Gandalf, the dwarves), *The Hobbit* is a primal Action Story.

This primal action component generates audience excitement

by posing and ultimately answering a fundamental question. Will Bilbo, Gandalf, and the dwarves survive unexpected challenges from the external and internally mediated social environments?

2. With its above-the-surface, powering up cognitive-capacity for all four of its central characters, *The Hobbit* is a transformational Worldview Story.

This transformational worldview component generates audience empathy by posing and ultimately answering a second fundamental question. How will Bilbo, Gandalf, and the dwarves generate the cognitive power to thrive and attain their individual and collective goals while navigating an unpredictable, life-threatening environment?

3. With its beyond-the-surface, “there and back again” movement through time and space, *The Hobbit* is a transcendent Heroic Journey 2.0 story.

The Heroic Journey 2.0 component generates audience catharsis by posing and ultimately answering the final two-part fundamental question. Will Bilbo, Gandalf, and the dwarves discover the truth about and apply their holistic capacities of propositional, procedural, perspectival, and participatory knowledge? And as agents, discover the complex truth about themselves while embedded inside a paradoxical universe both ordered and chaotic?

If, as I propose, *The Hobbit* is a timeless masterwork that entralls generation after generation of readers because of the compelling realization of these three macro story forms simultaneously, which inherently pose and then answer three intriguing questions ...

Where did these questions come from?

PERENNIAL PROBLEMS

From the cradle to the grave, no matter if we are citizens of the Lakota Nation or Scarsdale residents or live in vans down by the river, we all have three big abstract existential problems.

Suppose we were able to put history's broadest cultural spectrum of philosophers in one big conference room with an unlimited supply of coffee and donuts to identify the primary challenges we face as humans. In that case, these three perennial problems would emerge at the top of their list of what abstractly ails our species. *Homo sapiens* conundrums boil down into three fundamental categories.

Broadly put, these problems are what every single member of *Homo sapiens* faces "today." Our descendants will face these problems tomorrow too. Not surprisingly, they are derived from what every single member of *Homo sapiens* met in the past.

What would the worldly philosophers conclude?

Let's personalize them.

How do I survive?

How do I thrive?

How do I derive existential meaning?

That's it. Isn't it? Because every other problem we encounter fits within one of these categories.

We first have to meet our physiological needs (survive) to concentrate on generating the power to secure our continued well-being (thrive) to ultimately figure out who we are, why we're here, and what we ought to do about those truths (derive).

The individual must 1) stay alive, and then 2) summon the power to pursue goals beyond survival and 3) figure out the truth of who they are, why they're here, and how to behave to realize their particular purpose.

The grand thesis of Story Grid's Heroic Journey 2.0 (HJ2.0) is that our ancestors gave us far more useful earthly navigational direction than "grow up" or "follow your bliss." HJ2.0 is a synthesis of Carl Jung's seventy-plus-year-old monomythic fueled Individuation Process (which was mechanized by Joseph Campbell and Christopher Vogler as "The Hero's Journey") through the prism of contemporary cognitive science.

I propose that what's embedded inside stories from the past like *The Hobbit* is a sort of operator's manual for human life containing the semantic information we need to solve our perennial lurking problems from the past in our present. This process enables us to meaningfully grow as individuals and, by extension, affords us the collective capacity to survive as a species into the future.

Action Story concerns the primary representations of objectively measurable physical bodies' movements, including the overt utterances of *Homo sapiens* speech or what characters do and say. This arc involves the literal, observable, technical, and specific physical behaviors of a being through time and space. It's the realm of the objective.

Worldview Story concerns the secondary representations (individual qualia) of subjective applications of the mind or the way characters think about themselves and their world. This arc involves transforming the beings' integrated strategy (worldview) and specific behavioral tactics (personas enacted overtly or covertly) to optimize their power. The technique and tactics enable the beings to pay attention to and process the combinatorially explosive amounts of information that flood their senses in any given context.

Worldview is about how the mind transforms the way it processes

the multitude of sensory information from the external and socio-cultural environment and changes its behavior as a result. It's the realm of the subjective.

HJ2.0 concerns attuning the “transjective” relationship between ourselves and our universal arena. The universal arena includes not only the external world and all the people and objects within it but also the complex social systems from our closest *first-party* family affiliations, to our *second-party* tribal affiliations (limited by our human Dunbar number), to our *third-party* mass population affiliations, and ultimately to the collective cognitive capacities of our entire species through time.

Transjective refers to properties, not of the subject or the object environment, but the relationships between them. So, there's the object (the objective), the observer of the object (the subjective), and the relationship between the two and the universal arena (the transjective).

HJ2.0 is a mythic representation of how we come into our “personhood,” owning a fluid psyche capable of generating wise agency in and through time by clearly attuning the objective, subjective, and transjective in the short, medium, and long term.

In other words, Action Story concerns our efforts to survive—Schopenhauer's “will to live.” Worldview Story concerns our efforts to thrive—Nietzsche's “will to power.” And HJ2.0 concerns our efforts to derive wisdom—Kierkegaard and Frankl's “will to meaning.”

Timeless, inexhaustibly meaningful masterworks are the equivalent of what we at Story Grid conceptualize as a high signal ancestral internet, artificial intelligence 1.0 gifted to us from our wisest predecessors.

These masterworks serve us as sticky and spreadable interpersonal communication devices that advise us how to behave to generate our greatest chance to cultivate collective human wisdom through time. Conforming to these patterns not only ensures the continuation of our species but confers an adaptive advantage to the individual creator.

In other words, because they ring true to us and pack an emotional punch, stories that embed HJ2.0 sell at a more consistent and escalating rate through time than those that don't.

Story Grid is a methodology to crack open the seal of masterworks

to reveal the messages in the bottles our ancestors dropped into the swirling ocean of time to guide our best navigational course as individuals. And as a byproduct, it can transform a story that doesn't work commercially into one that does.

Before we get into the granular scene-by-scene analysis of *The Hobbit*, let's look at the nature and function of the story and use Story Grid's five macro stages of the Heroic Journey 2.0 to lay out the global movement of J.R.R. Tolkien's masterwork as a pitch-perfect example of the ancestral internet's singular signal.

THE BIG IDEA OF THE HEROIC JOURNEY 2.0

Story Grid's HJ2.0 is all about clarifying what we as a species use story for. What are its nature and function?

Here's what I've been going on for decades.

I maintain that stories are simulations or “counterfactual scenarios” that allow us to observe from a safe distance the fallout from unexpected events. All that means is they are “make 'em ups” about what might happen when a force of change drops into a *Homo sapiens*-modeled life.

From the creator's point of view (the storyteller), if “x” were to happen, there is a reasonable probability “y” would spool out as a result. *X* equals the force of change in a Global Inciting Incident that threatens or advances a protagonist's (or group of protagonists') ability to survive, thrive, and derive existential meaning. *Y* is the resulting change in the protagonist and the universal arena.

What is the nature of that unexpected event? Psychologically, these external forces of change reflect the repeating pattern of the protagonist's yet-to-be-solved abstract unconscious problems. The protagonist must confront and metabolize the change event, which forces them to break and remake their worldview. The result is either a reciprocal opening and attunement of the protagonist to their experiential arena or a joint narrowing of the protagonist and their

experiential arena. They expand their world, or they contract their world.

We use stories to prime the pumps of our imagination when we face changes in our environments. They serve as positive prescriptions and negative cautions to consider while plotting our path through time inside our particular ontological and epistemological frameworks (our idiosyncratic worldviews).

All of that is to say we see our lives as internal stories and thus map our life events onto stories we expose ourselves to.

What's been bothering me is that these prescriptions and cautions are all well and good, but unless we understand the ultimate destination or message, aren't they simply propaganda arguments to get us to see the world as the story creator sees it?

The answer is yes. The storyteller's controlling idea is, for lack of a better description, "what they are selling" to their potential audience.

The audience is searching for meaningful intelligence to inform their worldview so they can attune to a higher level of reality. We want to better understand the arena we must navigate including the external environment, our relationships with other humans, and our internal landscape. Thus story-engagers expend substantial amounts of cognitive energy to enter the world of a story.

But to what end?

Being informed by a story to help us attain goal states is useful, but soon a question arises. Is there a meta-goal state? A single operating principle that confers adaptive advantage for the individual and extends all the way up to the species?

I propose there is. In my years analyzing contemporary and perennial masterworks, I've found an extraordinary reoccurring phenomenon. The stories that last, the ones written generations ago that we still read today, share a whole slew of features in common. Abstractly, these stories offer a meta-goal for the individual and, taken to the end of the line, the species.

What's remarkable is that there is no single goal state, no Nirvana or utopic destination offered in these timeless masterworks. Instead, a process is on offer. The reason is that the universe is a paradox, made up of a complex mix of order and chaos. We cannot predict with

certainty what will happen next. And because change is the only constant we can rely on, there is no ideal result where everything remains stable and perfect. Disruption is the generator function of the system. So, we must adapt and roll with the changes.

What's on offer in the HJ2.0 is simply a navigational process that increases the probability of surviving, thriving, and deriving meaning. The individual gets to choose whether they follow its demanding and painful course. If most of us do, we increase the probability for all of us to continue to exist. If most of us don't, we decrease the probability for all of us to continue to exist. This is the purest signal of the HJ2.0.

The growth process embedded within these stories informs us about the most sensible navigational path, one we can use to guide our physical, meta-physical, and spiritual growth.

My findings are not unique.

Instead, they support the central idea Carl Jung introduced in 1935. His individuation process is the abstract structural and functional organization of stories that spread and last.

Jung proposes that our species has a North Star monomythic structure, a process by which the individual can survive, thrive, and derive meaning beyond the primary, objective, science-based representations of our physical existence. All that means is that Jung maintained that we are more than our atoms, molecules, and cellular systems that some popularly refer to as a “meat sack.”

How did he reach this conclusion? He read a lot of stories across multiple traditions and compared and contrasted them. He documented our species' rich storytelling tradition and the recurring patterns of representational behavior embedded inside stories across cultures and time.

Jung dedicated himself to exploring the secondary representations of our metaphysical existence—in other words, the subjective qualities of reality rather than just the measurable objective scientific quantities. He focused on the stories' thematic attributes rather than the characters' literal descriptions and actions. By doing so, he was able to uncover the best practices to attune the “transjective” relationships between our objective and subjective experiences.

He put forward that the most well-known and oldest stories are

about how an individual member of *Homo sapiens* must undertake a mission into unfamiliar terrain to level up into a higher realm of consciousness and become better attuned to the paradoxical circumstances of our existence.

Let's be more specific about what he was getting at and walk through Jung's idea using Story Grid's language.

THE HJ2.0 GLOBAL INCITING INCIDENT

At the beginning of a story, something happens to the protagonist that they cannot “see,” let alone understand. It will require the entire length and breadth of the story to realize what “that happening” means to them personally and to the species collectively.

It’s important to emphasize that the protagonist doesn’t even “see” the vector/force, which will require them to change, for what it truly represents.

That vector/force is the Global Inciting Incident, the drop-in of an unexpected phenomenon, and what I call an “Invisible Phere Gorilla,” a concept derived from the invisible gorilla experiment by Christopher Chabris and Daniel Simons. The experiment revealed that people can become blind to unexpected events happening in front of them when focused on a goal.¹

These Global Inciting Incidents are so complex and deeply rooted in the protagonist’s unconscious that they are utterly oblivious to their reoccurrence. Think of the film *Groundhog Day* or the Netflix series *Russian Doll*, which brings back the same change-inducing phenomenon over and over again. Until the protagonist solves this reoccurring Invisible Phere Gorilla problem, they will suffer the consequences of the same problem resurfacing in their life until they

dare to apply their energy and attention to figure out what it exactly means to them.

These Invisible Phere Gorillas have paradoxical philosophical origins. Through the lens of science, they would be classified as random instances of change that drop into the protagonist's life from the universal arena with no rhyme or reason. They are objectively definable ... like the cyclone in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* or Gandalf's out of the blue invitation to Bilbo to join a mission as akin to an international leader like the Dalai Lama or the Secretary-General of the UN inviting someone they only know by reputation to join a taskforce.

But through the lens of the humanities, Invisible Phere Gorillas represent recurring patterns that bubble up from the protagonist's or the collective unconscious. They are subjectively definable as triggers for maladaptive behaviors that the protagonist must correct or level up before they can reach a higher state of consciousness. They represent patterns of behavior adopted in the past to survive unmetabolized trauma in the short term. But now they have proven to be long-term behavioral liabilities.

The storyteller is required to understand and consider both the objective and subjective components of the change vector/inciting incident. What is the objective, measurable, concretely definable component and what is the subjective meaning of the stimulus to the protagonist?

For example, relieving stress by having an evening cocktail is a short-term solution for "having a tough day." But if that behavior turns into a habitual response to stress, it can prove to be a tough habit to break. An aid can quickly become both a physiological and psychological necessity. And soon "not having a cocktail" is unimaginable. To a carpenter, every problem looks like a "hammer-solution." And to an alcoholic, every problem looks like a "cocktail-solution."

Dissociating from one's body if one has been physically or mentally abused is another deeply rooted short-term self-preservation strategy. If someone suffers prolonged abuse, the dissociation behavior becomes a

habitual “go-to” for an ever-increasing category of negative objective and subjective experiences.

So, if the people responsible for protecting the protagonist turned out to be abusive, unsympathetic and unempathetic to their being ... then the first principle the protagonist will develop to protect themselves is that all human beings are abusive, uncaring and unempathetic to their being.

When the protagonist experiences similar environmental conditions and receives identical emotional messages from their limbic system that they’ve had in the past, the character goes into DEFCON 1 habitual behavior programming. They’ll automatically output “dissociation” or another short-term adaptive but long-term maladaptive behavior.

The entire story concerns the protagonist’s need to confront the awful truth that they have employed a worldview that includes dependence upon one of these faulty first principles as its foundation.

As individuals we *Homo sapiens* are not aware of when our internal protective behavioral programs that were effective short term transform into liabilities long term.

The truth is so harrowing for the individual with traumatic experience (these behaviors had been the last best hope for survival) that they strenuously avoid going near them intellectually to stand them down.

That makes biological sense because of the pleasure/pain principle. Our internal short-term thinker has no use for pain. They just want to stay alive, keep calm, and carry on with minimal discomfort.

So HJ2.0 is all about the protagonist going through the extraordinarily painful process of discovering “what ails them.” Learning what short-term adaptive code proves to be long-term maladaptive code is the first stage to correct their cognitive processes to sustain their life, power, and meaning-making growth.

The real rub here is that this code forms the foundation of the protagonist’s entire worldview. To break that code apart requires a complete fracturing of the system that has taken care of them since they can’t remember when. To undergo such dissolution is the most painful psychological torment imaginable.

Thus, it requires extraordinary courage and the acceptance of monumental loss.

But, to do so proves miraculous. For just as the final worldview principle breaks, a new, more accurately attuned worldview emerges. A revelatory insight comes to the protagonist—one that proves to be more meaningful than any other they've ever considered. From this bedrock of understanding, a more adaptive, better-attuned worldview emerges.

Jung called the process of breaking and remaking one's worldview framing individuation. Contemporary cognitive scientists have another phrase for breaking and remaking frame—insight.

So, the Global Inciting Incident of a HJ2.0 Story must be about a recurring abstract change-inducing stimulus that drops into a protagonist's life and outputs a complicated, autonomic habitual series of long-term maladaptive behaviors.

At the beginning of the story, the protagonist is clueless about the Invisible Phere Gorilla or what it means. They don't even see it.

This kick-off event for HJ2.0 raises two subliminal questions in the minds of the audience. Will the protagonist(s) discover the truth about their maladaptive worldview? And as agents with agency, will they afford their emergent development after confronting this truth?

THE HJ2.0 GLOBAL INCITING INCIDENT OF THE HOBBIT

Let's get specific.

I'm proposing that *The Hobbit* is a pitch-perfect example of a masterwork. And I'm also offering that masterworks are stories with Jung's individuation process empirically supported by contemporary Cognitive Science, what I'm calling HJ2.0, embedded within them.

So, to support my proposition, I should be able to map the specificities of *The Hobbit* onto my abstract notions of what HJ2.0 is.

Let's do that for the Global Inciting Incident for *The Hobbit*.

The Global Inciting Incident for the story is the emergence of an extraordinary external environmental change agent, the wizard Gandalf. He knocks on the protagonist Bilbo's door and represents an Invisible Phere Gorilla for Bilbo.

Remember that at the beginning of the story, Bilbo has no idea who Gandalf is. Gandalf represents an intrusive door-knocker to Bilbo, someone he must dispatch quickly. When Gandalf reveals his relationship to Bilbo, Bilbo realizes he must extend the common courtesy of his family, tribe, and culture to this person, thus extending an invitation into his home for tea. Gandalf agrees, knowing he'll be extending Bilbo's hospitality to the band of dwarves he's decided to aid, and the story commences.

Let's look at Gandalf more abstractly as an agent of change, an

Invisible Phere Gorilla. Gandalf serves as the external force that transports Bilbo into an extraordinary world, and he does that by appealing to the collective cultural grammar of the Hobbit people.

Objectively, Gandalf is a wizard. A wizard is not only a person who possesses magical powers but also a software feature that allows someone to perform tasks with the help of a series of questions or prompts. Both components of this definition prove useful to us.

As a wizard, Gandalf has skills that other creatures in Bilbo's world do not. He's capable of amazing physical manipulations of the natural world. So, on the Middle Earth power hierarchy, Gandalf sits at the apex, far above the likes of creatures such as Bilbo. What's more is that once Tolkien labels Gandalf as such, he can assign magical capabilities to him when the need arises. These capabilities must make sense within the global arena and shouldn't be employed at random (magic requires a cost), but they provide a useful device to progressively complicate the story as it unfolds. We're not quite sure how powerful Gandalf is, and we don't discover the depths of his resources until Tolkien writes *The Lord of the Rings*.

Objectively, having Gandalf on your side is a navigational advantage.

What about subjectively? Does Gandalf encourage and nudge the cognitive development of those around him? Especially Bilbo?

This is where the second part of the wizard definition enters our analysis, "a software feature that allows someone to perform tasks with the help of a series of questions or prompts."

Suppose we were to categorize Bilbo's worldview at the beginning of *The Hobbit* and do the same analysis at the end of the story as if they were software programs. In that case, it's reasonable to conclude that Bilbo's software upgrades from a worldview 1.0 to a worldview 2.0.

Gandalf serves as the behavioral model that induces the upgrade. As an archetype, he's a mentor. And Bilbo, by the end of the story, becomes a mentor figure too. He transforms from a rather lazy, insular homebody into a heroic force capable of great physical and mental prowess. He even assumes the magical power of a wizard with his possession of the ring.

Let's now go back to my definition of the Invisible Phere Gorilla. It

is an initially unrecognizable vector/force that drops into the life of a character, inducing them to change their worldview and thus their behavior.

Do you see what Tolkien did when he created Gandalf? He made an embodied Invisible Phere Gorilla, the metaphysical in corporeal form. Gandalf is a walking, talking manifestation of chaos—but a particular, *interested* form of chaos.

It's worth looking at embodied chaos of archetypical myth with a little more resolution.

I think there are three kinds of chaotic archetypes.

1. Chaos can be a force to compel disruption or Change as an inexorable indifferent, but entertaining, phenomena.

The **Trickster** archetype doesn't have what Nassim Taleb would call "skin in the game." These unpredictable beings create change without real forethought or long-term goal-directed purpose. It's as if they find entertainment value watching the actors before them struggle with inexorable change. When these characters get bored, they drop some chaos into their environment and enjoy the ensuing show. There are varying levels of Trickster behaviors. The "unconscious" Tricksters don't understand what they are doing, like the dog Toto in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* or the jinxed character who stumbles and upends all well-laid plans—Peter Sellers' Inspector Clouseau, for example. But there are purposeful, conscious ones, like the famous cartoon character Bugs Bunny.

In *The Hobbit*, the dwarf Bombur, the one who falls into Mirkwood's magical waters and is heavier than the rest, serves as a Trickster.

The Trickster chaotically upends order within the environment, but they do not have a specific agenda other than to distract themselves and others from purposeful action.

2. Chaos can be a force to compel Growth or Change to break a narrow cognitive frame.

The **Mentor** archetype is a purposeful force of chaotic change.

They recognize potential cognitive capacity in a fellow being and wish to induce them to level up their skills and worldview. They represent beings with “skin in the game” and serve as a force of creation committed to encouraging the expansion of sovereign agency across the species. That is their North Star purpose.

What is Gandalf’s goal? He doesn’t need or want the treasure that Smaug hoards. If he wished to free the Lake People or return the dwarves to their past glory, he could certainly have taken far more direct actions to achieve those goals.

Instead, Gandalf’s goal is to get Bilbo Baggins (and others just like him) to leave the comforts of their ordinary worlds, to seize their agency, and to live up to their potential. He wants to get Bilbo to grow up as an adult. By allying Bilbo with the dwarves, Gandalf entangles Bilbo into relationships that will challenge him to seize his inner agentic potential and actualize it.

Mentors push their mentees to transform themselves into more powerful agents, and in turn, the mentee becomes the mentor for future generations. Gandalf serves as Bilbo’s mentor. Then, Bilbo, at the beginning of *The Lord of the Rings*, serves Frodo as a mentor.

3. Chaos can be a force to compel compliance or Change as the force to capture collective agency to increase power.

The Antagonist/Shadow Agent archetype is a purposeful force of chaotic change too. But the Antagonist/Shadow Agent serves an ideology in opposition to that of the Mentor. The Antagonist/Shadow Agent wishes to co-opt the agentic capacities of their fellow beings by increasing chaos. The more chaos there is, the greater the ability of the Antagonist/Shadow Agent to seize more agents to do their bidding and to leverage their power.

There are several Antagonists and Shadow Agents in *The Hobbit*. The obvious ones are the dragon Smaug, the Goblins, and the Wargs. Thorin shapeshifts into a Shadow Agent at the tail end of *The Hobbit* and pays the ultimate price for his lust for riches and power.

The Necessity of All Three Forms of Chaotic Representation in HJ2.0

As we all know, what makes leveling up our capacities and realizing our potential so difficult is the multitude of domain-specific challenges we face along the way. Stressors emerge from all directions that keep us from venturing beyond our “working” worldviews. Our first, second, and third-party relationships—those we’re consciously aware of and those we’re not—quickly bear down on us the second we resolve to stretch ourselves.

We have to contend with metaphysical demands of family, tribal affiliations, and the stringent collective cultural grammar of our historical period. We face the terror of figuring out how to scratch out a means to survive, thrive, and derive an external life. A multitude of psychic vortexes are at play when we begin the process of leveling up our worldview.

It’s no wonder we need a symbolic representation of a capable figure we can appeal to in moments of crisis—someone to keep us on the right path.

Gandalf serves as that figure for Bilbo from the first page of the story until the last. And in the end, Bilbo transforms into a mentor-figure himself, a symbolic model of what’s required for an average regular being to achieve their inherent potential. They must leave the comforts of their ordinary world, embark on a purposeful quest, and adapt to the unexpected changes that ensue along the way.

But what about the other two? Why do we need Tricksters and Shadow Agents in order to fulfill our potential? Don’t they just disrupt our lives and plans? Yes, and that’s precisely why we need them. They drop chaos into the universal arena in a way that shakes us out of our conditioned ways of behaving and shows us our blind spots. Even with a nudge from a well-meaning mentor, we might choose to stay in the equivalent of our Hobbit hamlet in the absence of a compelling need. If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it. Right?

Wrong. And there are two main reasons this is true.

Remember we’re talking about *change*. Chaos is a change in the normal order of business. A system that doesn’t change will stagnate and die, as surely as a muscle that isn’t used atrophies and a bone that isn’t pulled by those muscles begins to disintegrate. Growth requires a certain amount of stress and change.

What's more, we don't actually know whether our current worldview 1.0 is broken or not until it's tested. Tricksters keep us from mistaking HJ2.0 as a specific destination and uncertainty as the main obstacle to solving our perennial problems of how to survive, thrive, and derive meaning.

THE HJ2.0 GLOBAL TURNING POINT PROGRESSIVE COMPLICATION

Other story theorists often call the Global Turning Point Progressive Complication the “midpoint climax.” For Story Grid’s HJ2.0, this is the moment when the protagonist’s habitual worldview, what I call their worldview 1.0, breaks. And the result of that breakage is that the story’s global value at stake shifts to the extraordinarily negative.

Why?

Remember the audience follows the story through the protagonist’s point of view or that of a group of protagonists. So, when the protagonist experiences negative stimuli, so does the audience. What happens at this turning point is that what once made sense to the protagonist, no longer does.

Is there anything more damaging than discovering that everything you’ve come to believe and rely upon to cause the effects that answer your trinity of perennial problems (how to survive, thrive, and derive) no longer work?

That is precisely what’s going on in this vital moment in the global story. The protagonist discovers the way they’ve made it through the world, how they’ve been causing their desired effects, doesn’t work anymore. Nothing makes sense. What they’ve used to navigate the world is a broken compass leading nowhere. We hit these moments in our lives now and then, and they are terrifying.

Let's back up and link this moment in the story to our Global Inciting Incident, our massive Invisible Phere Gorilla, that will require an entire story to come to grips with.

Thematically the Invisible Phere Gorilla is like a child progressively heightening their provocative behavior to seize the full attention of a parent. At this turning point stage, they take their frustration to the end of the line.

Having been ignored for far too long, the Invisible Phere Gorilla manifests its power by breaking the protagonist's worldview frame. Another metaphor I like to use to clarify this moment for myself is to consider that the protagonist is framing the world through a set of eyeglasses. The glasses enable the protagonist to see and make sense of the phenomena surrounding them. Still, these worldview 1.0 lenses do not allow the protagonist to see the critical gorilla causing havoc in their life.

The Global Turning Point Progressive Complication is the moment when the gorilla has had enough. The gorilla grabs the glasses the protagonist is wearing and smashes them to pieces. Now the protagonist can no longer "see." The world they used to navigate relatively easily is now a murky mess—just a big blur.

Losing the ability to coherently categorize and make sense of the environment you find yourself embedded inside is terrifying. Thus, this is a significant moment in the global story. It must be clearly defined in the mind of the storyteller and executed with precision.

Why? If done well, the audience will find themselves as stunned and anxious as the protagonist, which will intrigue them to no end. They feel compelled to keep experiencing the story so they can find satisfaction in its resolution. The audience has experienced this worldview fracture themselves, so they know implicitly if not explicitly what the protagonist is going through. The audience's great relief is that what's happening to the protagonist isn't happening to them. They get to feel the emotions without any of the real-world consequences.

At the highest level of analytical abstraction, the protagonist's experience at the Global Turning Point Progressive Complication is akin to the tremendous opening of cognition observed by people who've used psychedelics to alter their consciousness. These

experiences reflect an indescribable (but recognizable) encounter with what the philosopher Immanuel Kant called the numinous. The numinous is the sum total of everything in the universe that we will never be able to know—the Unknown Unknowns.

The prescribed approach to such encounters is to surrender to the experience and allow oneself to be inside the destabilizing random chaotic nothingness without acting. Simply pay attention rather than represent, categorize, symbolize and respond.

Discovering that our worldview isn't working, while terrifying and horrifying, is also enlightening. Problem-solving cannot begin until we've correctly formulated the problem itself. For an amateur carpenter, all problems seem to be hammer problems until they discover other tools.

The Turning Point Progressive Complication is the first stage for the protagonist to return to first-principle thinking to properly formulate the problem represented by the Invisible Phere Gorilla.

More abstractly, at the highest level of HJ2.0, it's the moment when the protagonist directly experiences the inescapable truth of their maladaptive worldview.

THE HJ2.0 GLOBAL TURNING POINT PROGRESSIVE COMPLICATION OF THE HOBBIT

At what moment in *The Hobbit* is Bilbo's worldview shattered? I propose that this moment arises in the twenty-fourth scene, in the last five thousand words of chapter 8, entitled "Flies and Spiders."

In chapter 8, the group is deep in the forest of Mirkwood. The dwarf king Thorin, the expedition leader, has vanished, and the remaining dwarves and Bilbo are nearing starvation. After failed attempts to appeal to the wood elves for help, Bilbo finds himself all alone in the pitch blackness.

Here is how the scene begins:

That was one of his most miserable moments. But he soon made up his mind that it was no good trying to do anything till day came with some little light, and quite useless to go blundering about tiring himself out with no hope of any breakfast to revive him. So he sat himself down with his back to a tree, and not for the last time fell to thinking of his far-distant hobbit-hole with its beautiful pantries. He was deep in thoughts of bacon and eggs and toast and butter when he felt something touch him. Something like a strong sticky string was against his left hand, and when he tried to move he found that his legs were

already wrapped in the same stuff, so that when he got up he fell over.

Then the great spider, who had been busy tying him up while he dozed, came from behind him and came at him.

Can you see how Tolkien reminds the reader of Bilbo's worldview 1.0 in his behavior and dream?

And what happens? A force awakens him from his dream, a metaphorical knock on Bilbo's metaphysical door (his consciousness), an unexpected supernatural force, the great spider, breaks Bilbo's worldview framing. Can you also see this is a similar wake-up call, although far more malevolent, to Gandalf's knock on Bilbo's door?

Bilbo must now enact his will to live. He must preserve his life. And to do so, he must fracture his understanding of himself as a weak, comfort-seeking, couch potato. A new formidable Bilbo must emerge, a Hobbit capable of unleashing his shadow agency, a being with the resolve and inner power to take another being's life. He must seize his physical agency to destroy and through it dispatch another in the service of his agency.

As I maintain, *The Hobbit*, while globally an Action Story, has a Worldview Story embedded within it. All HJ2.0 structured stories have action and worldview components. Can you see why this moment aligns with that proposition?

Let's look at this fracturing of Bilbo's worldview through the lens of a *Homo sapiens*' cognitive growth process.

When an adult reaches a self-reliant level of stability, there is a strong evolutionary desire to cling to that known functionality. When we lock down the job that can provide the means necessary to pay our rent, car lease, food, clothing, and utility bills, we feel the power of that position down to our bones. At that moment, or the anticipation of that moment on the horizon, we believe we'll have solved our three perennial existential problems. We have figured out how to survive and thrive independently, and the meaning we derive from that accomplishment is incredibly powerful. We feel secure and stable. We've "made it."

Once we've achieved a level of security, the prospect of losing our position of agentic sovereignty starts to emerge. Or if we are close to what we believe will be optimal, the possibility of being knocked off that path or denied that path appears.

Either way, the anticipation of failure to maintain our sovereignty—not the reality, mind you, just the anticipation of the possibility of our house of cards tumbling down—makes us tighten our grip on what we believe is foundational to our worldview. We get stuck in a rut, repeating the same behaviors to achieve the minimal results that keep us clinging to our power position. Or worse, we slowly fall behind in our quest to achieve long-term stability.

Can you see how social, cultural forces influence our ability to take the long view? Is it any wonder that our positions in the world, and the money and power they confer to us, never seem to be quite enough? That once we achieve some level of money and power, we simply move the goal further into the future where we have even more money and power?

We long for a position in society that Wall Streeters call “fuck you money.” This is a fantastical idea that there is some sort of power Nirvana we can attain that will allow us to do whatever the hell we want when we reach it, which some of use as affordance to do whatever the hell we want to reach it. Alas, those who have attained that position find it far less rewarding and comforting than advertised. These “winners” end up obsessing about maintenance, making sure they don't fall from their position.

So, what's the alternative?

The HJ2.0 is the myth we need in these multi-polar and desperate loss-aversion moments in our lives. We need to be reminded that settling for minimal viable comforts and fearing the loss of those so intensely that we refuse to explore alternative interests will eventually erode the satisfaction of our former achievements. We need to break out of our rut and courageously pursue alternate life experiences. We need to find meaning beyond objective quantification of possession.

If we refuse to pursue worldview upgrades, which require HJ2.0 journeys, unexpected events often drop into our lives and will do their utmost to force us to do so. We get laid off from our job. Our partner

tells us they need to leave us. Our friends abandon us for being “too negative” or “too pollyannish.” The heavyweight champion of the world offers us a free shot at the title. A pandemic forces us to shelter in place and change our behaviors so dramatically that we often forget what life used to be.

These are the aforementioned Invisible Phere Gorillas writ large.

The Hobbit's power is how Tolkien takes this universal life experience and embodies it inside of a relatively regular fellow who finds himself having to contend with extraordinary circumstances.

Bilbo doesn't have much of a choice when the giant spider attacks. He simply has to defend himself and kill the predator intent on ending his life. There is no deep dark Hamlet-Esque contemplation of whether or not he ought to bring out his destructive shadow. The fact that he's fighting a non-human-like force is helpful too. We, the reader, have no qualms about Bilbo cutting the giant spider into bits. We cheer him on.

We can substitute any number of unexpected personal events that play the same role as the giant spider (Chaotic Antagonist/Shadow Agent) in our lives.

We get sick. Or our partner gets sick. Or we get fired. Our dreams of becoming a big shot go up in flames, etc. The giant spider is the metaphor for the class of events that knock us down that are quickly identified when we see them but are difficult to anticipate. I call these *Visible* Phere Gorillas. There is no ambiguity about these drop-in events. We immediately see them as threats or enhancements to our ability to solve problems.

The Global Inciting Incident of HJ2.0, the Invisible Phere Gorilla, like a Terminator shapeshifter, transforms into these Visible Phere Gorillas throughout the story. The Turning Point Progressive Complication iteration is the one that shatters the worldview software of the protagonist.

The Revelatory Worldview Story, the one Bilbo undergoes in *The Hobbit*, is when the character discovers the power to level up their problem-solving skills. This is the Turning Point moment globally for this component of the HJ2.0. The character finds that they do have the capacity to break out of their old ways of thinking, that their potential is formidable. The flavor of the Revelatory Worldview component in *The*

Hobbit is the physical manifestation of Bilbo's power at this moment, the emergence of his shadow agency.

He fights for his life, and he triumphs. His power emerges without propositional inducement. He doesn't use his higher mind functions to defeat the spider. He allows another part of his mind to motor his body. His shadow runs the operations.

Additional revelations about Bilbo's power spool out from this foundational release of his shadow. And by the end of the story, we discover just how formidable a being Bilbo really is. He's not just rough enough to win a fight. His ability to solve extraordinarily difficult socio-cultural problems emerges too. But his core heroism as a physically courageous being must come first. Releasing the shadow is necessary for psyche coherence, but it is not sufficient. That's why we have the rest of the story, to show the process by which Bilbo comes to understand that shadow and when the appropriate time is to unleash it.

Killing the giant spider is a point of no return for Bilbo. He now understands that when push comes to shove, he's got the stuff within him to take another life. He's not the same Bilbo who began the journey. He has access to his shadow agency, a capability he thought he was too civilized to possess.

Now that he has the shadow agency, he must confront the Crisis of HJ2.o.

THE HJ2.0 GLOBAL CRISIS

The Global Crisis is the moment when the protagonist correctly formulates their problem with specificity. As inventor Charles Kettering said, “A problem well stated is a problem half-solved.” So, at last, the protagonist applies attention and energy to the Global Inciting Incident’s Invisible Phere Gorilla. The result is to understand the Invisible Phere Gorilla represents a problem in the form of a binary choice.

To metabolize and dispel this phenomenon’s negative effect, the protagonist reasons they can take “this action” or “that action.” This amounts to minimizing the negative (the best bad choice for the protagonist) or a zero-sum calculation of the positive (irreconcilable goods choice, either positive for the protagonist or positive for other agents in their arena, but not both).

Thematically, this moment is the result of directly identifying and correctly categorizing what that Global Inciting Incident, or Invisible Phere Gorilla introduced at the beginning represents.

The global category of the Invisible Phere Gorilla for an HJ2.0 story boils down to a single existential dilemma. The HJ2.0 Invisible Phere Gorilla is all about dealing with universal chaos, the unexpected drop-ins of change phenomena themselves.

Remember that HJ2.0 shows us how we can best navigate the world

when we have no certainty about our navigational system. So, the Invisible Phere Gorilla for an HJ2.0 is all about something that disintegrates the protagonist's existing navigational structure and what the protagonist must do to reform a new, better navigational system to replace it. The new system will be able to cope with this specific category of Invisible Phere Gorillas in the future.

And because the protagonist will have an indelible experience coming out on the other side of traumatic navigational system destruction with a better attunement to the natural world, the protagonist will be better prepared to undergo future worldview upgrades. They can add additional categories of Invisible Phere Gorilla metabolism with less trauma.

The Global Crisis of the HJ2.0, therefore, is a distillation all about coming to terms with uncertainty. It's about recognizing that pursuing a definitive goal state is not why we're here. Instead, the point is to pursue novel meaning, not to attain ultimate meaning which is, by universal first principals, unattainable. When our meaning seems entirely out of our grasp, we need to seek it nevertheless. We must stay the course.

The Crisis of the HJ2.0 is the existential Crisis itself.

If, contrary to all we've held to be real, there is no guarantee of ultimate singular meaning in existence, how is the individual to continue?

The Crisis for the HJ2.0 is contending with the inevitable loss of certainty. Growth requires loss. It requires putting away childish things and recognizing that clinging to certainty is folly when we know so little about life. The wisest among us accept just how little they understand or are capable of understanding.

That revelation is the ultimate metabolization of the Global Inciting Incident of the HJ2.0. In the case of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, the cyclone is a clear externalized instance of environmental chaos that knocks Dorothy into a whole other dimension of time and space. No one can save her from that chaos. It just is. In *The Hobbit*, Gandalf is an embodied chaotic force encouraging Bilbo to confront his passive approach to life. In the Global Crisis, he must face the truth that his failure to engage harms more than himself. No one can make his contribution for him.

Coming to terms with the universal truth that some things will knock you out, but you can't see them coming and going on your idiosyncratic mission to survive, thrive, and derive meaning anyway is what the heroic journey is all about. We must go on seeking to derive our meaning on earth, but more importantly, the collective meaning of the species.

Let's view this Crisis in terms of the best bad choice or an irreconcilable goods choice.

Once we surrender to our inability to have final and complete certainty about the universe's nature, is it better to conclude that life is meaningless and thus not care about anything anymore? Or is it better to go on searching for meaning and continue to care, even though there is no guarantee there is any?

That's the best bad choice the protagonist faces, and it's all of ours too.

Let's break the choice down a bit more.

It's better for the species' long-term continuation if every individual member continues to care about creating a meaningful existence even without a guarantee of any ultimate meaning. If we take care, the chances are that our species will survive. For the individual, though, in their short-term life span, it would seem to be better not to care about "meaning" and instead set out to experience more pleasure than pain on earth.

So, what's good for the species comes at the expense of the individual and vice versa.

Can you see how deep the HJ2.0 is? When we distill what Jung identified as the monomyth and what Campbell used to mechanize commercially viable story arcs, we discover an enormously important philosophical paradox.

What's extraordinarily heartening about the HJ2.0 is that there is very little ambiguity about what must be done. The climax is certain and inevitable, not random and uncertain. And we cathartically recognize that certainty as universally true—no matter our first, second, or third-party secular affiliations or the collective cultural grammar of our time.

THE HJ2.0 GLOBAL CRISIS OF THE HOBBIT

The Hobbit's Global HJ2.0 Crisis arrives just after Bilbo dispatches the giant spider. What's important to recognize here is that Tolkien does not belabor the Crisis. It is so deeply baked into the HJ2.0 and the collective cultural grammar of Tolkien's time that there is no need.

The Collective Cultural Grammar of Tolkien's time when he wrote *The Hobbit*, in between World War I and World War II, was inherently commons-centric. What I mean is that the sacrifices of individuals were so astronomical in that context, millions of young people from all of the world died in the absurd conflagration of WWI, that assigning meaning to all of that death and destruction required the species' rock-bottom foundational meaning system. That was all that was left.

That is, the people who died did so in the service of restoring peace. To engage in war as the means to achieve peace is paradoxical, but that's all that was left after WWI. Sacrificing one's life in the service of the greater continuation of the species (the commons) was honorable, worthy of foundational worldview formation. No matter one's political affiliation or who "won" the war, the fact that people died so others may live was the only bit of meaning to be had.

So, just after Bilbo defeats the spider, he goes off searching for his friends, knowing full well they need protection and he is required to provide it. He cannot fathom life alone and thus has no hesitation

doing his utmost to preserve the phenomenal “we,” in which he finds his own life’s meaning.

“What a mess we are in now! We! I only wish it was we: it is horrible being all alone.”

The heroic protagonist’s willingness to sacrifice their life to preserve the lives of others is such a fundamental component of HJ2.0 that it became the trope of the epic fantasy action-adventure story. The heroes of these traditionally structured stories do not spend much time contemplating the embedded HJ2.0 Crisis. Their duty to preserve the “we” is evident to them. After the Turning Point Progressive Complication, when they discover their shadow power, that is. Bilbo doesn’t think he has it “in him” to be a force of mighty destruction until he enacts that agency. Once it becomes afforded to him, he understands that he must employ it for the sake of the “we.”

In contrast, Shakespeare’s Hamlet is emblematic of the “heroic agent in existential Crisis” story. Hamlet owns shadow agency early in the story, but he just doesn’t quite understand what the point of using it is. The dramatic tension that sustains the play, a remarkable feat in and of itself, is all about Hamlet’s contemplation of the Global HJ2.0 Crisis.

But for Bilbo, as for the majority of epic fantasy heroic agents, the Sturm and Drang of the existential Crisis isn’t an issue. And by association, it wasn’t something Tolkien considered in question either. Nevertheless, this moment is clearly on the page.

Bilbo has hit his “all-is-lost” moment, but he doesn’t dwell on it. Tolkien doesn’t give him the time to dwell on it. Remember that the “all-is-lost” moment is when the protagonist’s worldview breaks irrevocably. And soon after that dissolution the Global Crisis of HJ2.0 emerges. It’s the Samuel Beckett conundrum.

“You must go on. I can’t go on. I’ll go on.”
— Samuel Beckett, *The Unnamable*

The Global Crisis for the heroic being is simply about whether they ought to go on. It’s Hamlet’s famous “to be, or not to be” contemplation.

What shall I do when the foundation of what I've held to be true proves false?

Bilbo believed he didn't have a shadow within him. He didn't have the stuff to go on adventures and survive, and he wasn't a leader. But now that worldview is in pieces. It's obvious to him that he has the stuff to impose his will on the environment.

He doesn't, nor should he as *The Hobbit* was written within the children's fiction vernacular, go all Hamlet-like or Beckett-ian when facing the Crisis. He simply gets on with it, "keeps calm and carries on," using his newfound internal shadow skillset pragmatically.

Like Dorothy in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, after she seizes her agency and Oz has left her on the ground as he floats away in his air balloon, Bilbo chooses to seek out his friends and help them.

The critical element of *The Hobbit's* Revelatory Worldview component is that up until the battle with the spider, Bilbo placed the responsibility for his survival on someone else. Gandalf wasn't around and the dwarves were not capable, so Bilbo settled in to accept his fate. The spider's attack brought him to his senses. Not surprisingly, that lack of belief in oneself as a capable agent strong enough to formulate and solve one's problems is the incredibly powerful Invisible Phere Gorilla behind the Worldview arc.

Before we move on, let's spell out the best bad choice and irreconcilable goods choice that Bilbo faces just after slaying the giant spider.

In terms of the best bad choice, Bilbo can endeavor to navigate home by himself. Or he can carry on with his mission, search for his companions and lend them aid. Charting a way home alone will be extraordinarily difficult, but it will give Bilbo a higher degree of control over his short-term survival prospects than searching for his friends. Finding and aligning with his friends will decrease the probability of his short-term survival and increase the likelihood of his long-term survival. So, going it alone is a short-term increase in survival, but a long-term decrease.

In terms of irreconcilable goods, what's good for Bilbo now is bad for his comrades. And what's good for his comrades now is bad for Bilbo now.

The tiebreaker, of course, is how Bilbo derives meaning. And the Collective Cultural Grammar of Bilbo's rock-bottom foundational worldview is the individual must sacrifice for the whole. From this first principle Bilbo's new worldview 2.0 emerges. He sees the world heroically rather than anti-heroically.

The audience of the time would indeed have stopped reading if Bilbo decided to bugger off and leave his friends to die. Having a character surrender to despair and uncertainty by choosing his survival over the group's survival, at that time, wouldn't make sense.

And today too. Even after the emergence of postmodernism, absurdism, the baffling behaviors of global states and markets worldwide, and the vacuum suck of meaning out of just about every institution we associate with, if Bilbo quit, the audience would feel, deep in their cells, that the story wasn't "right," that it didn't "ring true."

Why? Because the existential necessity of continuing onward into an uncertain future is required for the individual and the species to survive, thrive, and derive. The Heroic Journey 2.0's Crisis is to recognize that the agentic being inside the universal arena must accept the fundamental requirement that they must, as Samuel Beckett put it, "go on."

That truth was so fully endorsed in Tolkien's era (and our own too!) that few people even considered that Bilbo might bail on the mission.

THE HJ2.0 GLOBAL CLIMAX

In the Global Climax of the HJ2.0 the protagonist summons their trinity of agentic force, what Schopenhauer called “the will to live,” Nietzsche called “the will to power,” and Kierkegaard and Frankl called “the will to meaning” to solve their perennial problems to survive, thrive, and derive meaning anew.

Or in Beckett’s terms, they resolve to “go on.”

All of this is to say they do not quit the mission, even though the goal state they aspire to is as far from attainment as one might imagine. The chances of getting what they want are extraordinarily small, but with a revelatory understanding that whether or not they achieve success is not the point, they calmly move forward. They seek for the sake of seeking.

The Climax of the HJ2.0 is not so much about the drama of the protagonist’s Crisis decision. The audience knows the protagonist will choose to enter the ultimate arena to contend with the external or internal forces of chaos in the story’s ending payoff. That promise is embedded within the structure of the Aristotelian arc. Instead, the Climax of HJ2.0 is about the protagonist’s conscious attitude. Thematically, the protagonist has been acting “unconsciously” throughout all of the action until this specific moment in the story. They’ve been operating under an autonomic worldview I.O. But in this

pivotal moment, they're building a new worldview 2.0 on the fly, awake and in the moment.

The protagonist now has an optimal grip on the fundamental universal truth of *Homo sapiens'* existence—full awareness of our mortality. For lack of a better phrase, we ought to make the most of the time we have here. To bemoan one's inevitable death while all objects, subjects, and the relationships between them shimmer wondrously in front of us is not the best use of one's time.

So, the protagonist now moves forward with a commitment to explore. They'll continue to fire up their trinity of psychic will (to live, to power, to meaning) and see what is around the next corner, knowing full well they won't know what they'll find.

Can you see how the protagonist is now moving forward purposefully, with a higher attunement to their environment than ever? They are paying attention to what emerges in front of them in real-time rather than following an inaccurate script or map from their past, that old worldview 1.0.

This awakening is the Global Climax of the HJ2.0, and our ancestors homed in on this prescription as the best means to ensure that the individual and collective species survives, thrives, and derives meaning. And we love this prescription. We find it to be so universally true that we can't experience its revelation enough.

I love the Climax of the HJ2.0 because the result of the story is almost beside the point. What happens around the corner must be exciting and ultimately cathartic for the audience, but it's not the takeaway prescription. Catharsis is the resolution of the story, not the climax.

THE HJ2.0 GLOBAL CLIMAX OF THE HOBBIT

The Climax of the story unspools at the tail end of chapter 8, scene 24. After resolving to help his friends, Bilbo discovers them in captivity. An army of spiders has captured and cocooned the dwarves and hung them from trees. Now Bilbo must apply his worldview 2.0. He understands that he has shadow agency now, but he's not sure how to best apply it until a long-forgotten skill comes to him as he contemplates his situation. Tolkien's omniscient voice emphasizes the point to the reader. I've highlighted that commentary in bold type.

Bilbo saw that the moment had come when he must do something. He could not get up at the brutes, and he had nothing to shoot with, but looking about he saw that in this place there were many stones lying in what appeared to be a now dry little watercourse. Bilbo was a pretty fair shot with a stone, and it did not take him long to find a nice smooth egg-shaped one that fitted his hand cosily. As a boy he used to practice throwing stones at things, until rabbits and squirrels, and even birds, got out of his way as quick as lightning if they saw him stoop; and even grownup he had still spent a deal of his time at quoits, dart-throwing, shooting at the wand, bowls,

ninepins and other quiet games of the aiming and throwing sort—indeed he could do lots of things, besides blowing smoke-rings, asking riddles and cooking, that I haven't had time to tell you about. There is no time now. While he was picking up stones, the spider had reached Bombur, and soon he would have been dead. At that moment Bilbo threw. The stone struck the spider plunk on the head, and it dropped senseless off the tree, flop to the ground, with all its legs curled up.

Like Dorothy in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and her protection of the Trickster of that story (Toto the dog), so does Bilbo find himself compelled to defend the Trickster of *The Hobbit*, Bombur. Remember that the Trickster archetype is a force of chaos/uncertainty that causes disruption. Bombur is the dwarf that always seems to upend the best-laid plans of any of the characters. And thematically, as Bilbo is opening up his cognitive capacities, it makes sense that Bilbo first protects Bombur from death. Without the drop-in of unexpected events, our universe would no longer make sense. So as part of the revelation inherent in Bilbo's worldview 2.0, he must safeguard the forces of disruption. Without them, meaning creation would become a destination, not a process.

The adult who is transforming their worldview must embrace disruption as foundational to growth. If there were no Bombur figures in our lives, we could misrepresent uncertainty as enemy number one to our goal to survive, thrive, and derive. Tricksters—while some like Bugs Bunny enjoy our difficulties in coping with their unexpected behaviors—are indispensable. They remind us that accidents happen and people have psychological blind spots. As they say, “shit happens.” So to “kill off” the Tricksters in our lives would be a devastating mistake. We need Tricksters because they disrupt our worldviews in such a way that we have to rethink and reframe them continuously. This is why heroic agents defend the lives of their Tricksters.

So, the Climax of the HJ2.0 is the moment when the protagonist, who is in the process of a worldview 2.0 emergence, actively saves the life of the story's Trickster. It's worth noting that in an HJ2.0 story, the

Trickster must survive! And the figure who safeguards the Trickster's life is the emerging heroic agent.

The HJ2.0 Climax of *The Hobbit* is Bilbo's seizing of his heroic character by applying his shadow agency. He defeats the spider army so the group can continue onward.

THE HJ2.0 GLOBAL RESOLUTION

The Global Resolution of the HJ2.0 is the response to the protagonist's climactic action from the environment. It's what the world and the beings around the protagonist do in response to the protagonist applying their agentic self.

The idea behind the Resolution is that agents' actions are processed and metabolized by the universal arena, which includes the ecological and socio-cultural environments (the relationships between the agents in the arena in the collective cultural milieu). We are embedded inside the system, not players outside the system. In the same way, no cell in a being's body is independent of the cells and structures surrounding it, nor is the individual independent from the beings and systems that surround them.

The response from the universal arena could cause the protagonist's physical death. They take an action that results in the environment or one of the other agents in their arena taking their life. The being's body ceases to be animate, and any of their future potential agentic actions that their body could have employed vanish with the body's dissolution.

Physical death, however, is not sufficient to ensure metaphysical death. Depending upon the meaning the being was creating at the time of their physical death (the qualities of the active assertion of their

agentic capacity, or what they “meant”), the being could live on in the minds of those they left behind. Those minds include their first-party relationships, their second-party tribal affiliations, and even up to third-party mass populations. Historical figures like Joan of Arc, Siddhartha Gautama, and Martin Luther King, Jr. come to mind as beings who are more metaphysically potent and alive today than when they were physical actors on the earth.

While our bodies have natural and context-specific expiration dates, our metaphysical meanings are under no such constraints. They can live far longer in the imaginations of our fellow beings’ minds than can our objectively documented earthly interactions.

But wait, there’s more.

Joan of Arc was a once in a millennia kind of historical figure. What can the average *Homo sapiens* do to create lasting metaphysical meaning?

Our interactions indeed have linear limitations. An individual can only have authentic interaction with so many fellow *Homo sapiens* in their lifetime.

But our creations, the psycho-technologies and technologies that only we could introduce in the world, can prove to be adaptively advantageous for our entire species through time. And those creations can serve as our legacy. Forget the inaccurate symbolic representations of us like those we think of when we think of historical figures. We’ll never really know or understand the authentic people behind those historical representations.

Instead, consider the first *Homo sapiens* who had the imagination and courage to drape an arm across one of their fellow beings and squeeze them to reassure them that they understood what the other person was experiencing. Let them know that they got just how damn hard it was to navigate this world and that their suffering hadn’t gone unnoticed. That intimate creation proved magical.

Today, we have no idea who that individual was. They didn’t “get credit” for their innovative firm shoulder hug technology. Does it matter? The creation that came from their mind is so thoroughly incorporated into what it means to be human now that it’s immortal. I

suspect that inventive being is peacefully resting somewhere, even though, and mainly because, no one knows who they are.

What does this have to do with the Resolution of the Heroic Journey 2.0?

The Resolution not only shows the reaction from the ecological and socio-cultural environment in terms of physics (whether the protagonist's body survives) but also is the explication of the metaphysical meaning of the story (what the protagonist's death or survival means).

Whether the protagonist survives the physical circumstances of their agentic choices isn't as important as the clarity of the metaphysical legacy of their choice to "go on." If they die, the embedded HJ2.0 meaning is *at least they tried to carry on and to help others carry on in their unique way too.*

Their going on in their seeking of personal and collective truth despite the effects on their physical being (their suffering and pain) is the whole point of the HJ2.0.

Going on and continuing to search for meaning and truth is what we must do as individual *Homo sapiens* to continue to create adaptive advantages for the entire species, now and into the future. These adaptive advantages (symbolic representations of the necessity for us to pursue meaning and truth and the literal "story" the storytelling creator offers to the species) are our only hope to forestall termination of our species.

That may sound overly dramatic, but when one reads and analyzes hundreds of stories at multiple macro and micro levels (as Jung, Campbell, and I have), the clarity of that meta-monomythic ancestral tone booms true.

So right and real that it feels like it's a "duh, of course, that's what it's all about" kind of revelatory phenomenon.

THE HJ2.0 GLOBAL RESOLUTION OF THE HOBBIT

Having re-read and analyzed *The Hobbit* with high-resolution micro and macro detail, I see why it continues to be such an essential contribution to the collective cultural grammar.

It's just so fundamentally true about how difficult it is to keep pressing forward as an adult, so hard to risk our comfortable lifestyle to level up our worldview without a guarantee of "success." *The Hobbit* also works at any level of one's maturity, as a children's story, as an adolescent's fantasy, and as a grizzled adult's reminiscence. Leveling up our cognitive capacities (maturing) until the very last breath we take requires heroic fortitude, even when—especially when—we find ourselves overwhelmed by external and internal paradoxes.

That's what ultimately the HJ2.0 is encouraging us to do—to grow, mature, and commit oneself to the search process, the search for truth even though we know we'll never find a single answer. The universal arena is continuously changing, which requires that we change too. Then our changes feed back into the system to change the arena yet again. There is no final truth, only the creative act of meaning-making in the context of the here and now.

So how does *The Hobbit* resolve?

Once Bilbo discovers his capacity to roll with the changes that emerge in real-time, he can focus on longer-term, second-order

thinking. He knows he has shadow agency available to him and the magical ring to keep him hidden when necessary. With this newfound understanding of his capacity, his worldview 2.0 emerges.

The rest of the novel is about Bilbo using his worldview 2.0 to solve a whole host of short-term, intermediate-term, and long-term problems. While he has moments of self-doubt and despair throughout the ending payoff, Bilbo now has the capability to “step back” from his emotional states into a higher, more abstract, and omniscient “big picture” point of view.

This new worldview 2.0, an awakening that results in a more sufficient consciousness, is extraordinarily powerful. This new perspective provides Bilbo new propositions, procedures, and participatory environmental attunement. In other words, he is more capable of perceiving the world around him, applying what he learns, and sharing knowledge with his companions. Let’s review Bilbo’s actions and the feedback he receives from the global environment just after (and because of) his choice to put his life at stake to go back and free his companions.

1. Bilbo applies his shadow agency to fight the spiders. As a result, the dwarves are freed.
2. Bilbo applies his luminary agency and reveals the power of his ring to his friends. The response from the environment is that the friends now look to him for leadership.
3. Bilbo applies his luminary agency and does not physically respond to his companions’ capture by the wood elves because they are so outnumbered. The response from the environment is that he can infiltrate the wood elves’ domain and secure the freedom of the dwarves and their leader, Thorin.
4. Bilbo applies his luminary agency and turns over leadership of the group to Thorin. The environment responds that Thorin leads them with aplomb and secures their passage to the Lonely Mountain.
5. Bilbo applies his shadow agency while inside the mountain and steals a cup from Smaug. The response from the

environment is that an enraged Smaug starts to destroy the surroundings.

6. Bilbo applies his luminary agency on his second descent into the mountain. The response from the environment is that Smaug finds him amusing and spares his life while Bilbo discovers the dragon's vulnerability.
7. As the Lake people are under assault, Bilbo applies his luminary agency to tell his friends about Smaug's vulnerability. The response from the environment is that an old Thrush hears the information and takes it to the Lake people leader, Bard, who can kill Smaug just as all seems lost.
8. Bilbo applies his shadow agency to steal Thorin's precious Arkenstone. The response from the environment is that Thorin resolves to keep all of the treasure for himself and to not ally with the Lake people.
9. Bilbo applies his luminary agency to trade the Arkenstone so that peace prevails. The response from the environment is that Thorin resolves to fight to the death to retain his power and exile Bilbo from the group.
10. Bilbo's sacrificing of his wages to delay a war between the factions results in enough time for the allies to come together and defeat the invading armies of Wargs and goblins.

Do you see how Bilbo's new worldview 2.0 enables him to apply the best agentic behavior depending upon the context of his situation? Bilbo is no longer a passive hanger-on hoping to have minimal discomfort. Now he is applying a broader perspective to think through short, intermediate, and long-term problems and to solve them within a meaningful hierarchical order. He doesn't take short-cuts any longer but thinks about the big picture and his actions' second-order effects.

The result is the allies defeat an evil coalition of armies and distribute the wealth fairly among like-minded allied beings. Thorin, however, dies in the battle. Thematically, this death is consistent with the HJ2.0 structure.

Why?

Thorin is so entranced by his past that he has difficulty letting older concepts and traditions go. His inability to break the frame of his worldview almost results in catastrophe, and while he comes to his senses at the climactic moment of the ending payoff, the big battle, his ways of thinking no longer serve the collective.

But why must he die?

Moving forward requires loss. There is just no way around that requirement. When we are children, we attune to the natural world in ways that we, as adults, remember fondly. But we cannot recover them no matter how much we wish to. Growing up is not just a creative process that integrates information through a more objective and truthful lens upgrade (a worldview upgrade). It also requires the burning away of maladaptive points of view and capacities. Growing requires dissolution. And the capacities we must give up are extraordinarily difficult to let go of.

The sorrow of these losses is reflected in our love of nostalgia.

Back to *The Hobbit*. As a masterwork of the HJ2.0, *The Hobbit* does not omit the necessity for loss as the means to grow. And Thorin is the force that Bilbo must part with to complete the integration of his new worldview 2.0. Bilbo uses his shadow and luminary agencies with deftness and brilliance, but that success could not save his dear friend from death.

Birth and death are inextricably linked, and Tolkien did not avert his gaze from that eternal truth.

The birth of Bilbo's new worldview 2.0 saved civilization, but Bilbo's cost to achieve this heroic feat was the loss of a loved one. The heroic agent accepts that suffering is inescapable and no perfect set of actions will ever shelter us from pain. To go on, anyway, is the way to survive, thrive, and derive a meaningful life.

THE HJ2.0 CHEAT SHEET

The Heroic Journey 2.0 consists of five essential elements:

1. The Global Inciting Incident is a worldview destroying Invisible Phere Gorilla.
2. The Global Turning Point Progressive Complication arrives approximately halfway through the story when the protagonist's worldview 1.0 shatters, sending them into utter chaotic confusion.
3. The Global Crisis of the story emerges just after the protagonist realizes that all they held to be true in their past is now lost (the "all-is-lost" moment), from which emerges the mother of all crises, "Should I keep going, keep trying to find the truth? Or should I quit and surrender to nothingness?"
4. The Global Climax of the story is when the protagonist activates their Crisis choice. They *go on* (a prescriptive heroic journey) or *quit* (a cautionary anti-heroic journey).
5. The Global Resolution of the story is the result of the climactic choice. The prescriptive heroic journey pays off with meaning while the cautionary anti-heroic journey pays off with meaninglessness.

SCENE ANALYSIS

AN UNEXPECTED PARTY

SCENE I

1965 words

“In a hole in the ... had escaped adventures very well”

Summary: Gandalf visits Bilbo Baggins at his home in the neighborhood of The Hill.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo greets a visitor to his home.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Gandalf is trying to entice Bilbo to go on an adventure. Bilbo is not interested in an adventure and wants the visitor to move along.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Gandalf has been greeted warmly and invited back.

Welcomed to Rejected to Invited

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Gandalf pays a morning visit to Bilbo Baggins, who turns down his offer of adventure but accidentally invites him to come for tea the next day.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: A stranger comes to the door.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: The wizard corners Bilbo into agreeing to or declining an adventure.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If Bilbo agrees, he's in for hazard. If he doesn't agree, he'll offend a wizard.

Climax: Bilbo declines the offer.

Resolution: To soften his rejection, Bilbo invites Gandalf for tea.

NOTE

- This is the Global Inciting Incident of the Heroic Journey 2.0. Here, an unexpected event or Invisible Phere Gorilla presents a growth opportunity for Bilbo, but he doesn't see or understand what the invitation means because of his current worldview.

SCENE 2

6,278 words

“The next day he had ... day, when he woke up.”

Summary: The dwarves and Gandalf arrive for tea and discussion and stay for quite some time.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo is entertaining a large group of dwarves and a wizard.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The guests are recruiting Bilbo for an adventure, which he is resisting.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The dwarves are having difficulty recruiting Bilbo until they insult his pride.

Sociable to Rude to Convincing

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The dwarves and Gandalf arrive at teatime and take over Bilbo's house, slowly manipulating him to seriously consider signing on as the burglar of their adventure.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: A baker's dozen of dwarves arrive at Bilbo's house.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Gloin the dwarf insults Bilbo.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If Bilbo doesn't go, he'll confirm the dwarves' suspicions that he's a coward and will sully his family name. If he does go, he could be killed.

Climax: Bilbo agrees to go on the adventure.

Resolution: Bilbo regrets his decision.

NOTES

- To embrace the Heroic Journey 2.0 is to accept uncertainty, as the narrator explains. "This is a story of how a Baggins had an adventure, and found himself doing and saying things altogether unexpected. He may have lost the

neighbours' respect, but he gained—well, you will see whether he gained anything in the end.”

- How do we know the dwarves are not heroic? Some other motive is driving them to reclaim the treasure and their land. They cannot enter the Lonely Mountain through the Front Gate “without a mighty Warrior, even a Hero,” Gandalf says. Thorin has already said they are not interested in that approach.

ROAST MUTTON

SCENE 3

511 words

“Up jumped Bilbo, and putting ... that either! Off you go!”

Summary: Bilbo wakes to find the dwarves have left him a mess and a message.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo avoids going on the adventure but is then pushed to do so.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Bilbo is being roused to action.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Bilbo was safe and home, now he's heading into the wild.

Off the Hook to On the Hook

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo wakes up alone and believes the dwarves have left without him when Gandalf arrives and shoos him on his way.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo wakes up to find himself alone.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Thorin has left Bilbo a note.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Does Bilbo leave and risk his life or blow off the entire adventure and be safe?

Climax: Bilbo leaves and rushes to meet up with the dwarves

Resolution: Bilbo is in such a rush that he doesn't take anything with him.

NOTE

- Notice how quickly Bilbo returns to his usual behavior here, tending his home, eating, and chiding himself for imagining a bigger life in which he might make an impact. It feels authentic because even when we are attracted to the opportunity on offer, we resist. We've all been there.

SCENE 4

1,723 words

“To the end of his ... fashion at all, at all.”

Summary: Bilbo and the dwarves begin their journey and encounter difficulties.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The crew sets out on their journey.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The crew is navigating the landscape and the weather.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

They were all well fed and dry. Now they’re hungry and wet.
Safe to Threatened

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The dwarves and Bilbo set out on their adventure, and soon they lose a large supply of food and must investigate a fire in the offing.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The crew sets out.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: One of the ponies drowns with their food.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Should they investigate a fire in the woods and encounter danger or hide and risk going hungry?

Climax: Thorin orders Bilbo to investigate.

Resolution: Bilbo finds three very large persons around the fire.

SCENE 5

1,636 words

“Mutton yesterday, mutton today, and ... fear they should hear him.”

Summary: Bilbo observes the trolls and comes to the aid of the dwarves when they stumble in amongst the big creatures.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo watches and then tries to steal from the trolls.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The trolls debate how to best eat the dwarves.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

All were free. Now the only one not in a bag is Bilbo.

Free to Captured

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo encounters the low-class trolls who fight, eat, and drink like savages. They capture the dwarves and tie them up in sacks.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The trolls have plenty of food and drink.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Thorin attacks the trolls.

Crisis: Irreconcilable goods choice. Does Bilbo risk his safety by aiding Thorin, or should he stay safely away?

Climax: Bilbo fights.

Resolution: Thorin and Bilbo are overwhelmed.

NOTES

- Though Bilbo feels disgusted and afraid of the trolls, his pride will not let him return to the party emptyhanded. He must see this mini mission through. Remember his pride convinced him to join the dwarves in the beginning.
- The omniscient narrator breaks into the story periodically to provide information for the reader unfamiliar with the world. "Yes, I am afraid trolls do behave like that, even those with only one head each."

- Tolkien sets up the Resolution of the scene when Bert the troll says, “We’d best get out of the light.” If he doesn’t provide this information here, the reader would not forgive the sort of deus ex machina of Gandalf’s strategy to save the dwarves.

SCENE 6

1,413 words

“It was just then that ... ‘Thank you!’ said Thorin.”

Summary: Gandalf keeps the trolls bickering until they turn to stone, allowing the dwarves and Bilbo a meal and some rest.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

After Gandalf tricks the trolls, the fifteen adventurers check out the lair of the trolls, eat, and rest before setting off for the next stage of their journey.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The fifteen adventurers survey the trolls’ domain.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

All were terrified and now they are relieved.

Captured to Free

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Gandalf saves the day as he tricks the trolls into staying up until the dawn.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Gandalf Returns.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: The trolls had just decided to roast the dwarves now and eat them later.

Crisis: Irreconcilable goods choice. Does Gandalf rescue just Bilbo or does he risk all of their deaths to try and save them all?

Climax: Gandalf mimics the voices of the trolls and tricks them into arguing until daylight.

Resolution: The dwarves are freed and all explore, eat and relax until it's time to move forward.

A SHORT REST

SCENE 7

2,880 words

“They did not sing or ... Mountains to the land beyond.”

Summary: Gandalf guides the party to Rivendell where they eat, rest, and learn some vital information.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

I. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The band of brothers rests in Rivendell.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The fifteen companions prepare for moving their adventure forward.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The crew did not know about moon-letters or the derivation of their swords.

Ignorant to Informed

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Elrond and the elves are very hospitable, and they take care of the dwarves for fourteen days.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Gandalf leads the crew into Rivendell

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Elrond reveals the origin of two swords and of the message hidden inside Thorin's map.

Crisis: Should they remain safe and sound or embark further?

Climax: The crew goes forward.

Resolution: They have a firm plan and depart with the songs of elves in their heads.

NOTE

- The dwarves gain some vital information from Elrond that Bilbo remembers in his moment of insight later in the story. “Stand by the grey stone when the thrush knocks,’ read Elrond, ‘and the setting sun with the last light of Durin’s Day will shine upon the key-hole.”

OVER HILL AND UNDER HILL

SCENE 8

1,405 words

“There were many paths that ... they had brought with them.”

Summary: The party leaves Rivendell and travels into the Misty Mountains where they encounter a thunder battle between stone giants.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The band of brothers is traveling through the Misty Mountains.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

They are looking for shelter from the storm.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

They were wet, tired and vulnerable. Now they are dry and safe.
Vulnerable to Safe

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The expedition finds shelter in a cave during a storm.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: A thunderstorm/thunder battle begins in the mountains.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Thorin sends Fili and Kili out to find a better resting place than the narrow shelf under a hanging rock.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Do they move and expose themselves to

unforeseen danger in the cave, or do they stay outside and risk falling or being hit by boulders?

Climax: They move to the cave.

Resolution: All seems well, and all go to sleep.

NOTE

- The narrator foreshadows that the party will lose their ponies, packages, and tools. This is symbolic of the shift within this quadrant of the story. The luminary agent's usual tools will not help them solve their current problem.

SCENE 9

2,648 words

“It turned out a good ... rock, and remembered nothing more.”

Summary: The dwarves and Bilbo are captured by goblins, but Gandalf fights to free them.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The crew is held captive and then escapes the goblins.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The fifteen adventurers are desperately looking for refuge.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The crew was about to be eaten and now they are running from the goblins.

Doomed to Saved

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The crew is pulled into the goblin cavern through a crack, and just as they are close to big trouble, Gandalf arrives to save them.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: A crack in the back of the cave opens and goblins come out.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: The great goblin attacks Thorin.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Should Thorin and the dwarves fight the great goblin?

Climax: Gandalf comes to the rescue and saves the crew.

Resolution: They escape but are being chased. Bilbo falls off Dorin's shoulders and loses consciousness.

RIDDLES IN THE DARK

SCENE 10

591 words

“When Bilbo opened his eyes ... a patter and a pitter.”

Summary: Bilbo wakes up alone and finds a ring.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo is thinking about what to do next.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Bilbo is taking stock of his situation.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Bilbo is summoning the courage to move forward and gains strength by taking stock.

Confused to Directed

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo is in complete darkness, finds the ring, and presses forward.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo awakens in complete darkness.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Bilbo finds his sword.

Crisis: Should Bilbo go back or sideways or forward?

Climax: Bilbo moves forward.

Resolution: He's afraid but doing it anyway.

SCENE II

5,598 words

“Now certainly Bilbo was in ... will lead you to worse things.”

Summary: Bilbo encounters Gollum, and they engage in a battle of wits.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo and Gollum match wits.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Bilbo is buying time. Gollum is entertaining himself.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Bilbo gains tremendous power while Gollum loses it.
At the Mercy to Empowered

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo and Gollum match wits, and Bilbo gains an advantage and escapes.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo steps in water.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Gollum unknowingly leads Bilbo back to the passages he knew, but Gollum stands in the way of his progress.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Should Bilbo kill Gollum or evade him?

Climax: Bilbo evades Gollum.

Resolution: Bilbo makes his way toward the goblins.

NOTE

- In this scene, Bilbo realizes if he doesn't play a literal game of riddles, Gollum will kill him. The only way home is to confront the forces of antagonism, even though he doesn't fully understand the rules of the game.
- In the beginning, Bilbo pretends to be a thief. Now, he must become the thief to survive. He absentmindedly picks up the ring but soon realizes it belongs to Gollum.

SCENE 12

804 words

“The passage was low and ... the door. Bilbo had escaped.”

Summary: Bilbo encounters and then escapes a group of goblins.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo is leaving the goblin cavern.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Bilbo is running for his life.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

With the help from the ring, Bilbo finds safety.

Stuck to Free

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo escapes from the goblins.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo discovers life from out-of-doors.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Bilbo vanishes after he puts on the ring.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Should Bilbo wait it out or rush for the doorway?

Climax: Bilbo rushes to the door but gets stuck.

Resolution: Bilbo frees himself and escapes.

OUT OF THE FRYING-PAN INTO THE FIRE

SCENE 13

2,558 words

“Bilbo had escaped the goblins ... the branches of the trees.”

Summary: Bilbo is reunited with the dwarves and Gandalf, and they swap stories about their time apart before continuing their journey.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

I. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo is searching for his friends, who are discussing where Bilbo might be, and then they all meet up.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Bilbo and the crew are “catching up.”

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

They are lost and have found each other.

Lost to Found

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene’s on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo finds the dwarves and Gandalf on the other side of the mountain, and they set off to escape the pursuing goblins.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo finds Balin.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Bilbo announces himself at the dwarves’ camp.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Should the crew rest and risk being found by the goblins? Or should they move on in the diminishing light?

Climax: Gandalf commands them to press forward.

Resolution: Hungry and tired, the group complies with Gandalf's orders.

SCENE 14

1,794 words

“Must we go any further? ... yammering and looking for water.”

Summary: After dark, the party stumbles into the meeting place for a large group of Wargs and ends up stuck in the trees.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The crew is moving forward in the woods toward their goal but must find safety after the attack of the Wargs.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Pressing forward and then adapting to new environmental conditions.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

They all would be eaten by the Wargs if not for quick thinking.
Death to Life

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Dori helps Bilbo into the trees to escape the Wargs, and Gandalf throws burning pinecones on the backs of the wolves to get them to leave.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The crew hears the howling of Wargs.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Dori helps Bilbo into a tree.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Should they wait out the Wargs or do something to scare them off?

Climax: Gandalf launches fireballs down on the wolves.

Resolution: The Wargs yelp and retreat.

NOTE

- The protagonist represents an Invisible Phere Gorilla for the forces of antagonism. The party doesn't realize that killing the Goblin King upsets the plans of the Wargs who now know of the dwarves' presence in the arena.

SCENE 15

1,036 words

“What is all this uproar ... his talons, and was gone.”

Summary: The Lord of the Eagles is alerted to trouble in the forest, and the goblins attempt to burn the trees where the party climbed for safety.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The crew is in the trees while the Wargs bide their time, and goblins guide the fire toward the trees.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Waiting ’em out.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Just when it seems there is no escape, the Lord of the Eagles descends to save Gandalf. Certain death becomes life.

Death to Life

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Just as the fifteen travelers hiding from the Wargs and goblins in the trees are about to be burned down, the Lord of the Eagles descends to save them.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The Lord of the Eagles is disturbed by the commotion in the woods.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: The goblins arrive to join the Wargs, making it clear that no one is going to abandon the woods because of the fire.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Does the crew jump out of the trees and make a run for it, or do they burn alive?

Climax: The crew decides to stay in the trees.

Resolution: The Lord of the Eagles descends to save Gandalf, and his minions save the rest (beginning of the next scene).

SCENE 16

1,316 words

“There was a howl of ... remember what it looked like.”

Summary: The eagles take the dwarves, Gandalf, and Bilbo to their eyrie where they eat and rest.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The party is hoping to be saved by the eagles.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Pleading for help.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The crew is safe with the eagles but now must find a way to eat and continue with their journey.

Hungry to Satisfied

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Gandalf asks the Lord of the Eagles to find them some food. They eat and rest.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo is forgotten.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Gandalf and the Lord of the Eagles are friendly acquaintances.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Should Gandalf ask for more help and risk the ire of the Lord?

Climax: Gandalf asks for help procuring food.

Resolution: The Lord of the Eagles agrees to send out for some food.

QUEER LODGINGS

SCENE 17

982 words

“The next morning Bilbo woke ... when you have got it.”

Summary: The next morning, the eagles fly the party to a safe place where Gandalf tells the dwarves and Bilbo he will leave them soon.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

I. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The group is escorted by the eagles into a safe part of the woods.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The crew is getting its bearings and taking stock of their situation.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The relief of knowing they'd reached relative safety is now interrupted by Gandalf's declaration that he will be leaving soon.

Relieved to Disappointed

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The eagles drop off the dwarves and Bilbo to safety, and Gandalf lets them all know he'll be leaving them soon.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: A new morning arrives.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Gandalf announces he'll soon be leaving.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Should the rest of the crew freak out or be stoic?

Climax: They freak out.

Resolution: Gandalf holds firm but promises to get them to the next stage.

NOTE

- The narrator foreshadows the importance of the eagles in a later part of the story but also of success of the mission and that the dwarves reward the eagles as promised for their service.

SCENE 18

4,274 words

“After that they stopped pleading ... in spite of his fears.”

Summary: Gandalf leads the dwarves and Bilbo to the home of Beorn the shape-shifter to secure food and shelter.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The group is traveling through the woods to find shelter at the home of a shape-shifter Gandalf knows.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Playing a game to secure shelter.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

By artfully telling their story, Gandalf has gotten a grumpy guy to be hospitable.

Vulnerable to Safe

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The crew makes its way to Beorn's house and spends the night after Gandalf slowly coaxes him to provide hospitality with their story.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: After bathing, the crew moves into the woods.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Beorn invites them to stay.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Should they be in Beorn's debt and be vulnerable to his power or not?

Climax: They accept.

Resolution: Bilbo goes to bed but wakes to noises outside the door and fears Beorn will come in and slaughter them.

NOTE

- Beorn's questions allow Tolkien to remind the reader about the journey they've already taken. Beorn also offers advice in the form of tales about the land around his home, which foreshadows troubles to come.

SCENE 19

1,810 words

“It was full morning when ... gate at a good pace.”

Summary: While the party rests at Beorn’s home, the shape-shifter seeks to confirm their story.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The group awaits the return of Beorn, who arrives and gives them the lay of the land and supplies for the continuation of their journey.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The group is placing their trust in a stranger. Beorn returns from a mission to confirm the group’s story.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

As Beorn is the most powerful player in this scene, his universal value shift is the critical factor in the continuation of the group's mission. So, the value to feature on the spreadsheet is Beorn's attitude toward the group. "Under suspicion to worthy of aid."

Under Suspicion to Worthy of Aid

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

After getting confirmation of their story, Beorn decides to provide the group some much-needed aid.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Morning breaks and Beorn is nowhere to be found.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Beorn outfits them for their next leg of the trip.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If they heed the advice of Beorn, they could be led into a trap. If they don't, they'll be traveling without critical information.

Climax: They agree to follow his advice.

Resolution: They prepare for departure.

SCENE 20

1,960 words

“As soon as they left ... and plunged into the forest.”

Summary: Following Beorn’s advice, the party travels up the edge of Mirkwood where they must part with Beorn’s ponies and Gandalf.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The group navigates according to Beorn’s recommendations using his ponies to make it to the gateway into Mirkwood forest, which will lead them to Smaug’s Lonely Mountain.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

They are following orders.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Gandalf has warned the group that he will need to leave them shortly and the time has come for him to do that by the end of this scene.

Full Strength to Diminished

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The group travels the route Beorn recommended and in five days reaches the edge of Mirkwood and the straight path to the Lonely Mountain.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The group travels Beorn's route.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Gandalf leaves the group just as they reach Mirkwood.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If they send back the ponies to Beorn, they'll have to travel through Mirkwood on foot. If they don't, Beorn will become their enemy.

Climax: They send back the ponies.

Resolution: They plunge into the forest.

FLIES AND SPIDERS

SCENE 21

1,944 words

“They walked in single file ... span slowly off and disappeared.”

Summary: The party enters Mirkwood and eventually comes to an enchanted river of black water.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The group navigates day after day until they reach the black water. Beorn warned them about.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

They are following orders.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

This scene is the moment when Bilbo assumes a leadership role. Thorin defers to Bilbo about how to best get across the water without falling in, and Bilbo proves capable of solving the problem.

Bilbo: *Follower to Leader*

Group: *Stymied to Liberated*

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo assumes a leadership role when he is entrusted with figuring out how to cross the magic black water.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The group moves through the Mirkwood forest under duress.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: The group reaches the magic black water.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If they fall in the water, they're doomed. If they don't make their way across it, their mission will fail and they will probably starve on their way home.

Climax: Bilbo figures out how to get a boat across the water to ferry them.

Resolution: Bombur falls into the water.

SCENE 22

1,442 words

“They could still see his ... to climb up and feel.”

Summary: The party rescues Bombur from the enchanted river but must carry him, and their hope wanes as the forest seems to go on without end.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

After rescuing a sleeping Bombur from the water, the crew presses further into the Mirkwood Forest.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

They are making the best of things but looking for a sign to raise their spirits.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

This scene is the moment when the long, hard slog of the journey bears down on the group the most. They are running out of food and hoping they are coming toward the end of their journey. But after Bilbo climbs a tree, they discover they are still far, far away from their destination.

Hope to Despair

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo climbs a tree and discovers they are still far from a clearing in the Mirkwood Forest.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The group saves Bombur and now must continue on.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Bilbo discovers they are still in the thick of the forest with no end in sight.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If they give in to despair, they will certainly die in the forest. If they press on, they still face a high probability of death.

Climax: They despair and complain but continue onward.

Resolution: They take their anger out on Bilbo.

NOTE

- The white deer, sounds of the hunt, and fair voices are Invisible Phere Gorillas the narrator calls out for the reader.

The dwarves and Bilbo still possess their worldview 1.0 lenses (notice how Bilbo is blinded by the light when he climbs the tall oak), and while weighed down by Bombur and their despair, they can't see what the unexpected event means.

SCENE 23

1,817 words

“That night they ate their ... in complete silence and darkness.”

Summary: The party eats the last of their food, Bombur wakes up, and they spot lights in the forest that cause them to leave the path.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

After eating the last scraps of food and with the awakening of Bombur, the crew carries on.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

They are pressing forward even though they are coming to the conclusion that they will not make it out of the forest alive.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

This scene is the moment when the crew reaches an all-is-lost desperation. They've despaired only to discover the possibility of food in the darkness. Rabid with hunger they leave the trail to find provisions, only to discover that their desires are shared hallucinations. After three attempts to beg for food from the woodland king and his people, Bilbo is cast into the darkness alone and exhausted.

Group Despair to Hope and to Alone in Despair

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The crew is starving and after seeing evidence of light off the beaten path, they venture into the darkness to find feasting elves who disappear three times in a row as they try and beg for food, leaving Bilbo alone in the darkness after the third attempt.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bombur awakens, has lost his memory of their travels, and tells them his dream of a feast in the woods.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Dori, on first watch, discovers light coming from the depths of the forest.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If they leave the path, they could get lost forever. If they don't, they could starve.

Climax: They leave the path in search of the light in the forest.

Resolution: The light appears to be a shared illusion and Bilbo is left alone in the darkness after the third attempt to beg for food.

NOTE

- Bilbo finds himself alone and must rely on his own wits. He already knows he is more powerful and resourceful than the dwarves, and Gandalf is not there to save him again.

SCENE 24

4,999 words

“That was one of his ... hobbit again showed his usefulness.”

Summary: Bilbo defends himself by killing the great spider and then finds his friends and releases them.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo and the dwarves fight the Mirkwood spiders.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

They are fighting for their lives.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Bilbo and the dwarves move from certain death to life and from threatened to secure, while Thorin remains threatened.

Threatened to Secure and Certain Death to Life

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Under Bilbo's leadership the dwarves, without Thorin, defeat the Mirkwood spiders and then rest and contemplate the whereabouts of Thorin, who has been captured by the wood elves.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo discovers he's being wrapped in a spider's web.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: The spiders intend to kill and eat the entire crew.

Crisis: Irreconcilable goods choice. If Bilbo fights the spiders on behalf of the dwarves, he will likely be killed or seriously wounded. If Bilbo doesn't fight the spiders, the dwarves will die.

Climax: Bilbo fights the spiders.

Resolution: The crew defeats the spiders but discovers that Thorin is missing.

NOTE

- The act of fighting off the spider alters Bilbo's mood. "He felt a different person, and much fiercer and bolder in spite of an empty stomach, as he wiped the sword on the grass and put it back in its sheath." He had resolved to stay put but exercising his agency to save himself gave Bilbo the will to

get up and look for his friends, even though he didn't know where to find them. "In the end he made as good a guess as he could at the direction from which the cries for help had come in the night—and by luck (he was born with a good share of it) he guessed more or less right, as you will see. Having made up his mind he crept along as cleverly as he could. Hobbits are clever at quietness, especially in woods, as I have already told you; also Bilbo had slipped on his ring before he started. That is why the spiders neither saw nor heard him coming." This exercise of agency continues afterward when they must decide to look for Thorin.

- Part of the shift here is in the application of tactics Bilbo hadn't thought of before now. "Indeed he could do lots of things, besides blowing smoke-rings, asking riddles and cooking, that I haven't had time to tell you about."
- Bilbo's *action* comes before he *feels* brave. "In fact they praised him so much that Bilbo began to feel there really was something of a bold adventurer about himself after all, though he would have felt a lot bolder still, if there had been anything to eat."

BARRELS OUT OF BOND

SCENE 25

889 words

“The day after the battle ... Bilbo who found that out.”

Summary: The dwarves are captured by Wood-elves, but Bilbo puts on his ring and follows them to the Elvenking’s Halls.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

I. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo and the dwarves surrender to the Wood-elves.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

They are turning over their agency for food and water.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Bilbo and the dwarves move from being free in the forest, but near death, to being incarcerated in the Wood-elves' kingdom.

Free to Captured

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The Wood-elves capture the crew and bring them to their king, who insists on hearing their story, but they refuse to explain why they were in his forest and are thus thrown in jail.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The crew is starving but must move forward the next morning, eight of the thirteen agree on the direction and off they go.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Wood-elves leap out of the forest and capture the crew.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If the dwarves answer the questions of the Elvenking, they may lose their full claim on the fortune they seek. If they don't answer, they'll be thrown in jail.

Climax: The dwarves are thrown in jail.

Resolution: Bilbo remains unseen as he is wearing his ring, and he will have to figure a way out of the dilemma.

SCENE 26

4,936 words

“Poor Mr. Baggins—it was ... still remains to be seen.”

Summary: Bilbo comes up with a plan and frees the dwarves from the Wood-elves.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo frees the crew, puts them in barrels, and joins them in the river until they set off to Lake-town.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

They are following a plan.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Bilbo and the dwarves move from being held in captivity to leaving their prison incognito.

Captured to Free

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo frees the dwarves, and together they rush out of the castle down a river and on their way to Lake-town in barrels, while Bilbo remains invisible on board.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo discovers the water-gate.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Bilbo frees the dwarves from their cells.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If the dwarves hide in the barrels, they may not survive the journey. If they don't go in the barrels, they may never have another chance to escape.

Climax: The dwarves and Bilbo escape.

Resolution: The dwarves are on their way to Lake-town, but they still have far to go to accomplish their mission.

A WARM WELCOME

SCENE 27

1,893 words

“The day grew lighter and ... Bilbo. What else is there?”

Summary: Bilbo follows the dwarves in their barrels to Lake-town where he releases the dwarves.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo and crew travel down the river and into Lake-town with the raft of floating barrels.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

They are avoiding detection.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Once the boatmen leave and night falls, Bilbo opens up the barrels and frees the dwarves.

Confined to Released

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The crew arrives in Lake-town and after the boatmen leave to eat in town, Bilbo unpacks the crew from the barrels.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Darkness falls.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: The boatmen leave to have dinner in town and the wharf is abandoned.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If Bilbo releases the dwarves, they might make too much noise and be discovered. If he doesn't release the dwarves, they could die inside.

Climax: Bilbo releases the dwarves.

Resolution: Bilbo suggests they head into town.

SCENE 28

1,465 words

“Nothing else could, of course ... to “Thag you very buch.”

Summary: Thorin, Bilbo, and the two younger dwarves visit Lake-town’s Master.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Thorin and the crew ask to see the Master of the town.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

They seek their proper recognition.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The Master of Lake-town publicly recognizes Thorin as the King under the Mountain.

Under Suspicion to Celebrated

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Thorin assumes his identity as King under the Mountain and insists on the recognition thereof, which he receives from the lake people.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Thorin, Bilbo, Fili, and Kili interrupt the guards of Lake Town.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Thorin reveals that he is the descendent of kings and that he is the rightful King under the Mountain.

What's the Crisis: Best bad choice. If the Master of the town recognizes Thorin, he could alienate himself from the Elvenking. If he doesn't he will disappoint the people of the lake.

Climax: Thorin is recognized as legitimate

Resolution: The crew is celebrated and given high honors in the town.

SCENE 29

565 words

“In the meanwhile the Wood-elves ... person thoroughly unhappy was Bilbo.”

Summary: The Wood-elves know of Thorin’s plans. The Master of Lake-town agrees to help Thorin and the dwarves with their quest.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Thorin and the crew prepare to leave Lake-town and do so with the aid of the Master and the townspeople.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

They are steeling themselves for their encounter with Smaug.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Thorin and the crew do what is necessary to continue their journey to the Lonely Mountain.

Preparing to Departure

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The crew prepares for their trip up the Lonely Mountain and gains the aid of Lake-town for their journey and recognition of their legitimacy.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The crew is given hospitality by Lake-town.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Thorin meets with the Master and his councilors and asks for advice and aid for his departure.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If the Master of the town gives aid to the crew, he'll deplete his town's reserves. If he doesn't, the crew will surely fail and he'll betray the legacy of the King under the Mountain.

Climax: The Master provides aid.

Resolution: The crew departs.

ON THE DOORSTEP

SCENE 30

1,526 words

“In two days going they ... began their long climb down.”

Summary: The crew arrives at the Lonely Mountain, and Thorin sends a small party to search for the secret doorway.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

A search party made up of Balin, Bilbo, Fili and Kili scout the Lonely Mountain for signs of the secret doorway that Elrond told them about months ago in June. At long last they find it.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

They are searching.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Both the secret door and the dragon become real to the crew once they discover evidence of both.

Imagined to Realized

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

After days of searching, the crew's search party made up of Balin, Bilbo, Kili, and Fili discover the secret doorway in the mountain that Elrond told them about.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The crew makes it to the base of the Lonely Mountain.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: The search party discovers

how ominous and desolate the environment is and finds evidence that the dragon is still in full control of the arena.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If the crew continues to search, they might actually find the door and usher in the certainty of their failure. If they search halfheartedly, they may be able to exhaust Thorin's patience and be reprimanded.

Climax: Bilbo wholeheartedly presses forward and finds the doorway.

Resolution: No matter how hard they push, they can't get the doorway open.

SCENE 31

1,476 words

“There was excitement in the ... mouth leading in and down.”

Summary: Bilbo gains insight to find the keyhole and open the secret door.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The crew is desperately trying to get the secret doorway set inside the mountain open.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The crew is starting to think only of themselves, and thus as Bilbo is the only “non-dwarf,” they’re looking for him to solve the problem.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The closed door opens.

Closed to Open

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

After days of trying to break down the door, Bilbo (attuning to the natural world moment by moment) has the insight that solves the dilemma.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The crew hustles up the mountain to get the door open.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Their tools are unable to budge the door.

Crisis: Best bad choice. They need to get inside the mountain and contemplate making Bilbo use his ring and go in the hard way, where he is certain to arouse the attentions of Smaug. If they don't get into the mountain, though, they'll never achieve their mission.

Climax: Bilbo figures out how to get the doorway open by paying attention to the natural world.

Resolution: Thorin uses his key and they are able to get the door open.

NOTE

- This is the moment when Bilbo attunes to his environment to gain insight about the problem of opening a locked door. The thrush reminds him of Elrond's information. "Suddenly

Bilbo understood. Forgetting all danger he stood on the ledge and hailed the dwarves, shouting and waving. Those that were nearest came tumbling over the rocks and as fast as they could along the ledge to him, wondering what on earth was the matter; the others shouted to be hauled up the ropes (except Bombur, of course: he was asleep).”

INSIDE INFORMATION

SCENE 32

1,107 words

“For a long time the ... glow. The glow of Smaug!”

Summary: Bilbo enters the Lonely Mountain and must decide to whether to fulfill his part of the deal he struck with the dwarves and continue on alone.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Thorin calls on Bilbo to perform his duty. Balin is the only dwarf willing to accompany him part way into the Mountain as Bilbo moves into and descends into the darkness.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The crew is living up to their offer while Bilbo is living up to his.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Externally, Bilbo moves down into the Mountain, but internally, he goes from the dwarves' chosen burglar to taking responsibility for the next step in the mission.

Above to Below or Chosen to Responsible

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Soon after entering the Mountain, Bilbo gets on with it and heads down into the darkness to confront Smaug.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Once inside the mountain it's time for Bilbo to burgle.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Balin tells Bilbo he's gone as far as he's willing to go.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Bilbo must move forward and face Smaug alone or go back on his promise by refusing to go any farther.

Climax: Bilbo carries on.

Resolution: Bilbo reaches the bottom and sees a slumbering Smaug.

NOTES

- The narrator explains the general character of the dwarves in order to establish how Bilbo is different. "There it is: dwarves are not heroes, but calculating folk with a great idea of the value of money; some are tricky and treacherous and pretty bad lots; some are not, but are decent enough people like Thorin and Company, if you don't expect too much."
- The narrator calls the reader's attention to the change in Bilbo. "Already he was a very different hobbit from the one that had run out without a pocket-handkerchief from Bag-End long ago."
- Everything Bilbo does after this moment depends on what happens here when he chooses to confront his fear and go on. He must face other external battles soon, but without winning this internal battle first, those efforts would fail. "*Going on* from there was the bravest thing he ever did. The tremendous things that happened afterwards were as nothing compared to it. He fought the real battle in the tunnel alone, before he ever saw the vast danger that lay in wait. At any rate after a short halt go on he did; and you can picture him coming to the end of the tunnel, an opening of much the same size and shape as the door above."

SCENE 33

1,435 words

“There he lay, a vast ... and round the mountain-sides.”

Summary: Bilbo steals a cup from the treasure hoard and wakes the dragon.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Smaug awakens to discover the missing cup, sets out to find the thief, and the dwarves set to hide from his wrath.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

To keep calm and secure all dwarves and as many supplies as possible.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Before, the dragon was unaware of the dwarves' presence, but now he knows they are nearby and is looking for them.

Safe to Threatened

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Smaug discovers the missing cup and leaves the mountain to find the thief while the dwarves protect their own and find safety inside their mountain tomb.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Smaug awakens

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Bombur and Bofur are down below.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If they try and rescue Bombur and Bofur, they will be exposed. If they don't, Bombur and Bofur will die.

Climax: They safeguard Bombur and Bofur.

Resolution: They're safe but Smaug is raising hell outside. It won't be long until they must confront him again.

SCENE 34

2,704 words

“He guessed from the ponies ... was pretty true as well.”

Summary: The dwarves rely on Bilbo to come up with a solution, and Bilbo goes into Smaug’s lair again.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo takes the leadership reins and suggests that he go back into Smaug’s lair and report back. He does so, has a conversation with Smaug, and heads back up to report to the dwarves.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Bilbo assumes leadership of the expedition.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Bilbo's responsibilities exceed the scope of his original agreement, and the dwarves all look to him to deal with the dragon.

Follower to Leader

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo heads back into Smaug's lair, has a long conversation with the dragon and returns with priceless confirmation about the dragon's vulnerability with other warnings about the dwarves' attachment to treasure.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The crew is stuck with few options in dealing with Smaug.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Bilbo begins to manipulate Smaug into showing Bilbo his vulnerabilities.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Smaug is brilliant and if he catches on to what Bilbo is up to, it could backfire on him. If he doesn't get a clear sense of where Smaug can be defeated, there will be no chance to wrest control of the Mountain and the fortune.

Climax: Bilbo flatters Smaug, who reveals his vulnerability.

Resolution: Smaug doesn't like Bilbo's snarky attitude, and he almost burns him alive during Bilbo's escape.

NOTES

- Bilbo is on the lookout for possible solutions to the problem

and relying on rules of thumb like “Every worm has his weak spot,” a bit of wisdom passed down from his father. Then Bilbo uses flattery to trick the dragon into revealing where he is vulnerable.

- Smaug sows the seeds of doubt in Bilbo’s mind about the potential for success and the likelihood that the dwarves will treat him fairly. The force of his personality is a formidable tool with which Smaug tries to get what he wants. Bilbo chooses to go on in the face of these doubts.

SCENE 35

1,888 words

“The afternoon was turning into ... south towards the Running River.”

Summary: Bilbo returns from speaking with the dragon, and he and the dwarves narrowly escape Smaug’s attack.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo and the crew discuss what to do with the information Bilbo has received from Smaug while Smaug creeps out of the cave and searches for the opening to the mountain to destroy them.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Thorin and the other dwarves are placating Bilbo in regard to how they would handle the treasure while Bilbo questions their intentions.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Thorin closes the door just before Smaug attacks.

Safe to Threatened

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo and the crew debate what to do next and of what to do about the vast treasures inside if they are to be successful in killing Smaug while Smaug almost finds and destroys them.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo returns from Smaug's lair shaken.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Bilbo insists that Smaug is enraged and is definitely planning an attack.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If they close the door, the only way out is through Smaug's lair. If they don't, Smaug could kill them all.

Climax: They close the door.

Resolution: Smaug smashes the mountainside to bits and they survive ... for now.

NOT AT HOME

SCENE 36

2,345 words

“In the meanwhile, the dwarves ... rumour of the dragon’s coming.”

Summary: Bilbo and the dwarves realize the way out is blocked and enter Smaug’s lair.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

I. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo convinces the dwarves they need to leave the tunnel. He leads them out and discovers the Arkenstone, which he secures in his pocket, and then the dwarves join him to explore the treasures Smaug guards.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Bilbo is leveling with friends while the dwarves are placing their trust in Bilbo.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The dwarves are terrified of dying in the tunnel or encountering Smaug and become enthralled at the sight of the treasure.

Terrified to Enthralled

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo convinces the crew to leave the tunnel, and then he leads the procession into Smaug's lair and discovers the Arkenstone, which he conceals in his pocket.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo and the dwarves are growing stir crazy from hiding in the tunnel.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Bilbo discovers the Arkenstone and realizes just how valuable this mission could be for him.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If they continue to stay inside Smaug's lair, they will be able to enjoy the treasures. But doing so will make a confrontation with Smaug inevitable.

Climax: Bilbo recommends they find their way out of the mountain and leave the treasure behind.

Resolution: The crew sets out to leave the mountain.

SCENE 37

1,566 words

“Though all the old adornments ... first cold stars came out.”

Summary: The party leaves the hall and hikes to a safe place where they can rest.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The crew hikes to Balin’s watch post on the side of the Lonely Mountain.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The crew rationally figures out where to go, which will give them the greatest probability of safety. They all reason a path forward.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

There is no place to hide in the caves, and Smaug could return anytime. The crew travels to the watch post where they have a wide view and can stay out of sight.

Threatened to Safe

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Balin tells the crew how to navigate to a place of safety. They follow his direction and arrive just as the night falls.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo and the dwarves make their way to Balin's watch post on the mountain and escape Smaug's inner sanctum while he is away.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Balin suggests they head up to Ravenshill and find shelter.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If they seek shelter, they will be easily killed if Smaug returns. If they don't they'll be killed inside the mountain.

Climax: They head for the watch post.

Resolution: They make it to their destination, still unsure of Smaug's whereabouts.

FIRE AND WATER

SCENE 38

1,479 words

“Now if you wish, like ... Esgaroth, but not of Bard.”

Summary: Smaug attacks Esgaroth but is defeated by a well-placed arrow shot by Bard.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The people of Esgaroth prepare for and then fight Smaug.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Fighting for their lives.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The people are facing certain death until the old thrush gives Bard the information he needs to defeat Smaug.

Death to Life

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

After hearing the thrush tell him about Smaug's vulnerability, Bard kills him.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Smaug attacks Esgaroth.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: The thrush tells Bard how to defeat Smaug.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Trusting the bird and standing his ground, will

definitely determine Bard's life or death. If he doesn't stand his ground, all of his tribe will die.

Climax: Bard shoots his last black arrow.

Resolution: Smaug dies and falls into the lake.

SCENE 39

1,752 words

“The waxing moon rose higher ... came into the desolate lands.”

Summary: The people of Esgaroth seek help from the Elvenking, and they agree to join forces to obtain the treasure.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The people of Esgaroth recover from the battle by allying with the Elvenking and his kingdom. They resolve to take by force their fair share of Smaug’s treasure.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The Wood-elves and people of Esgaroth focus on getting their due.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The people are relieved that Bard has survived, but soon the Master deflects responsibility toward the dwarves who caused Smaug to attack their town.

Relief to Resentment

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The Esgaroths and the Elves of the Woods become allies and begin the march to the Lonely Mountain to partake in the treasure the dwarves now possess.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The Esgaroths believe Bard the dragon-slayer has died in the final battle.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: The Master brilliantly turns the focus of the Esgaroths from his poor leadership to the dwarves as the source of their pain.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If the Esgaroths ally with the Elvenking, they'll have to divide the treasure they seek. If they don't, the town will not survive the winter.

Climax: They ally with the Elves of the Woods.

Resolution: An army of Elves and men set out for the Lonely Mountain to confront the dwarves.

THE GATHERING OF THE CLOUDS

SCENE 40

1,237 words

“Now we will return to ... had to go with them.”

Summary: Thorin learns that Smaug is dead and the lake men and elves want a share of the treasure.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The dwarves are on Ravenhill biding time when the old thrush arrives and brings Roac, a raven the dwarves can understand, to tell them the goings on in Lake Town.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Processing information.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The dwarves can't make sense of the flocks of birds that are gathering, but soon they learn the birds gather because Smaug is dead, but also the Elvenking's army is on its way and the people of Lake-town want recompense.

Uncertainty to Certainty to Complexity

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Thorin hears the news about Esgaroth and decides to protect the treasure at all costs, so he sends for help from his cousin using the raven network.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Flocks of birds are gathering near the Lonely Mountain.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Smaug is dead, but the Wood-elves are on their way, and the Esgaroths blame the dwarves for destruction of their town.

Crisis: Best bad choice. Thirteen dwarves can't face two armies, but if Thorin makes peace with the lake men and elves, he has to share the treasure.

Climax: Thorin asks Roac to send word to his cousin Dain in the Iron Hills.

Resolution: Roac agrees, and Thorin orders everyone back to the Mountain.

SCENE 4I

2,124 words

“As you have heard some ... to stick in my throat.”

Summary: The armies arrive, and Thorin refuses to discuss Bard’s claim on the treasure.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The dwarves fortify the mountain gate. Thorin listens to Bard argue his case and then denies his requests.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Digging in their heels.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The dwarves gather what food they can and fortify the Front Gate against the approaching armies, but soon they are besieged.

Fortified to Entombed

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Thorin refuses Bard's reasonable suggestions to avoid conflict and the dwarves are left inside of their bejeweled fortress without access to food beyond their meager stores.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bard and company approach the gate.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Bard offers a compromise so they can avoid conflict

Crisis: Best bad choice. If Thorin accepts the compromise, he may be the victim of a lie. If he doesn't, conflict is assured.

Climax: Thorin rejects the pleas to reasonably discuss compensation.

Resolution: The dwarves are pinned inside their mountain.

A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

SCENE 42

2,151 words

“Now the days passed slowly ... dreaming of eggs and bacon.”

Summary: Bilbo sneaks down the mountain with the Arkenstone to meet with Bard and the Elvenking.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo sneaks out of the fortress late at night to forge a compromise with Bard and the Elvenking

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Leveling with someone and placing trust in another's morality.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Bilbo is powerless to convince Thorin to be reasonable, but he can offer a bargaining chip so others can negotiate.

Powerless to Powerful

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo sneaks out of the fortress and hands over the Arkenstone to Bard as a means to avoid conflict.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo realizes that Thorin is overwhelmed with desire for treasure and is not seeing clearly.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Bilbo resolves to negotiate a truce and leaves the fortress to do so.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If Bilbo gives the Arkenstone to Bard, he may be denied leave and held prisoner. If he doesn't there will be a war no matter what.

Climax: Bilbo gives the Arkenstone, Thorin's most desired object, to Bard.

Resolution: Bard and the Elvenking allow Bilbo to go back to the dwarf camp. He meets Gandalf on his way out of the camp.

THE CLOUDS BURST

SCENE 43

1,056 words

“Next day the trumpets rang ... him come with wary speed.”

Summary: Thorin agrees to a share of the treasure in exchange for the Arkenstone when Bard, the Elvenking, and Gandalf come to negotiate.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bard and the Elvenking, along with a disguised Gandalf, meet with Thorin and the dwarves to negotiate peace.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Pulling a trump card.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Bilbo begins as a member of the expedition entitled to his share of the treasure but is exiled by Thorin when he learns that Bilbo gave away the Arkenstone.

Belonging to Exile

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo admits to giving Bard the Arkenstone. Thorin agrees to give up one fourteenth of the treasure to Bard to retain it, but he throws out Bilbo from the dwarf crew.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: A messenger from Bard and the Elvenking arrives at the fortress.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Thorin throws Bilbo out of the crew.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If Bilbo fights the exile, it will result in bloodshed. If he doesn't, he'll be out his payment and his camaraderie.

Climax: Bilbo accepts his excommunication and leaves with Bard and company.

Resolution: An ultimatum results and Thorin is to turn over the loot in exchange for the Arkenstone at noon the next day.

SCENE 44

1,020 words

“That day passed and the ... Nain come swiftly to us!”

Summary: Dain’s army arrives and Thorin fires upon Bard’s messengers while an army of goblins, Wargs, and wolves approaches.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The two sides react to the other’s tactics to prepare for an inevitable confrontation.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The parties are engaged in making the best game theoretical choices based upon the scarcity first principle.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Each side believes they have an advantage until the army of goblins, Wargs, and wolves appears.

From Order to Chaos

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Dain, Bard, and Thorin prepare to fight, but just as they are about to engage, the goblins and Wargs arrive to take advantage of their internecine squabbles.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Dain and his folk arrive to support Thorin.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Thorin has his archers fire about Bard's messengers.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If Bard retaliates, he will face a two-front war. If he doesn't, the dwarves may overrun his position.

Climax: Gandalf intercedes just as Bard is about to act.

Resolution: The common enemy of the dwarves, elves, and men arrives to take advantage of the infighting.

SCENE 45

1,859 words

“So began a battle that ... crash and knew no more.”

Summary: The armies clash in a fight to the death.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

The fight ensues and the players make game moves in the moment to their best advantage.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

The dwarves, elves, and men are fighting for their lives.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

The goblins attack and nearly reach the gate, but the Eagles arrive.
Death to Salvation

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The Five Army War commences and the ebb and flow of it moves back and forth between the two opposing forces until the arrival of and seeming intervention of the natural world as represented by the eagles.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The goblins and Wargs attack.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Thorin and his dwarves advance from the Mountain, and he calls out to the allies to follow him into the scrum.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If the allies advance, they may all be wiped out. If they don't, Thorin will definitely be wiped out.

Climax: Some follow Thorin. Others stay in the fortifications. Individual expression of agency hedges both sides of the dilemma.

Resolution: The last full measure is about to fail when the eagles arrive.

THE RETURN JOURNEY

SCENE 46

2,017 words

“When Bilbo came to himself ... Then he turned away.”

Summary: Bilbo makes peace with the dying Thorin and then prepares to leave the dwarves.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

I. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

After saying farewell to the dying Thorin, Bilbo prepares to leave.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Settling affairs before departure.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Bilbo prepares to leave his band of brothers after saying goodbye to Thorin.

One of the Group to Lone Wolf

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

After Thorin's death and the defeat of the goblins, Bilbo prepares to leave the Lonely Mountain to head back homeward to the Shire.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo wakes up after the final battle.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Bard offers to give Bilbo his full share of the treasure.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If Bilbo takes his full share, he'll endanger

himself on his way home. If he doesn't take the full share, his adventure will have no material reward.

Climax: Bilbo takes a manageable amount of treasure that will be not be a burden but will safeguard his material needs for the foreseeable future.

Resolution: Bilbo departs.

NOTE

- In the end, Thorin recognizes Bilbo's contribution to their quest, but also that there is value in the life he leads. "There is more in you of good than you know, child of the kindly West. Some courage and some wisdom, blended in measure. If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world. But sad or merry, I must leave it now. Farewell!"

SCENE 47

791 words

“The elf-host was on ... my own armchair!” he said.

Summary: Bilbo crosses country he traveled earlier with the dwarves.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

Bilbo, Gandalf, the Elves and Beorn travel home.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Making the best of a long journey.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Bilbo makes his way home.

Far Away to Closer to Home

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

The first stages of the trip are complete, and Bilbo and Gandalf leave Beorn's home for the last leg.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: The departure party moves out of the valley of the Lonely Mountain.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: Spring arrives and the roads are ready to travel.

Crisis: Best bad choice. If Bilbo leaves, he'll probably never see the beauty of Beorn's property again. If he doesn't, he'll never get home.

Climax: Bilbo leaves.

Resolution: They only have a reasonable trip ahead of them.

THE LAST STAGE

SCENE 48

2,461 words

“It was on May the ... handed him the tobacco-jar.”

Summary: Bilbo arrives home to find things have changed.

STORY EVENT

A Story Event is an active change of a universal human value for one or more characters as a result of conflict (one character’s desires clash with another’s, or an environmental shift changes the value positively or negatively).

A Working Scene contains at least one Story Event. To determine a scene’s Story Event, answer these four Socratic questions:

1. The Action Story Component: What are the characters literally doing—that is, what are their micro on-the-surface actions?

After staying with the elves and Elrond for a few weeks, Bilbo and Gandalf make it back to the Shire to discover that Bilbo is presumed dead.

2. The Worldview Story Component: What is the essential tactic of the characters—that is, what above-the-surface macro behaviors are they employing that are linked to a universal human value?

Settling back into the old ways.

3. The Heroic Journey 2.0 Component: What beyond-the-surface universal human values have changed for one or more characters in the scene? Which one of those value changes is most important and should be included in the Story Grid Spreadsheet?

Bilbo's family members learn he is still alive.

Death to Life

4. The Scene Event Synthesis: What Story Event sums up the scene's on-the-surface actions, essential above-the-surface worldview behavioral tactics, and beyond-the-surface value change? We will enter that event in the Story Grid Spreadsheet.

Bilbo makes it home to find himself presumed dead. He settles in and begins to write his memoirs.

HOW THE SCENE ABIDES BY THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Inciting Incident: Bilbo and Gandalf come into Rivendell.

Turning Point Progressive Complication: The hobbits have presumed Bilbo dead.

Crisis: Irreconcilable goods choice. If Bilbo is alive, he will ruin the plans of his relatives and the others who have bought his property.

Climax: Bilbo buys back his own property.

Resolution: Bilbo is content and done with adventures.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SHAWN COYNE created, developed, and expanded the story analysis and problem-solving methodology The Story Grid throughout his quarter-century-plus book publishing career. A seasoned story editor, book publisher and ghostwriter, Coyne has also co-authored *The Ones Who Hit the Hardest: The Steelers, The Cowboys, the '70s and the Fight for America's Soul* with Chad Millman and *Cognitive Dominance: A Brain Surgeon's Quest to Out-Think Fear* with Mark McLaughlin, M.D. With his friend and editorial client Steven Pressfield, Coyne runs Black Irish Entertainment LLC, publisher of the cult classic book *The War of Art*. With his friend and editorial client Tim Grahl, Coyne oversees the Story Grid Universe, LLC, which includes Story Grid University and Story Grid Publishing.

ABOUT THE EDITOR

LESLIE WATTS is a Story Grid Certified Editor, writer, and podcaster based in Austin, Texas. She's been writing for as long as she can remember—from her sixth-grade magazine about cats to writing practice while drafting opinions for an appellate court judge. Leslie has co-authored *The Tipping Point by Malcolm Gladwell: A Story Grid Masterworks Analysis Guide* and *What's the Big Idea? Nonfiction Condensed*, both with Shelley Sperry, and *Conventions and Obligatory Moments: The Must-Haves to Meet Audience Expectations* with Kimberly Kessler. As an editor, Leslie helps fiction and nonfiction clients write epic stories that matter. She believes writers become better storytellers through study and practice, and editors owe a duty of care to help writers with specific and supportive guidance. You can find her online at Writership.com.

NOTES

THE HJ2.0 GLOBAL INCITING INCIDENT

1. Daniel Simons and Christopher Chabris, "Selective Attention Test," YouTube video, 1:21, posted by Daniel Simons, March 10, 2010, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJG698U2Mvo>).

