

NFTS

CYMRU

WALES

WALEZ

CYMRU

JOHN YORKE
INTO *the* WOODS

NFTS

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IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT STORY

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INTO *the* WOODS



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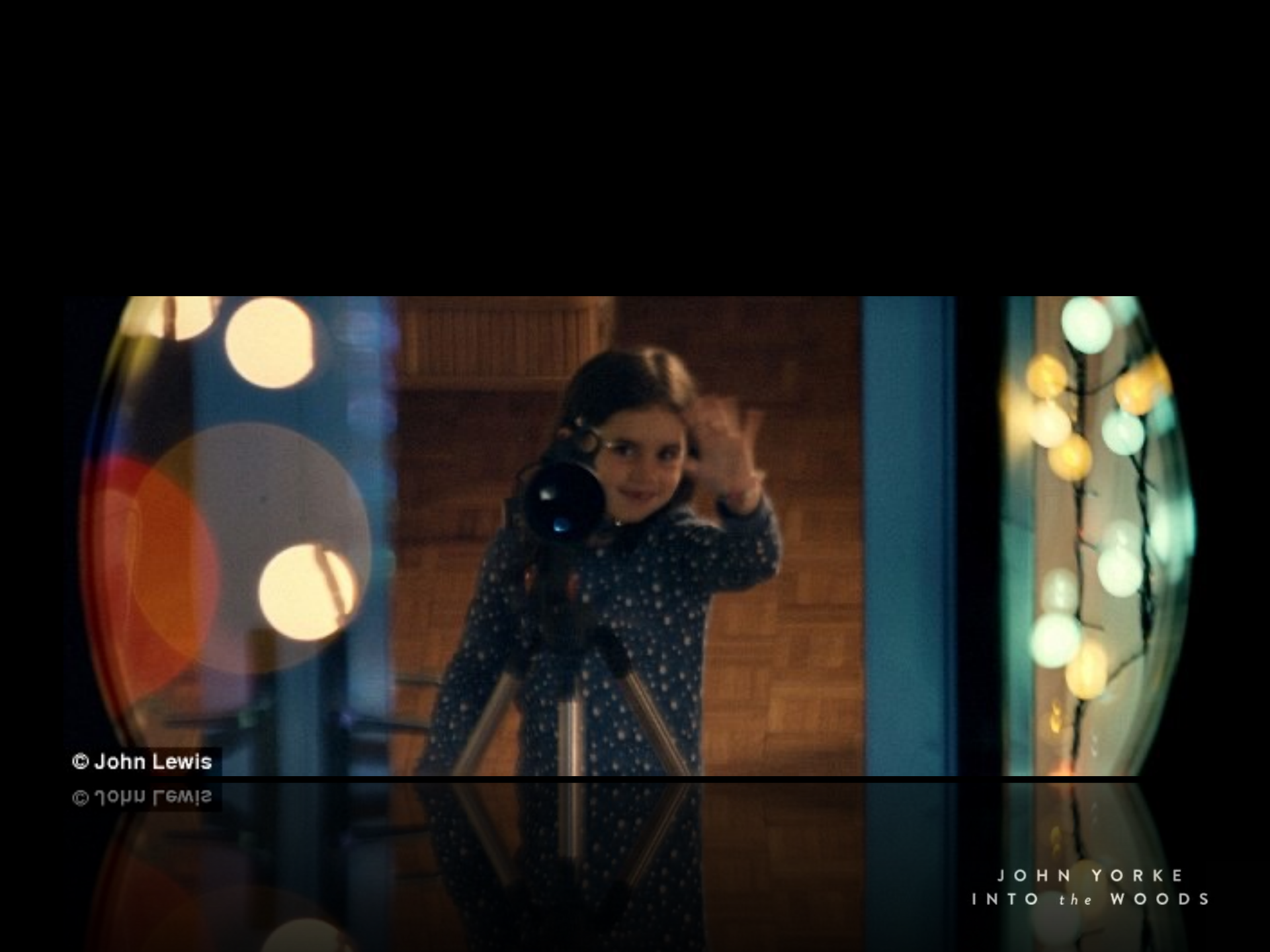


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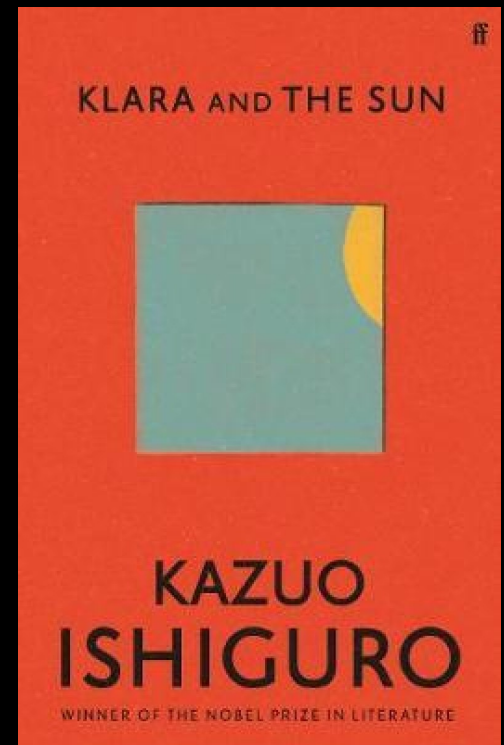
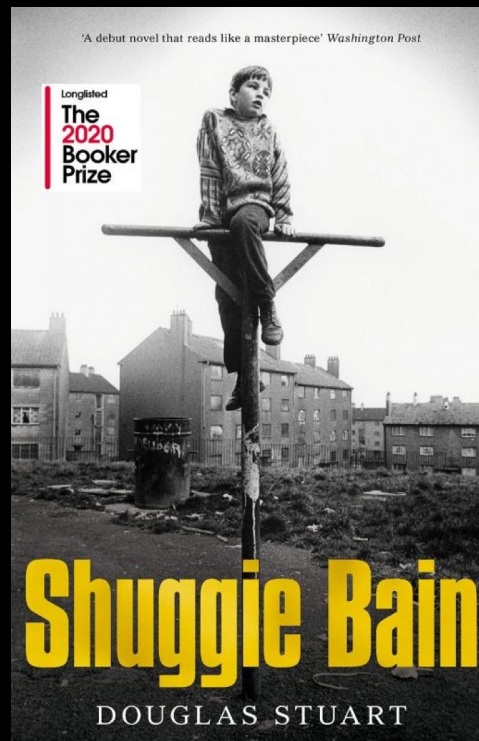
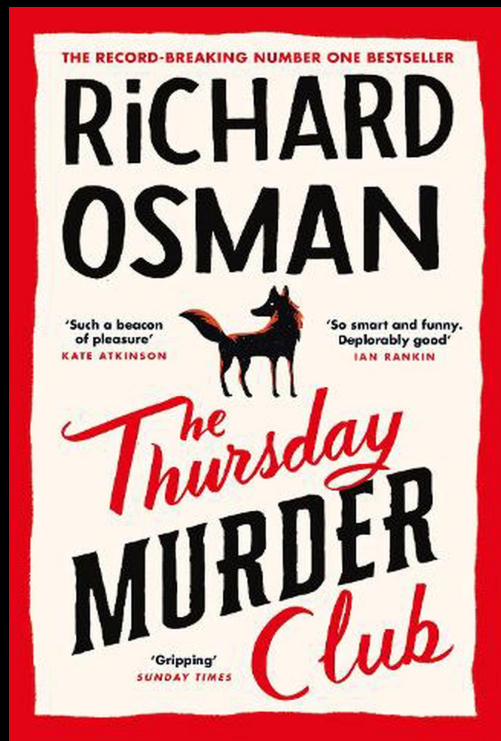




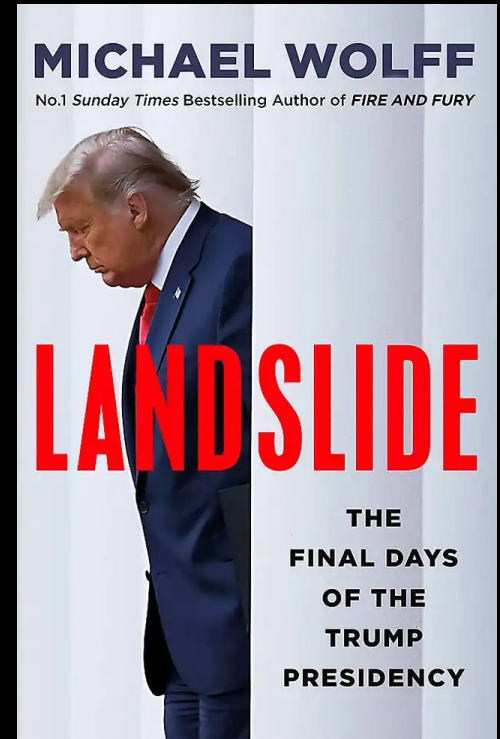
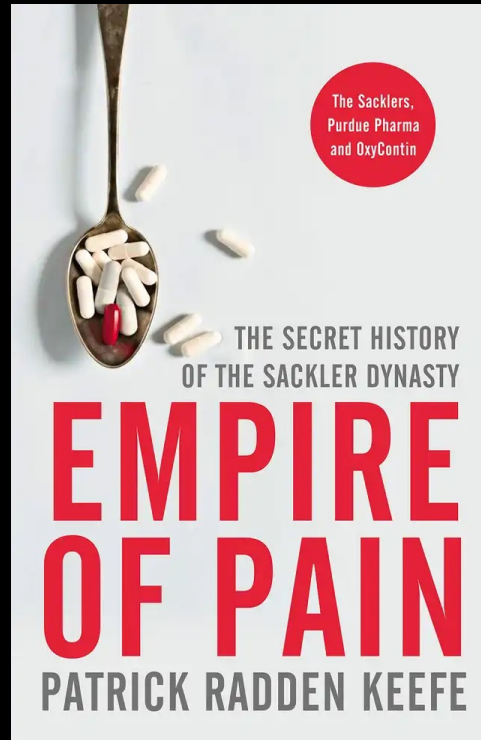
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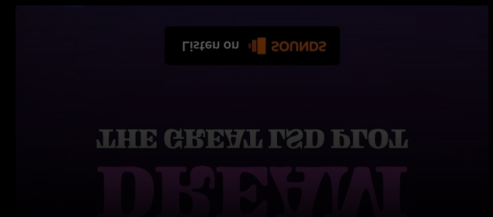
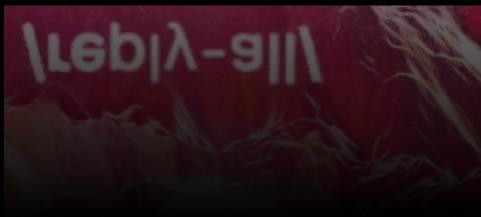
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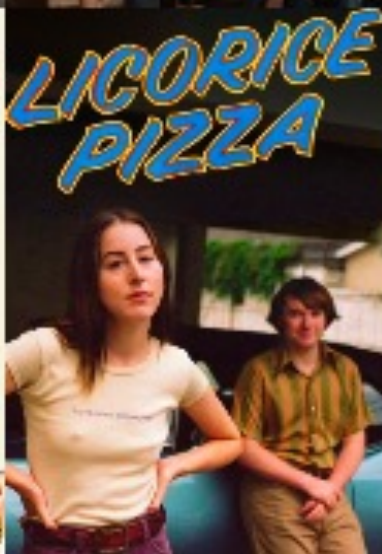
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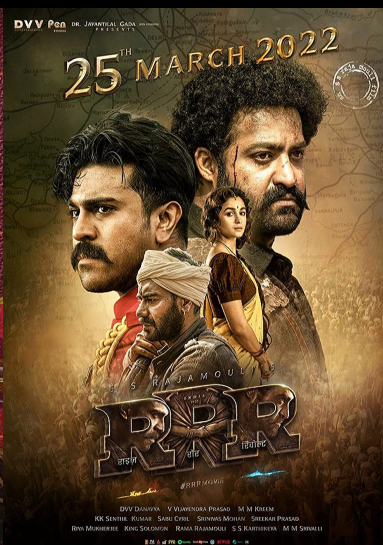
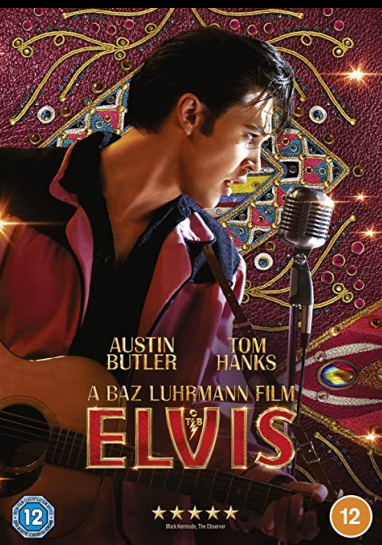
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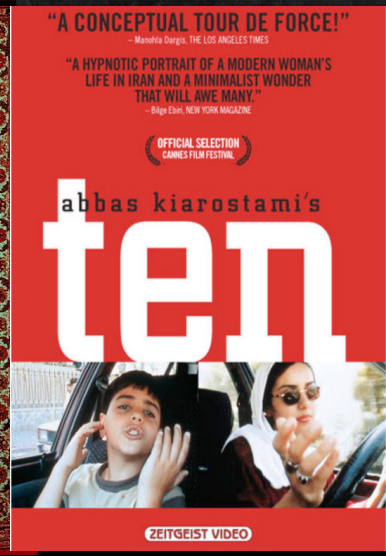
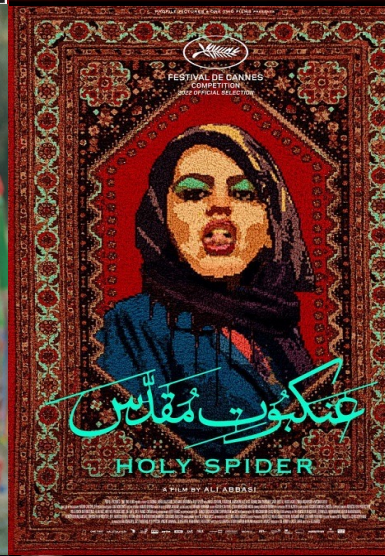
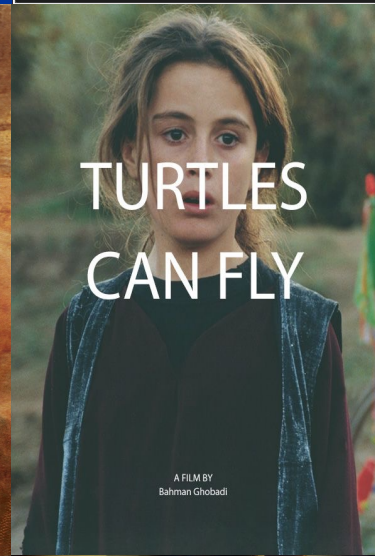
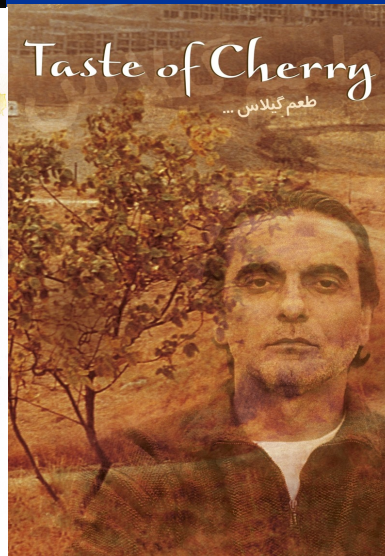
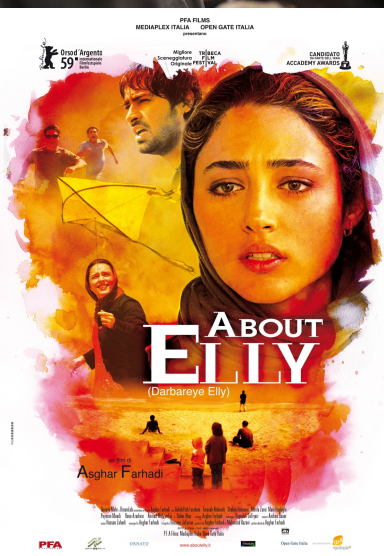
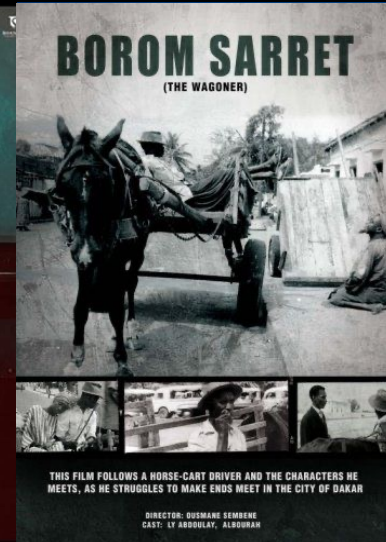
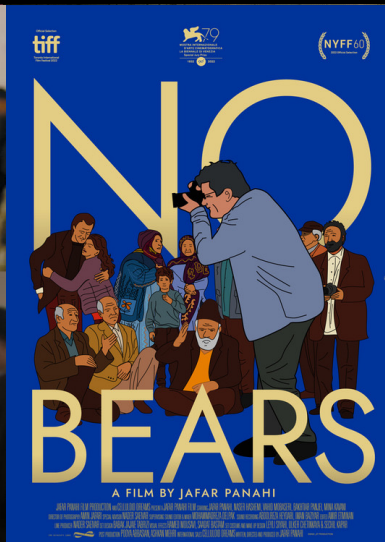
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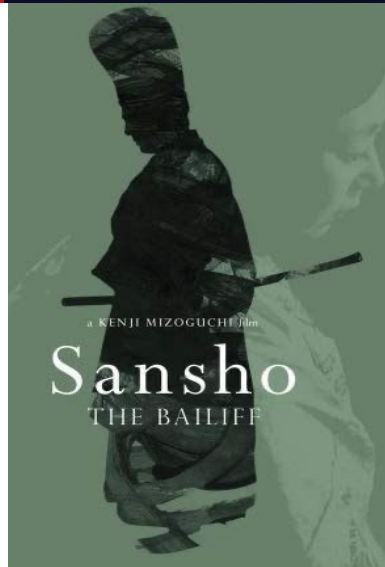
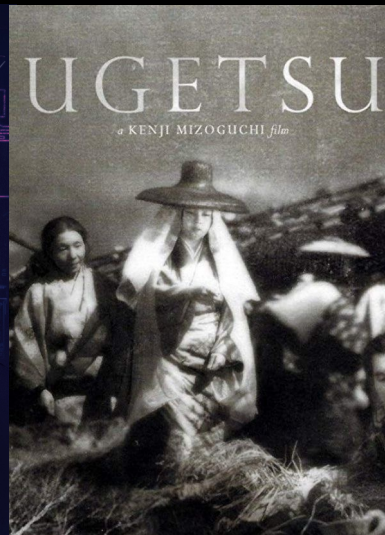
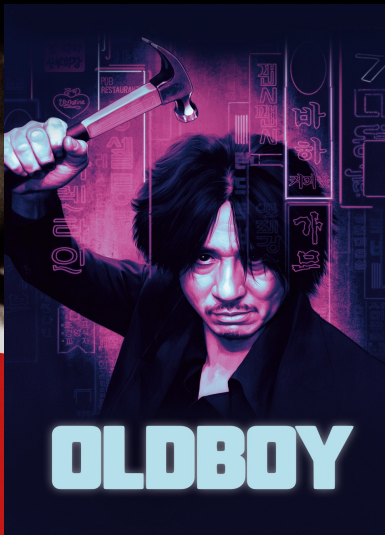
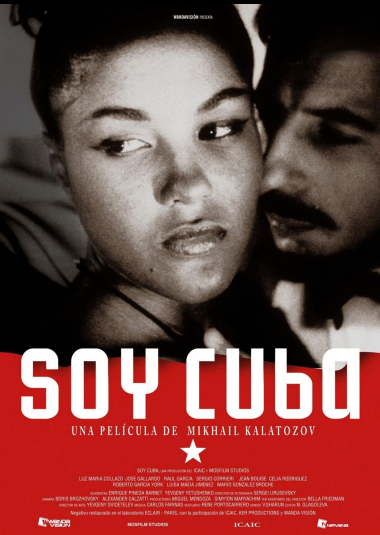
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Harry Potter is an orphan living with his uncle and aunt in the remote wilderness of Suburbia

Luke Skywalker is an orphan living with his uncle and aunt in the remote wilderness of Tatooine



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Hagrid reveals to Harry that Harry's father was also a Wizard and was the best Quidditch player he had ever seen

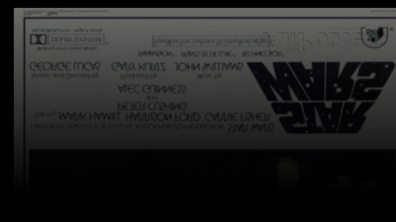
Ben reveals to Luke that Luke's father was also a Jedi and was the best Jedi Knight he had ever seen



Harry is instructed to use a magic wand as he trains to become more like his father



Luke is instructed to use a light sabre as he trains to become more like his father



Harry has many adventures in
Hogwarts and makes new
friends like Hermione and Ron



Luke has many adventures in
the galaxy and makes new
friends like Han and Leia

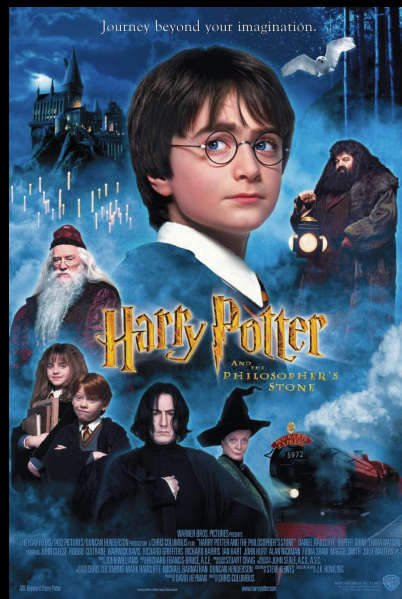


He become a top Quidditch seeker in the battle for the trophy making the dead-hit that secures the rebels' victory against the forces of Slytheria

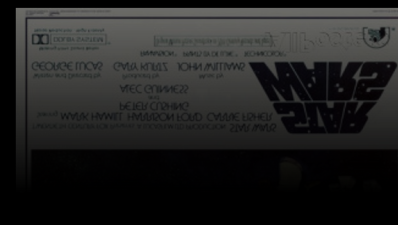
He becomes a top fighter pilot in the battle for the Death Star making the dead-hit that secures the rebels' victory against the forces of evil



In the climax, Harry and his new friends receive the House Cup

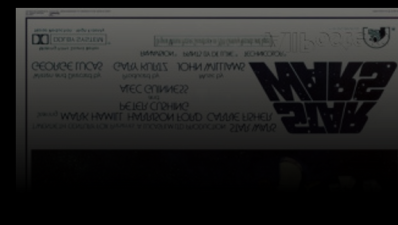
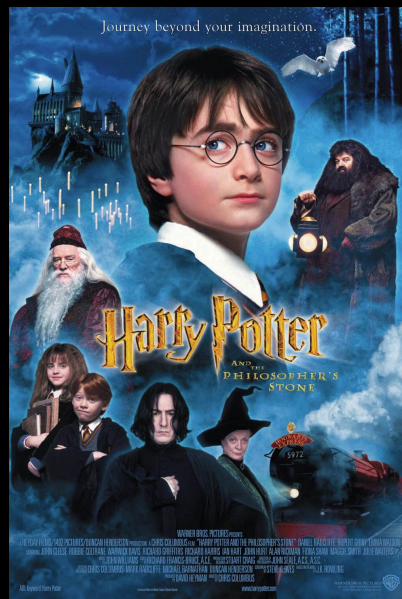


In the climax, Luke and his new friends receive medals of valour

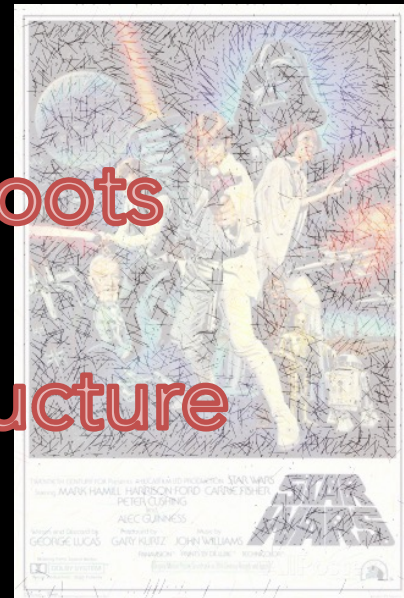
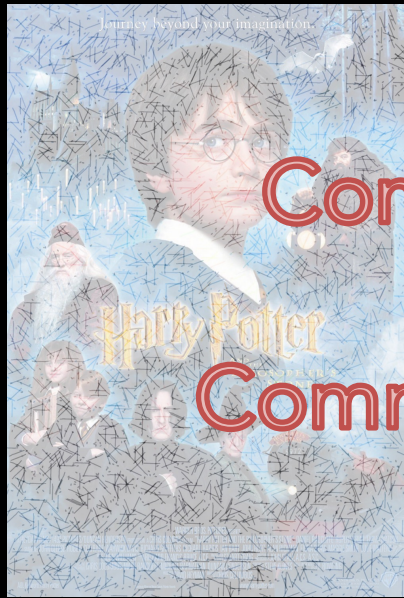


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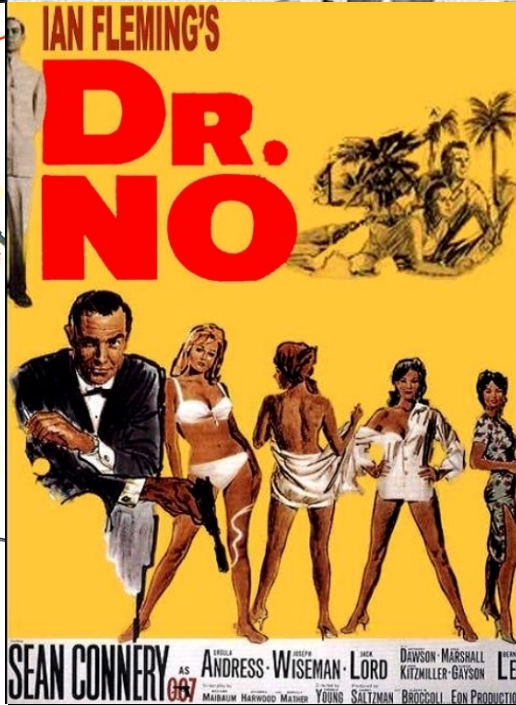
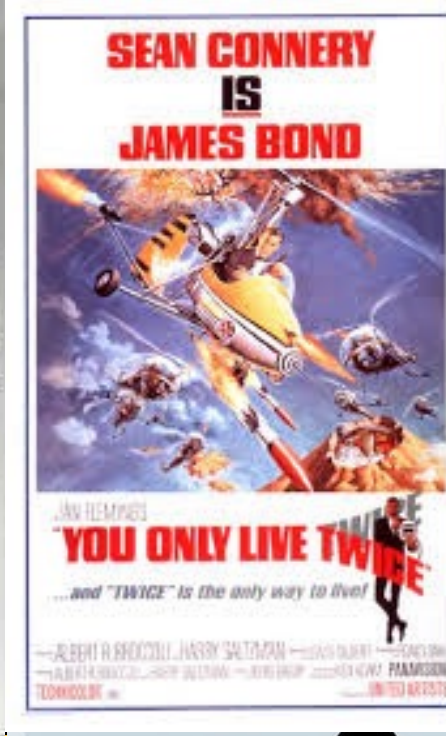
All composed to an orchestral score by John Williams



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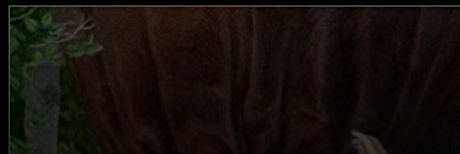
Common Roots Common Structure





JANE EYRE

CHARLOTTE BRONTE



CHARLOTTE BRONTE

JANE EYRE

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- Where does it come from?
- Why do all stories share the same underlying structure?
 - The one question gurus never ask.....

• WHY?

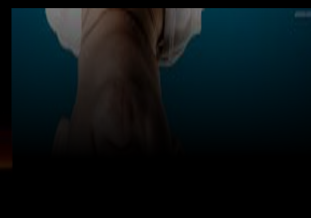
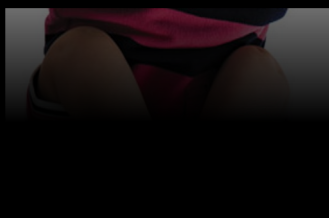
How do we perceive the world?



- We think dialectically
 - Thesis
 - Antithesis
 - Synthesis

- We are incapable of **NOT** ordering the world
- Every act of perception is an attempt to impose order
- Every time we come across alien phenomena, we explore it, find its essential truth, then assimilate it
 - In turn that process changes us

- I hear there's a talk about narrative structure
 - I go to it and listen intently
- I conclude it's rubbish / genius / somewhere in-between



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- Storytelling is the act of perception *dramatised*:

THREE ACTS:

THESIS

ANTITHESIS

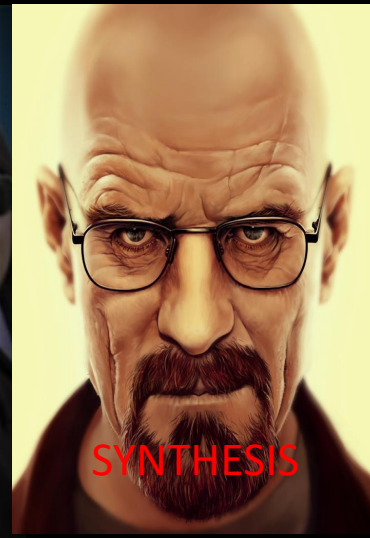
SYNTHESIS



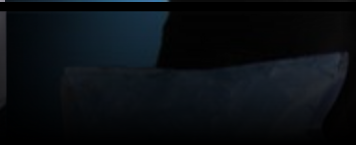
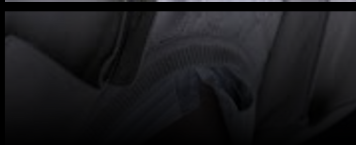
THESIS



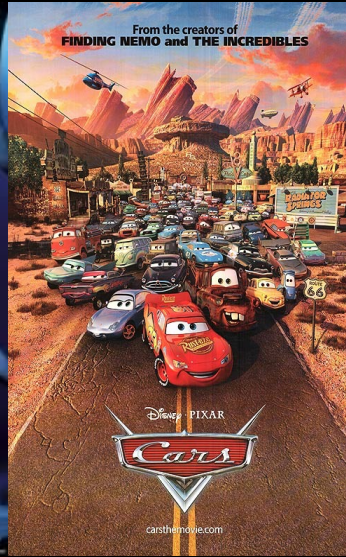
ANTITHESIS



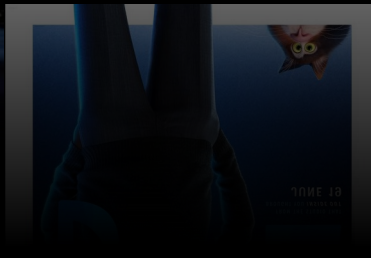
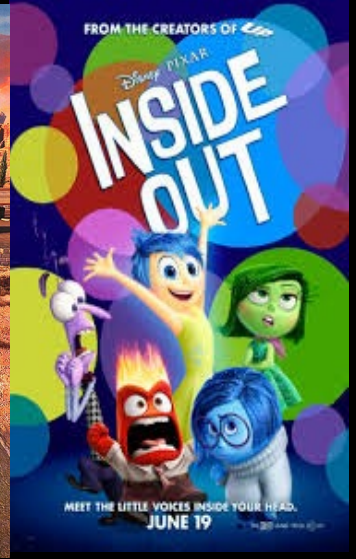
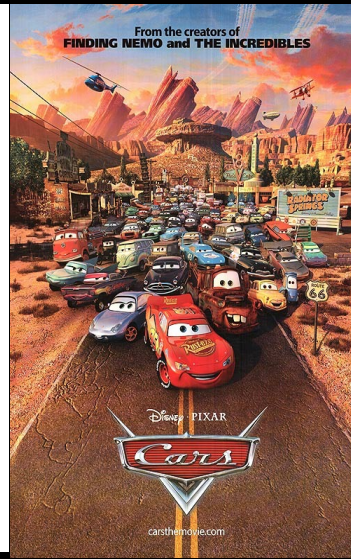
SYNTHESIS



- **ACT ONE** - CHARACTER FLAW
- **ACT TWO** - CONFRONTATION WITH OPPOSITE
- **ACT THREE** - SYNTHESIS OF QUALITIES



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- Storytelling is a codification of the essential method by which we learn - expressed in a Three Act shape

BUT NOT JUST DRAMA,
NOT JUST SHORT STORIES,
NOT JUST FICTION.....

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THE APPRENTICE



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THE GREAT IRISH BAKE OFF



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Så
Mycket
Bättre

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FRAUEN TAUSCH TAUSCH FRAUEN

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GRAND DESIGNS AUSTRALIA



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SVERIGES

Mästerkock

Wäpferkock

SVERIGES

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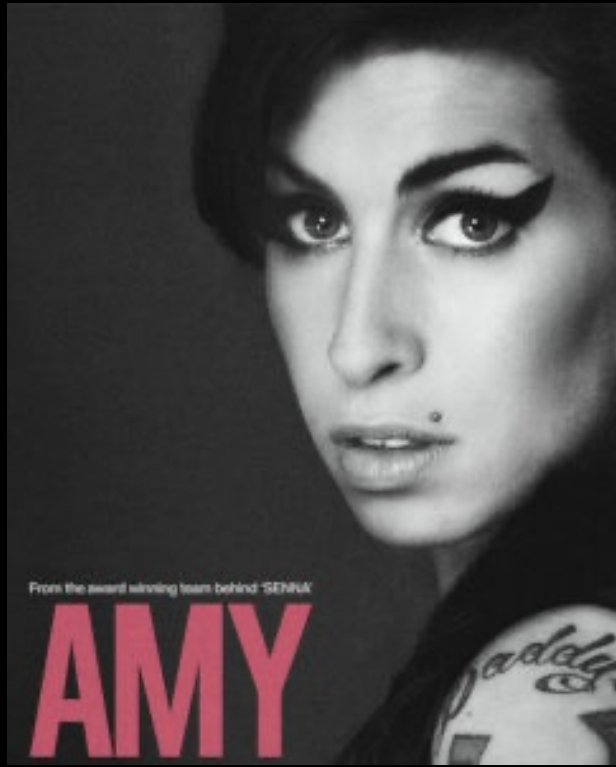
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THE
APPRENTICE
APPRENTICE
THE

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BUT NOT JUST DRAMA,
NOT JUST SHORT STORIES,
NOT JUST CONSTRUCTED REALITY...



From the award winning team behind 'SENNA'

AMY



From the award winning team behind 'SENNA'

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BUT NOT JUST DRAMA,
NOT JUST SHORT STORIES,
NOT JUST FICTION,
NOT JUST REALITY TELEVISION
NOT JUST DOCUMENTARIES...



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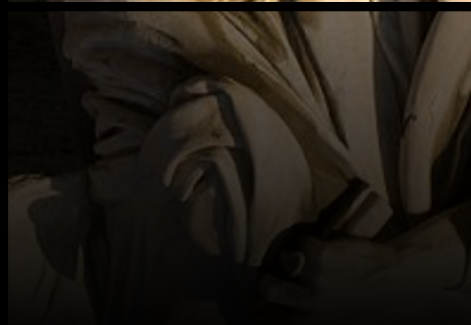


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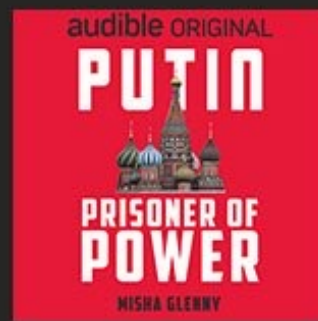
TRUMP

MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!

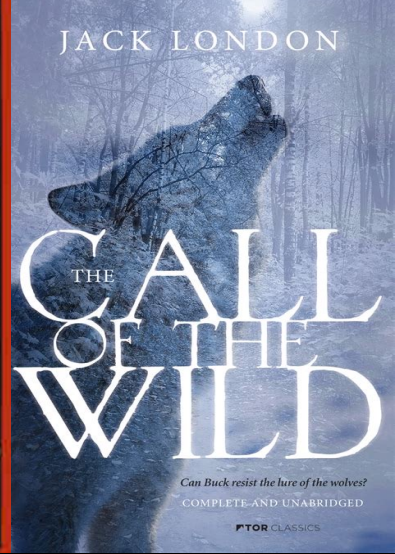
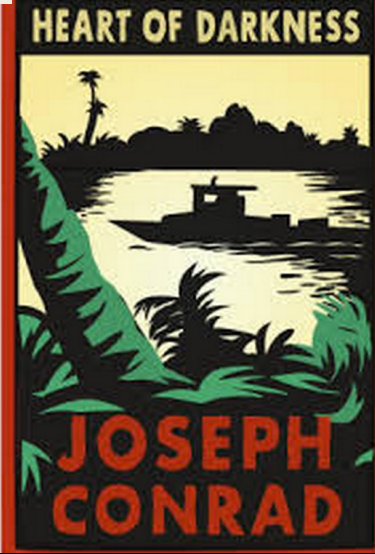
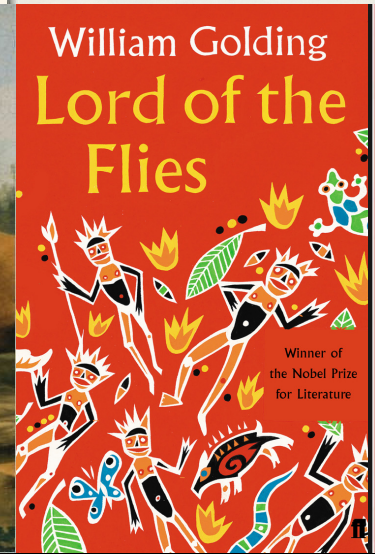
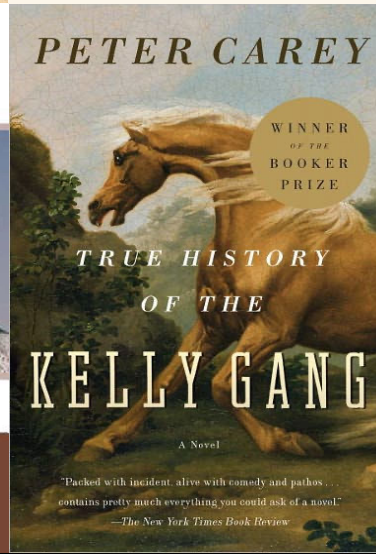
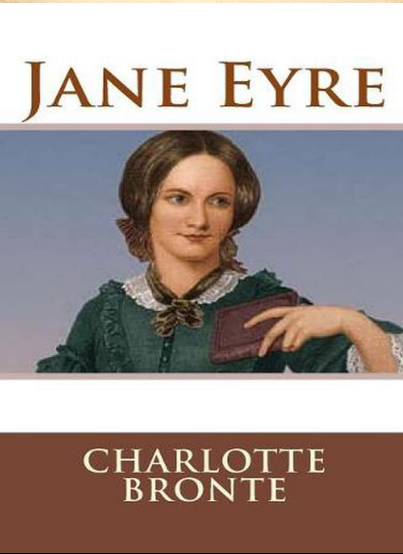
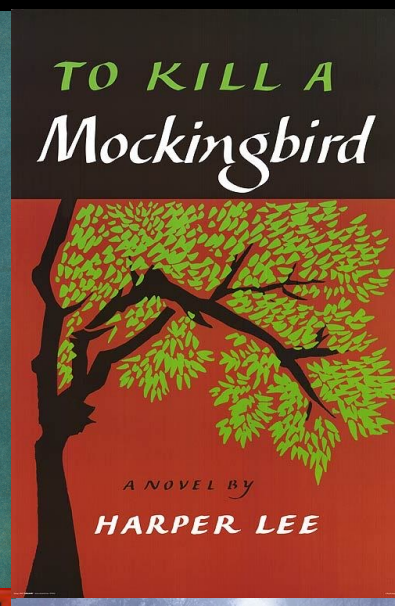
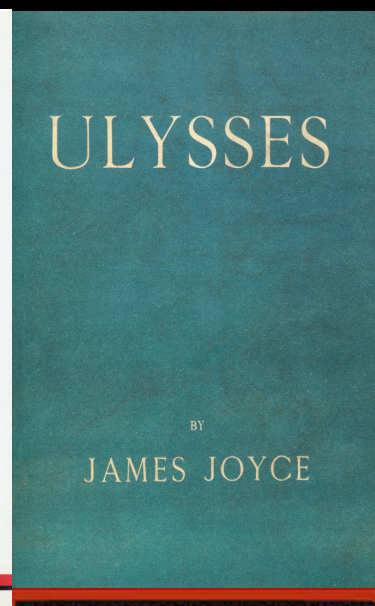
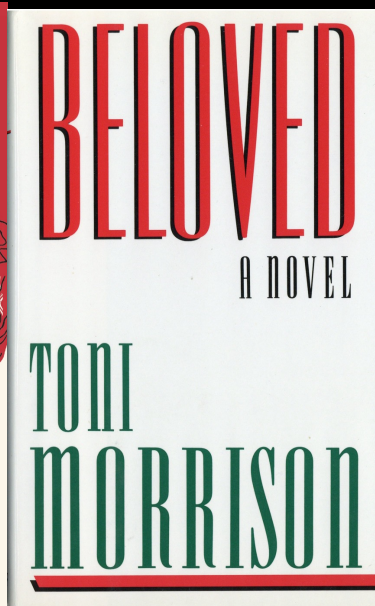
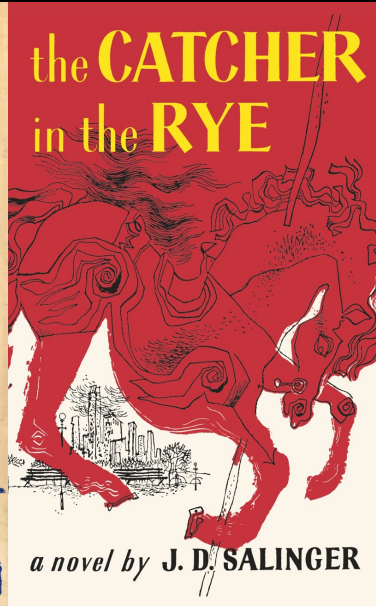
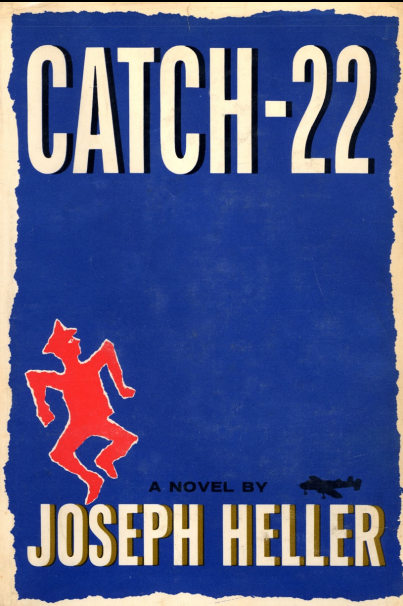


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- And of course...



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THE HANDMAID'S TALE

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Girl, Woman, Other

A Novel

SHORTLISTED for the 2019 BOOKER Prize

BERNARDINE EVARISTO

"A debut novel that reads like a masterpiece" *Washington Post*

Winner The 2020 Booker Prize

Shuggie Bain

DOUGLAS STUART

The Sacklers, Purdue Pharma and OxyContin

THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE SACKLER DYNASTY

EMPIRE OF PAIN

PATRICK RADDEN KEEFE

CATHERINE BELTON

PUTIN'S PEOPLE

HOW THE KGB TOOK BACK RUSSIA AND THEN TURNED ON THE WEST

'A highly original piece of work...gripping' *Martin Amis*

HHH

Laurent Binet

STATION ELEVEN

EMILY ST. JOHN MANDEL

"A firework of a novel" *Lauren Beukes, author of The Shifting Gold*

William Golding

Lord of the Flies

Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature

FINTAN O'TOOLE

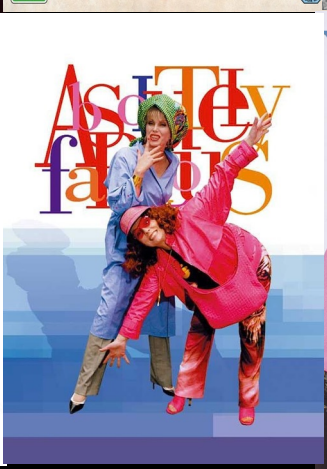
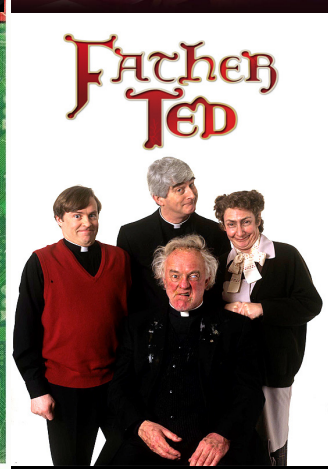
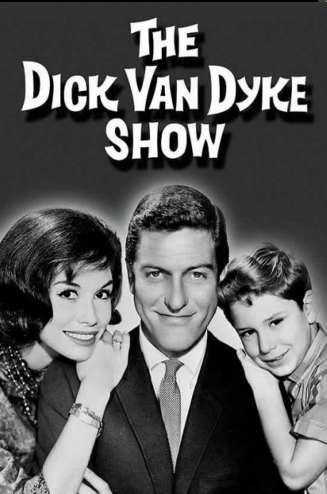
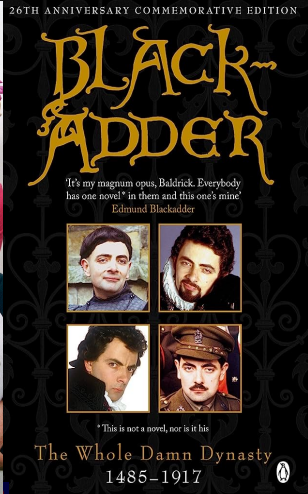
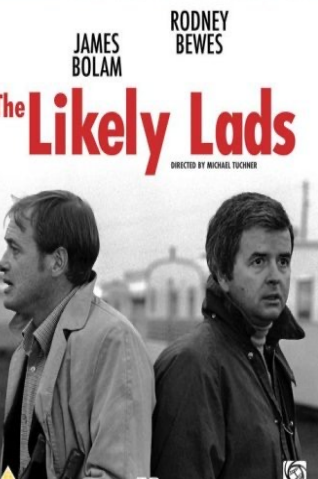
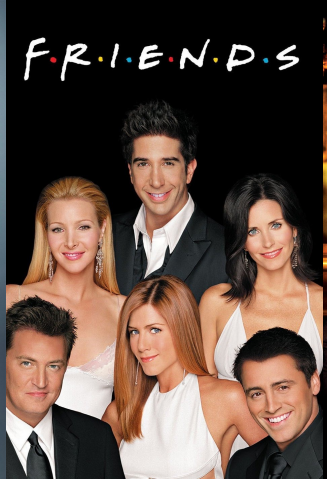
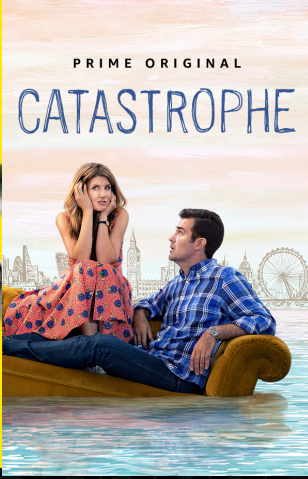
We Don't Know Ourselves

A Personal History of Ireland Since 1958

IAN MCEWAN

ON CHESIL BEACH

JOHN YORKE INTO the WOODS



Narrative structure is
NOT arbitrary

THREE ACTS...

"is our way of
ordering the
universe into a
comprehensible
form"

- David Mamet -



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In films
In books
In television
In Sit Com
In rhetoric
In Politics
In life

We express our
understanding of
the world in three
act shape



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- So what are the key ingredients?
- What does every story need?

THE PROTAGONIST

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The person whom the story is about

The person you care most about

The one who **LEARNS**

- You must love them
- They are avatars for the audience
- They are proxies for you



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- You must love them
- They are avatars for the audience
- They are proxies for you



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- You must love them
- They are avatars for the audience
- They are proxies for you



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THE ANTAGONIST

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The Antagonist

The **obstacles** in your protagonist's way

Do they incite awe, fear, emotion?

“The more
successful the villain,
the more successful
the picture”



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THE INCITING INCIDENT

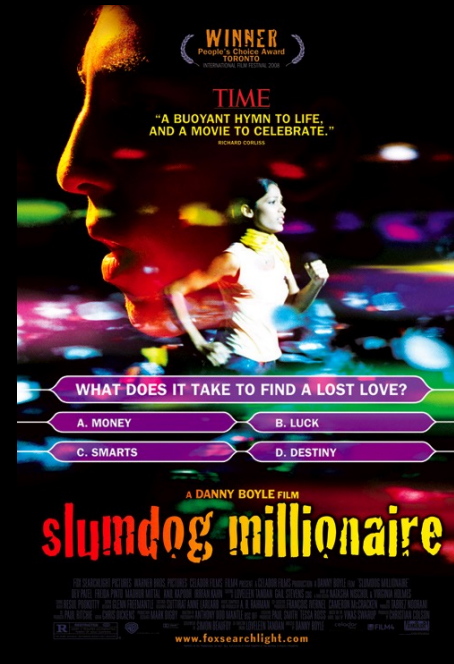
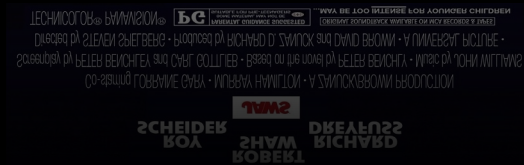
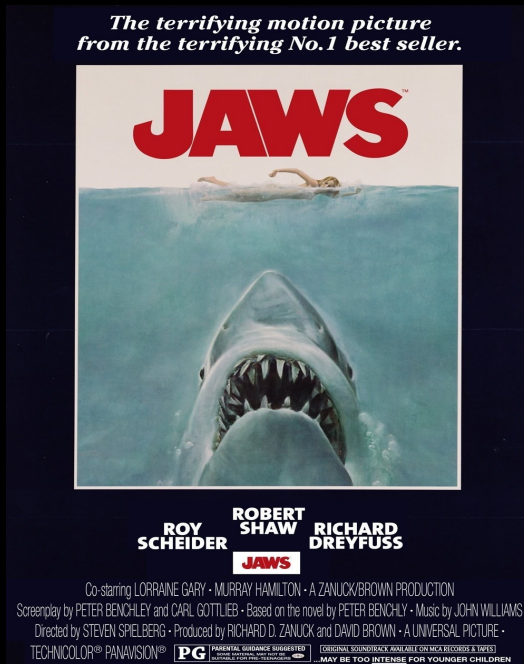
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The Inciting Incident

All stories have a premise – “What if?” ...

.. a shark swam into a holiday resort and started eating tourists...

A young boy in Mumbai is accused of cheating on “Who Wants To Be A Millionaire” ...



In All Stories

This “**What If?**” is the inciting incident.

Inciting Incidents are the **THE PROBLEM** your character must face

It must **ALWAYS** give them an **ACTIVE GOAL**



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THE MIDPOINT

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THE
MIDPOINT

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INTO *the* WOODS



Exactly halfway through any story

The moment of most significant change

The moment of “no going back”

STORIES ARE THE DRAMATISATION OF THE PROCESS OF LEARNING



EXPRESSED IN THREE ACT SHAPE

AND THE MIDPOINT...



...is the
LESSON

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AND THE MIDPOINT...



...is the LESSON DELIVERED

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THE CRISIS

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The Crisis

The protagonist finds themselves in a huge great inescapable hole...

The Crisis

It's **THE WORST POINT** in your character's journey

The moment where all hope is lost

Their goal further away than ever.

The Crisis

It's the **WORST POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCE**
of the decision your hero took at the Inciting Incident

....



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THE CLIMAX

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THE MORAL

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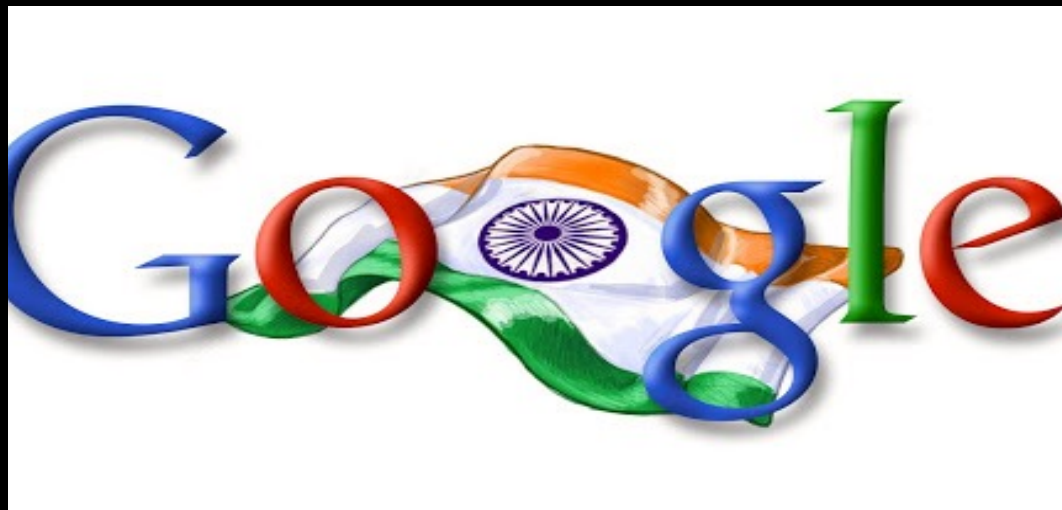
- ...is the LESSON LEARNED

A person in a blue space suit stands on the moon's surface, looking towards the Earth in the distance. The scene is set against a dark, starry sky. On the left side of the frame, several colorful balloons (white, green, blue, and purple) are visible. The entire scene is reflected in a dark, glossy surface at the bottom. The text "Show someone they're loved this Christmas" is centered in the upper half of the image.

Show someone they're loved this Christmas

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- And if you put all these elements together....



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MIDPOINT



- In advertising it is tempting to make the brand the midpoint / the lesson
- But just as common is to place a **value** there you want the brand to represent
- Audience learns that brand and value are the same thing

MIDPOINT



- But just as common is to place a **value** there you want the brand to represent

MIDPOINT



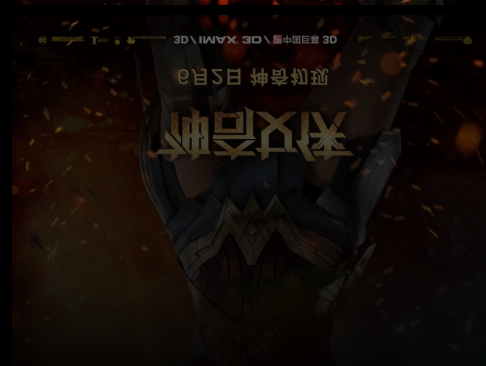
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What has your character *learned*?

They have learned the VALUE you want to associate with
your brand...

...the value you want to convey

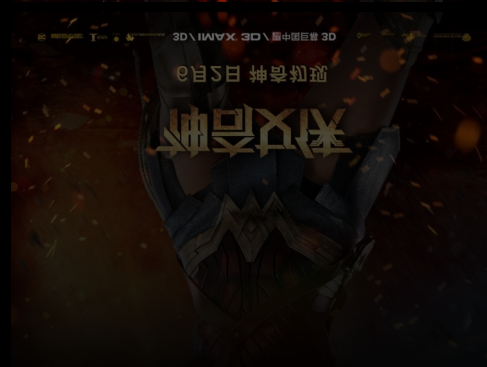
So Diana learns...



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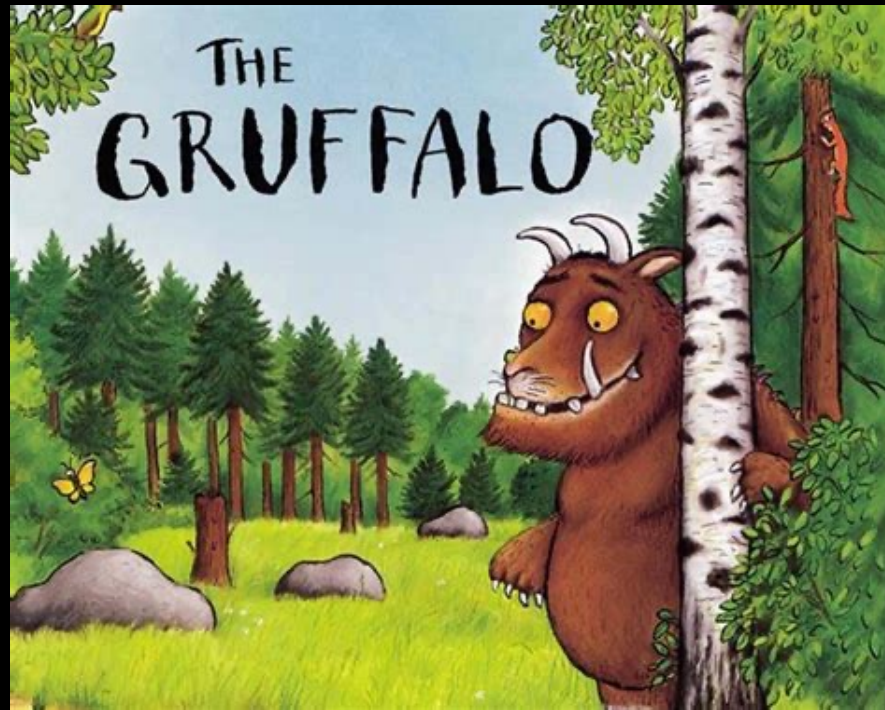
To be Wonder Woman...



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Stories
Adverts
Rhetoric
Novels
Films
Television
Lectures
Radio
Podcasting
Conspiracy Theories

- All crave the same **PATTERN**

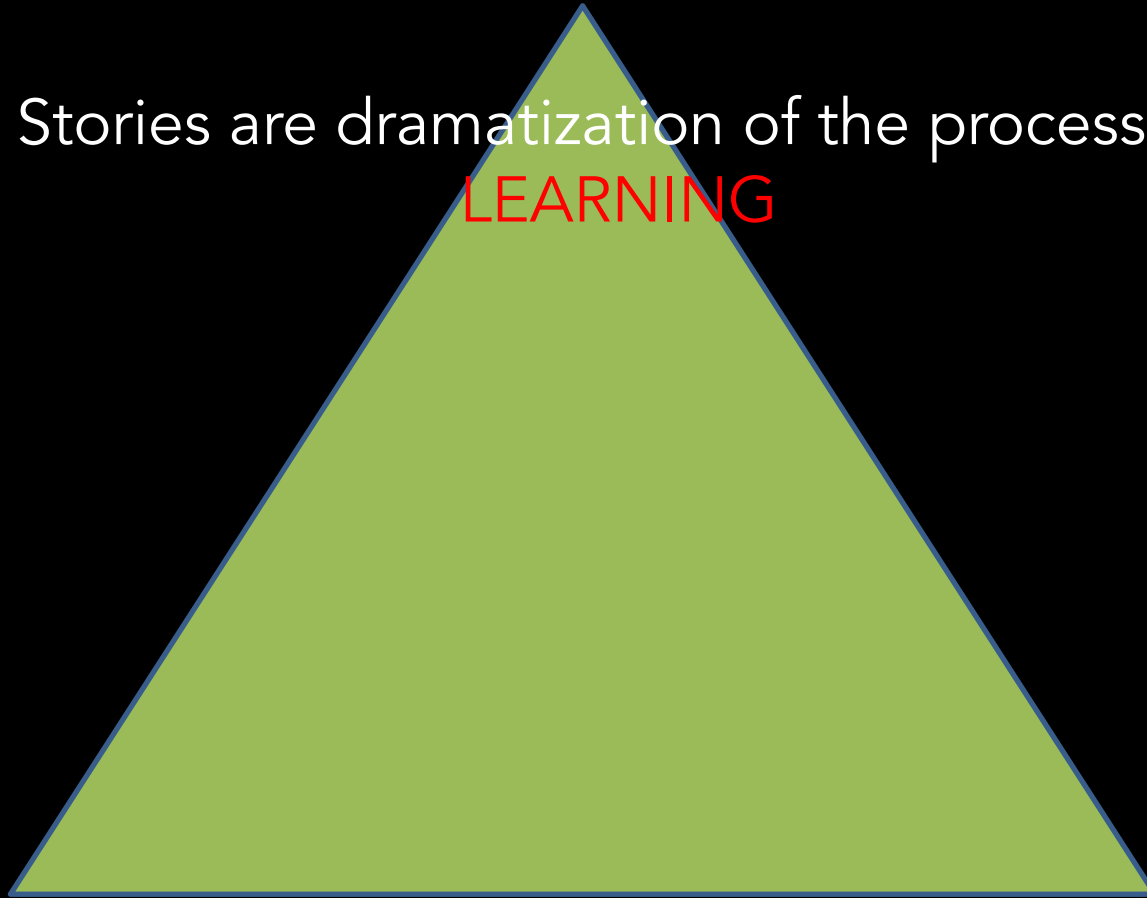


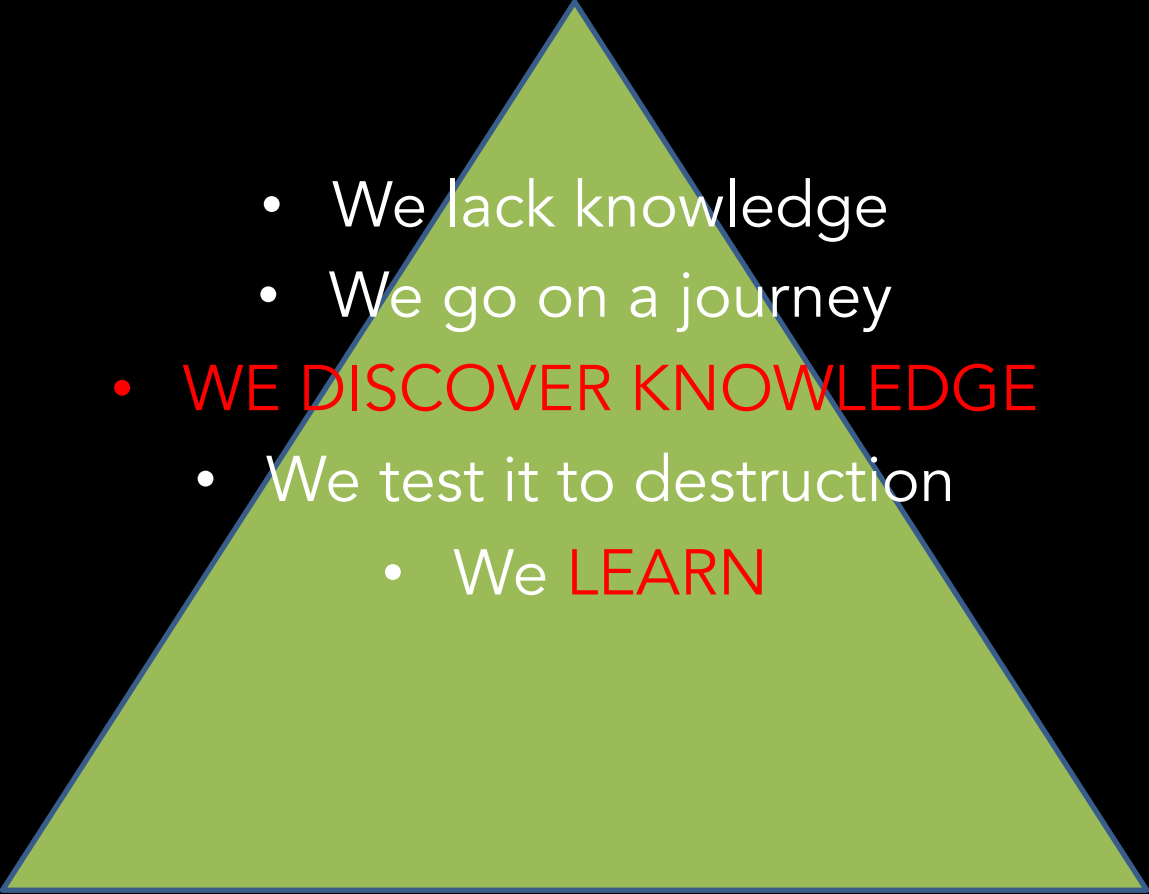
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- What is that pattern?
- The processing of knowledge being **ACQUIRED**
 - By **DEFEATING A MONSTER**

- Here's our problem.
 - Here's our goal
- You identify with me.
- We learn how to beat this problem together
 - We will be rewarded.

- Stories are dramatization of the process of
LEARNING



- 
- We lack knowledge
 - We go on a journey
 - **WE DISCOVER KNOWLEDGE**
 - We test it to destruction
 - We **LEARN**

WOODS

**STORIES ARE
UNITS OF
KNOWLEDGE**

HOME

HOME AGAIN,
CHANGED

WOODS



HOME

HOME AGAIN,
CHANGED

If you empathise with the
protagonist



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If you're terrified of the shark...



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If you learn the lesson



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If you learn the lesson



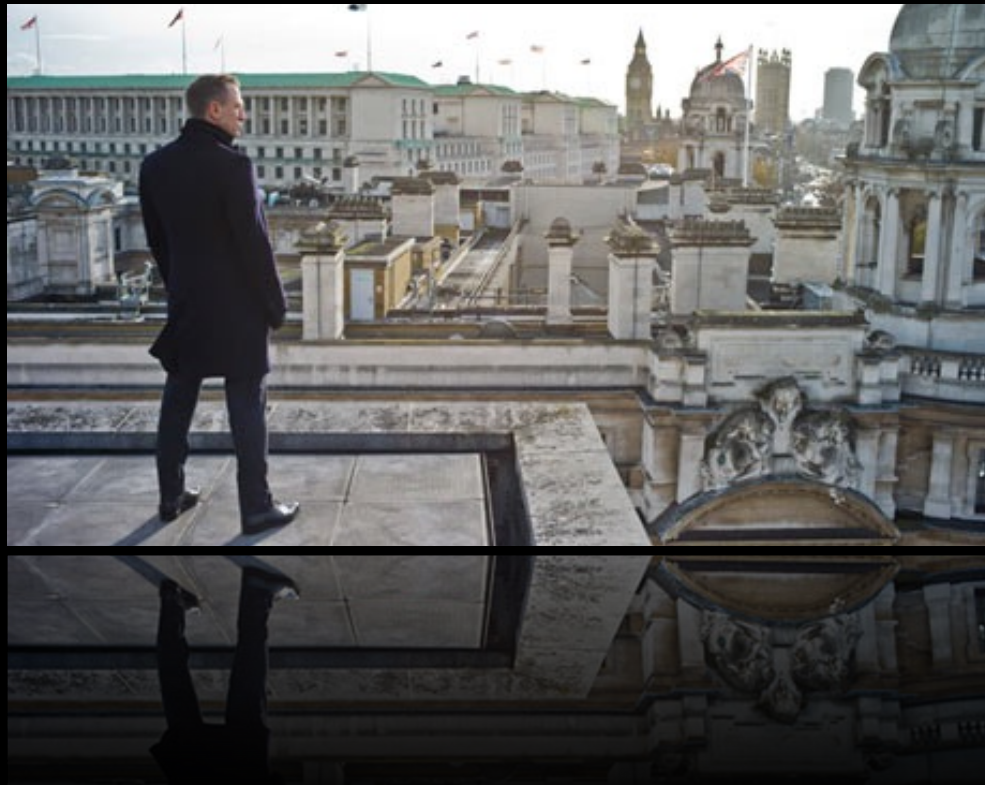
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And you buy into the goal...



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You "Save" The World



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always

always

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EXERCISE



- Write a FUNNY Advert in five lines for BBC STUDIOS COMEDY

- 1) Set up and call to action (Inciting Incident)
- 2) Things go well - initial objectives achieved
- 3) Things start to go wrong (at midpoint) as odds increase and forces of antagonism gather strength
- 4) Things go really badly wrong precipitating crisis
- 5) Final battle with Antagonist. Matters resolve for good or ill



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INTO *the* WOODS

HOW STORIES WORK
AND WHY WE TELL THEM

'All script-writers will want to read *Into The Woods*.
All plots and archetypes BUSTED'

CAITLIN MORAN

www.johnyorkestory.com

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