

Creating an Awesome Act 2

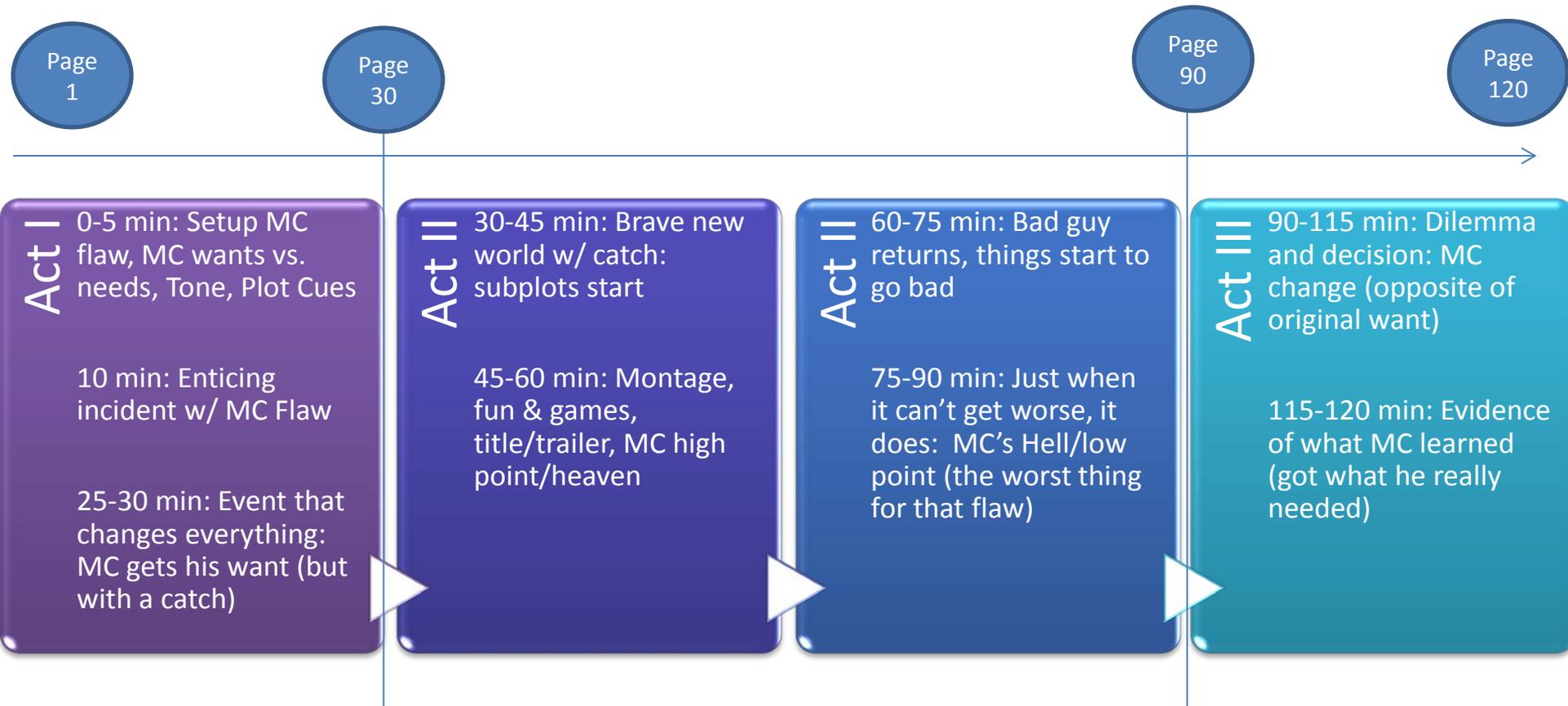
Presented by Michele Ryan



What is Exactly is Act 2?

Technically speaking, it starts the moment after your “*EVENT THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING*” and end with your main character’s “*MOMENT OF HELL*”.

Also know as..... Page 30 to page 90.



Cutting Act 2 in half... Part 1

Act 1 ends with...

The EVENT THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING - Page 30 (or sequence 2)

Event just happened. MC just got what they wanted and now we see the big catch.

Act 2 contains 2 main beats. It starts with...

BRAVE NEW WORLD- Page 30-45 (or sequence 3)

Post EVENT, MC deals with it the way he always deals with things for a dude with that flaw. The test begins or the real journey starts.

Usually has at least 3 sub-beats including a love interest and/or introduce the subplots.

FUN & GAMES- Page 45-60 (or sequence 4)

MC now over the shock of the catch starts to get into it. Often a montage happens here. We are now in HEAVEN.

Usually this is where the trailer and the title come from.

Usually has at least 3 sub-beats including the MC's highest point, often enjoying himself despite it all.

Cutting Act 2 in half... Part 2

MIDPOINT Page 60

Midpoint is the center point of your film. EVERYTHING CENTERS AROUND THIS factor. It touches on what the script is *really* about. Often our first big sign of what The *STORY is really about*, not just the *SITUATION* the MC is in.

THE BAD GUY COMES BACK- Page 60-75 (or sequence 5)

Now we start to get into both the internal and external struggles. Things start to get bad. MC keeps dealing with it with their flaw.

Usually has at least 3 sub-beats where we see MC start his decline.

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IF COULDN'T GET ANY WORSE- Page 75-90 (or seq.6)

Situation gets a lot worse. Massive JOLT to the extreme. Usually has at least 3 sub-beats ending with one very powerful emotional moment.

MOMENT OF HELL Page 90

MC's lowest point. This is the worst thing that could happen to a dude with this flaw. *STORY and SITUATION* become a head on collision. Forces MC to consider change. Flaw has destroyed him.

Cutting Act 2 in half... Part 1

Act 1 ends with...

The EVENT THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING - Page 20 (or sequence 2)

Event just happened. MC catch.

Loop Closed on him but Old-self gets away.
Wanted- to retire in France. Gets his want with the closed loop, but catch! Old self won't let him.

Act 2 contains 2 main beats. It starts with...

BRAVE NEW WORLD- Page 30-45 (or sequence 3)

Post EVENT, MC deals with it the way he always deals with things for a dude with that flaw. The test begins

Montage of counting years to see the other possible outcome.

Usually has at least 3 subplots.

Flaw is seen and young self behaves the same as always.

FUN & GAMES- Page 4

MC now over the shock happens here. We are Usually this is where the

We meet wife.

Diner with the two.

We learn more about the task at hand (find the kids).

We meet the lady and her kid.

Usually has at least 3 sub-beats including the MC's highest point, often enjoying himself despite it all.

Cutting Act 2 in half... Part 2

MIDPOINT Page 60

Midpoint is the center point of your film. EVERYTHING CENTERS AROUND THIS factor. It touches on what the script is *really* about. Of what The *STORY is really about*, not just the *SITUATION*. He meets the boy.

THE BAD GUY COMES BACK- Page 60-75 (or sequence 5)

Now we start to get into both the internal and external struggles. Things start to get bad. MC keeps dealing with it with

Usually has at least 3 sub-beats where

Kid and young-self get to know each other. (internal struggle begins)
Bad guys chase him. (external)

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IF COULD GET ANY WORSE- Page 75-90 (or seq.6)

Situation gets a lot worse. Massive JO sub-beats ending with one very pow

Boy has extreme power.
Bad guy shows up at the house.
Old-self discovers other boy is hooker's kid.

MOMENT OF HELL Page 90

MC's lowest point. This is the worst thing that could happen to a dude with this flaw. *STORY and SITUATION* become a head on collision. Forces MC to consider change. Flaw has destroyed him.

Duel MC's with mirrored Arcs
Young- can't kill the boy.
Old- goes on killing spree.

Act II, part 1:

Questions to Answer

Brave New World:

How has everything changed for the better? (at least for now)

How does MC manage or embrace the *catch*? (denial, thinks he can handle it, lying, etc.)

What sub-plots will start now?

What love interest will show now? (not always a person)

Fun & Games:

How is MC enjoying and exploiting the current situation?

What is the film's title? (comes from this part of the script)

What will make a great trailer? (comes from this part of the script)

Why did people come to see this film? (promise of the premise)

What is MC's highest point?

Why is this *heaven* for the MC's main flaw?

Act II, part 2:

Questions to Answer

Bad Guy Returns:

What little things occur and increasingly become unmanageable?

What unexpected conflicts arise?

Why does MC still think he can handle it?

How does MC's flaw start to work against him?

Hell:

How can bad guy be even worse?

How do these events put MC's flaw to the ultimate test?

What is the lowest point the MC can have?

Can the lowest point be even lower? (what about suicide, death, etc.)

Is this exactly opposite of the initial *want*? (MC must not *want* it anymore)

Famous Act 2 Quotes

“Don't resist the urge to burn down the stronghold, kill off the main love interest or otherwise foul up the lives of your characters.”

– Patricia Hamill

“There's an old rule of theater that goes, 'If there's a gun on the mantel in Act I, it must go off in Act III.' The reverse is also true.”

– Stephen King

