



Sentient Pilot – Structure – Act One

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Guide

- Your protagonist lives through the aftermath of the Teaser act's shocking reveal
- Intro the new world, your abandoned and damaged city
- Discover the new world through your protagonist and characters
- Afflict your characters with temporary physical and mental problems from the Day One storm, (blindness, deafness, dementia, anaphylactic shock, paranoia, disorientation etc)
- Kick-in with your A-story: Your protagonist pursues their external goal based on their interpretation of the Day One event
- Kick-in with your B-story: Your nemesis, will interpret the event completely differently and frustrate the plans of the protagonist
- Intro C through D stories, featuring A the most and D with the least screentime
- Continue the exploration of your theme. Pit the protagonist and the nemesis against one another. Explore their values through conflict
- End on a cliffhanger to shock your audience

B through D stories might include:

- The nemesis who knows better, interprets the events completely differently and frustrates the protagonist's plans
- An opponent-ally (Someone combatant to the protagonist but who is really their ally)

- **The ally-opponent (Someone friendly to the protagonist who is really their opponent)**
- **A mirror character to the protagonist (someone who faces same challenges but makes different decisions)**
- **A love interest**

Each of these storylines will feature a character, discovering and coming to grips with what has just happened then pursuing a line of action based on their interpretation of events.

Whoever you introduce will be on a line to intersect with your protagonist and the A story.

Ensure conflict.

Include:

- **Clues (set-ups that get the audience wondering and speculating) OR**
- **Advance / reveal more of your clues**
- **The beginning of your mythology. Every unexplained event, piles of bodies that disappear, burnt human ash, humming phones etc, all contribute to the growing mystery and mythology**

There is no need to spell it out to the audience. Hint at it and let them leap into the gap of the unknown with their own theories.

- **A hint of the full season arc, (where we are headed)**
- **The theme explored through conflict**

Theme

Introduce your theme.

Integrate it into the protagonist's journey.

The theme of Sentient-Australia is the patriot abused.

It's about the smartest people in the room making well thought-out decisions that are all wrong and their insistence that their patriots, in this case Dowd and the military, should carry-out their orders.

Sentient - Australia

- **Dowd realises that the Day One event is at least Sydney-wide**
- **Starts, still in the Day One storm. Teicher seeks survival. Dowd wants to get to the command bunker to ready for war. The storm defeats them both**

- Intro of the D-story, Pastor Hubert Heston, the blind preacher lost on the road to Bankstown. Heston believes his blindness is a 'Job-like' biblical test
- Dowd's inciting incident from the Teaser sees him lose the Admiral's son, Lt. Aiden Frank in a diving accident. Act one sees the Admiral's dog turn-up to retrieve Dowd back to the Admiral
- Dowd and Teicher discover the abandoned world
- Dowd and Teicher are both afflicted as a result of the storm
- Intro the C-story, Heidi Fisk, the overstayer, who thinks she has missed her plane and that she will be taken to a detention centre
- Teicher discovers a clue, the human ash shadow burnt into the wall
- Dowd and Teicher head toward the bunker which is also the source of a mysterious banging sound
- Pastor Hubert Heston is joined by a figure with a machete. The audience see the threat. Heston cannot
- Heidi explores the abandoned world starting with the hotel foyer. She discovers a wallet with a photo of the Stamm family and in particular, a young women, 'Sammy.' Heidi reveals herself as a person who has lost out in love and who is down and out in life. She takes the wallet but promises to return it
- Dowd tricks Teicher into revealing more information about himself. We discover Teicher is a defence contractor and judging from his outfit, he works with toxic substances
- We discover Hubert Heston's 'man with the machete' is Arab-Australian police officer, Senior Constable Wasim Sabban of the NSW-TOU. Sabban passes out with anaphylactic shock. As he passes out we see a seed, jet airliners circling Sydney

Later, the characters will use the circling planes to speculate on what has happened. Are they loaded with soldiers ready to take control of the city? Perhaps they are here to collect the survivors or deliver medical help. The reality will be very different.

- The Admiral's dog delivers Dowd and Teicher to the Admiral who is discovered, banging his head up against the bunker door
- Whilst Dowd is focused on the Admiral, Teicher makes a gruesome discovery, the command bunker is covered in freeze-frame ash bodies, burnt into the wall
- **Note; the nemesis, Friesner will not begin to frustrate Dowd's plans until the next act in the Australian script**

Must-see content

1. Survive the Day One storm – Show the survivors' experience and how they are afflicted

2. Show the state of the abandoned city/ world

- No power
- No communication
- The storm has smashed windows and caused mayhem
- A red haze hangs over the city
- Planes will circle your city

Note the jet airliners circling the city are a device that allows characters to speculate on their meaning. Why don't they land? Each character has their theory.

Those planes will eventually come in to land but as they hit the red haze over the city, will flame out and crash.

They will set your city on fire. That fire will pose a risk to a massive toxic chemical dump. The fire will burn throughout the first season.

An assessment will be made by the smartest people and determine there is no risk of the chemical dump going up in flames.

3. Meet a character who provides another reference point

4. Intro the B - D storylines

Remember

The global inciting incident of the arrival of an alien life form is the defining event however whilst the audience knows this, your characters DO NOT.

For example; When you first watched, 'The Walking Dead', the genre made it clear this was a zombie story. The protagonist didn't know that. They had to take that journey and discover it. Rick Grimes was also given another set of eyes, a mirror character, Morgan, who provides some insights to Rick as to what has happened.