



Sentient Pilot – Structure – Teaser Act

Page count: 2 -10 pages

Guide

- The opening image must immediately draw us into the story
- Establish a sense of time, place and tone, (the world of the story)
- Introduce your protagonist and their special skill
- You may choose to introduce an inciting incident or ghost for the protagonist. This is a seed that will grow throughout your story and will be something that requires redemption
- Introduce the central conflict if possible. This may spill to Act one
- Intro the theme if possible. This may spill to Act one
- Create mystery by loading clues from the Day One storm
- The protagonist may begin to explore the new world in the Teaser
- Introduce an interpretation of events by the protagonist
- The protagonist's interpretation may be partially right but is flawed
- First look at the Sentient – Shroud it in mystery – For now they live in the shadows
- The protagonist may meet another character. The other character may act as another set of eyes, a different perspective on the event
- End on a shocking reveal. Seeing the storm or the aftermath or?

Sentient - Australia

- The opening scene features Dowd's vision of a harbour full of bodies. This is a ghost of Xmas future event that establishes tone, stakes and the future we will face
- Dowd is introduced as a RAN diver

- Dowd's inciting incident is the loss of a junior officer, Lt. Aiden Frank on his watch. Frank is the the son of Dowd's mentor, Admiral Frank. This event is a seed that grows in meaning through the story
- The central conflict between Dowd and Commodore Friesner is introduced. Friesner warns him he will be made to pay for his failure. The tone and approach forewarns us that Friesner is gunning for Dowd
- The theme of the patriot betrayed is hinted at
- Dowd wakes during the Day One storm and sees a series of clues
 - The glowing phones that hum like Tibetan singing bowls
 - The pile of dead bodies that disappear
- Dowd's training, (revealed by a flashback), convinces him that Day One is a chemical or biological attack and that Australia is at war. He expects an invasion any moment. Dowd immediately goes into warrior mode. This shapes his decision making and course of action. He does not realize that the invaders are already here nor who they really are
- Dowd, unknowingly makes first contact with a Sentient when Dowd 'Stares into the abyss and the abyss stares back'
- Dowd discovers opponent-ally Dr. Amon Teicher, his second set of eyes. Neither of them share what they really see but the audience sees it all
- Dowd ends the Teaser discovering the Day One storm has enveloped Sydney

Must-see content

1. Day one – Arrival of the storm or
2. After Day One – Wake in fright or
3. The protagonist's inciting incident, (a crisis in their life leading up to Day One then either 1 or 2

Whichever 1,2 or 3, the protagonist wakes up in a new world.

The protagonist does not know what has happened but they may make a presumption.

Day One mindsets might presume terrorism, war, invasion, chemical or environmental disaster, act of god or religious view of rapture or end of the world etc.

4. Create mystery. Start loading clues, like the protagonist discovering a stack of haulocaust style bodies, piled-up against an exit then make them disappear. The audience will not know whether the protagonist is hallucinating or not. They will take the journey with them because they, like the protagonist want to know what the hell is going on

5. **Your protagonist should get a first look at the Sentient but keep them in the shadows and keep it brief. This is a WTF moment then move on but ensure your protagonist recognises it as a threat, make their reaction instinctive, create fear**