



The Story Cycle

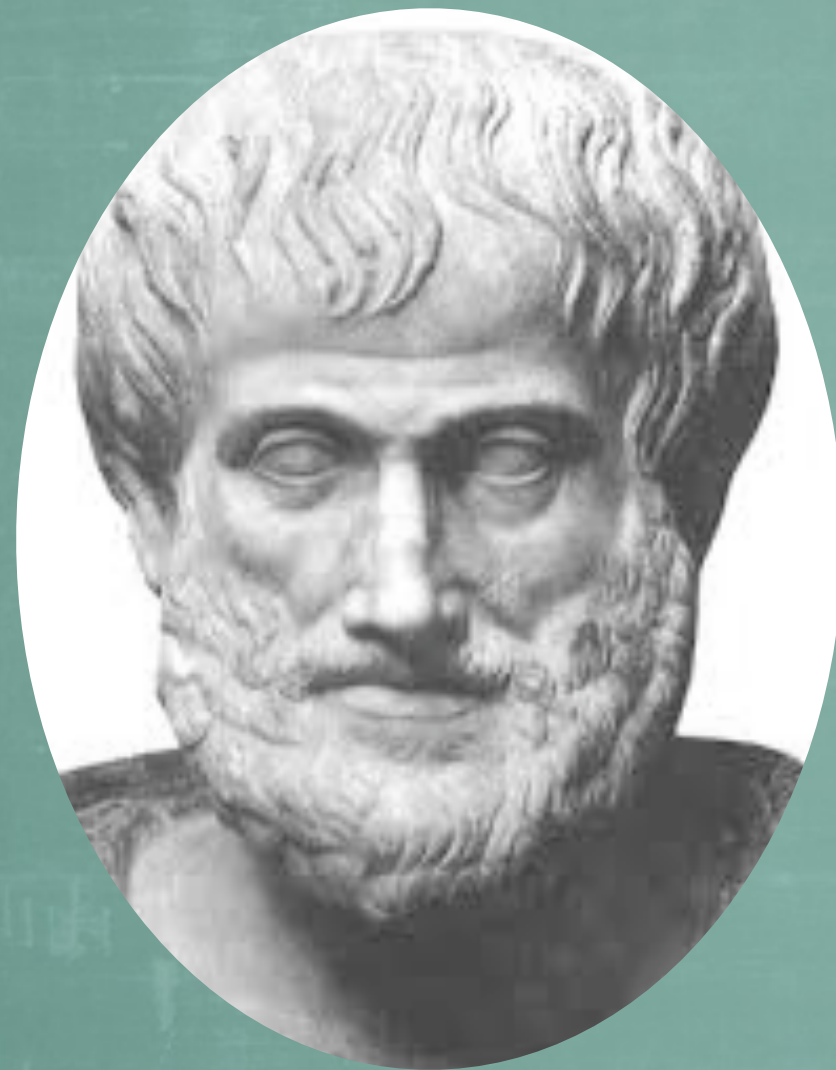
How to craft and tell compelling stories that sell.

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the business
of **story**

The origin of the Story Cycle

The Story Cycle is a hybrid of American mythologist Joseph Campbell's universal story structure called the Hero's Journey. Our 10-step process is distilled from the timeless narrative structure of the ancients, inspired by the story artists of Hollywood, influenced by masters of persuasion, guided by trend seers and informed by how the mind grapples for meaning.

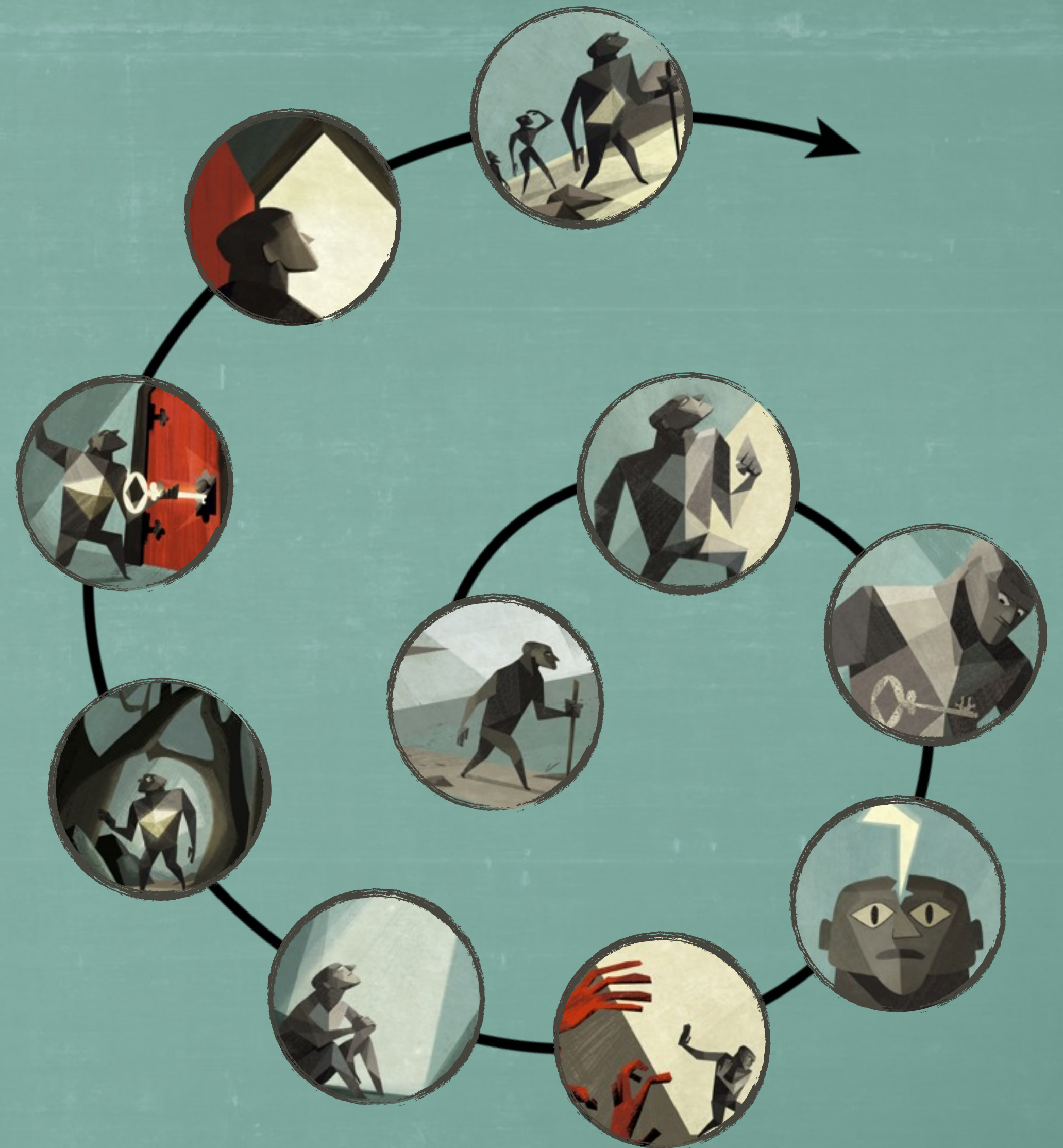


From Aristotle to the Apostles to Shakespeare to Spielberg to Red Bull, we all keep telling the same story.

Story mirrors life

Once you understand the Story Cycle, you will begin to recognize it in everything from epic journeys to simple daily rituals. We have found that using the Story Cycle will help you...

- Better understand your own personal/professional story
- Appreciate the journeys of the people around you
- Empathize and connect with your core customers
- Make sense of your organization's trajectory
- Determine your brand's precise position in the marketplace
- Reveal the authentic brand promise that resonates with your shareholders, stakeholders, employees and customers
- Create a genuine personality that reflects the character of your brand
- Build consensus among your leadership around your brand story and what your organization stands for
- Achieve your goals faster
- Nudge the world in any direction you choose!



Our friend Edmond, created for us by an animator at Pixar, will walk you through the Story Cycle to help you assemble your content. You can even craft your story using the same chapter-by-chapter order. However, the Story Cycle is a form, not a formula. Once your story is created, feel free to share it in any sequence you like.



First use the Story Cycle to tell your story with *you* as the hero of the journey. Then create a story about your organization casting you as the mentor. Finally, author a brand narrative that places your customer at the center of the journey, your brand as the mentor and your product or service as the gift that helps them in their quest to enrich their lives.

Act I Set-up

An illustration of a man in a dark, textured tunic and sandals walking across a sandy, mountainous landscape. He is holding a wooden staff in his right hand. The background features large, angular, light-colored rock formations under a pale sky. The overall style is minimalist and graphic.

Where In The World Have You Been?

All epic journeys begin in an interesting setting. Describe your hero's backstory – where they've been, where they are now, and where they're headed. Begin every story with the end in mind.



Who's Your Hero?

Introduce your main character and tell us all about them. What are their strengths and, even more intriguing, weaknesses?

Tip: Protagonists are always more interesting if they are reluctant heroes who are thrust into action by circumstance.

What's At Stake?

What does your hero want to achieve? It must be compelling enough to drive them, against all odds, in pursuit of success, even when the universe pushes back. What do they stand to gain and lose in their quest?



The Call To Adventure

What happens, either an internal decision or something triggered by outside forces, that turns your hero's world upside down and propels them into action?

Hollywood calls this the "inciting incident." Without some kind of force creating tension and causing change, you have no story.



Act II Conflict



Villains, Fog And Crevasses

What are the obstacles and who are the antagonists that are out to thwart your hero in their quest to achieve their goal?

Remember, in addition to outside forces, identify the internal demons your hero must overcome to be successful.

Enter The Mentor

Who is your hero's mentor that assists them on their journey? What character and insight do they bring to your hero's quest to help them succeed?

A mentor can be a person, a group of people, or even an organization.



The Road Of Trials

Show us what their journey is like. How do they overcome their challenges? When are they on the cusp of victory only to have a setback?

It typically gets worse before it gets better on our quests. Share the trials in all of their gore and glory. Our minds love this stuff.



Act III

Resolution



Victory Is At Hand

How does your hero overcome their struggles and achieve success? What does their success look like? How has it leveled them up as a person?

Often, what we initially achieve is no longer what we want, because we have grown to be stronger, faster, smarter and more courageous due to the trials and tribulations of our journey.

The Moral Of The Story

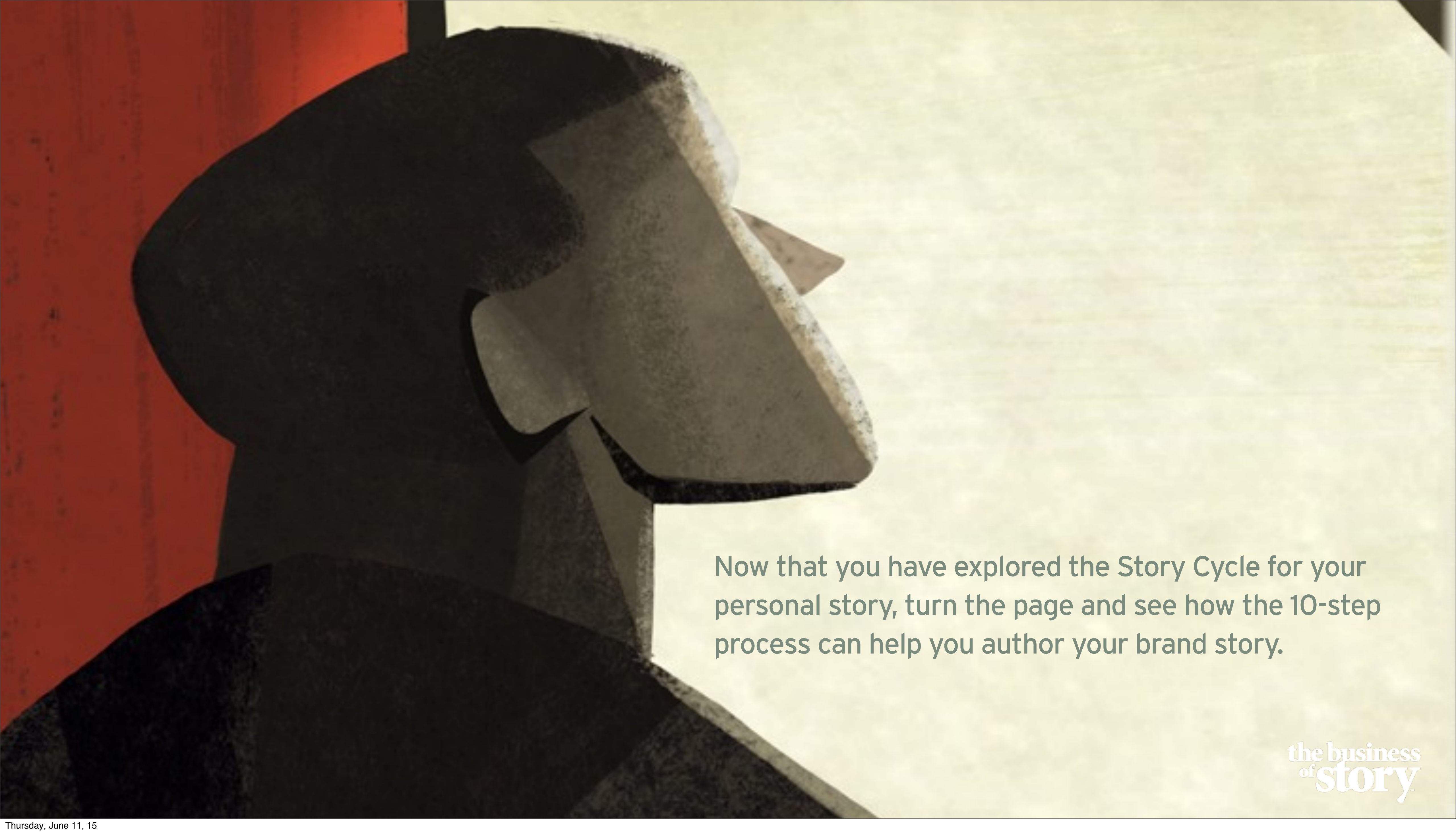
Reveal the universal truth found in your story that anchors your audience by connecting their values with yours.



To Be Continued...

What is the sequel to your story? How do you want your audience to participate in the next virtuous revolution of the Story Cycle and what will you ask them to do?

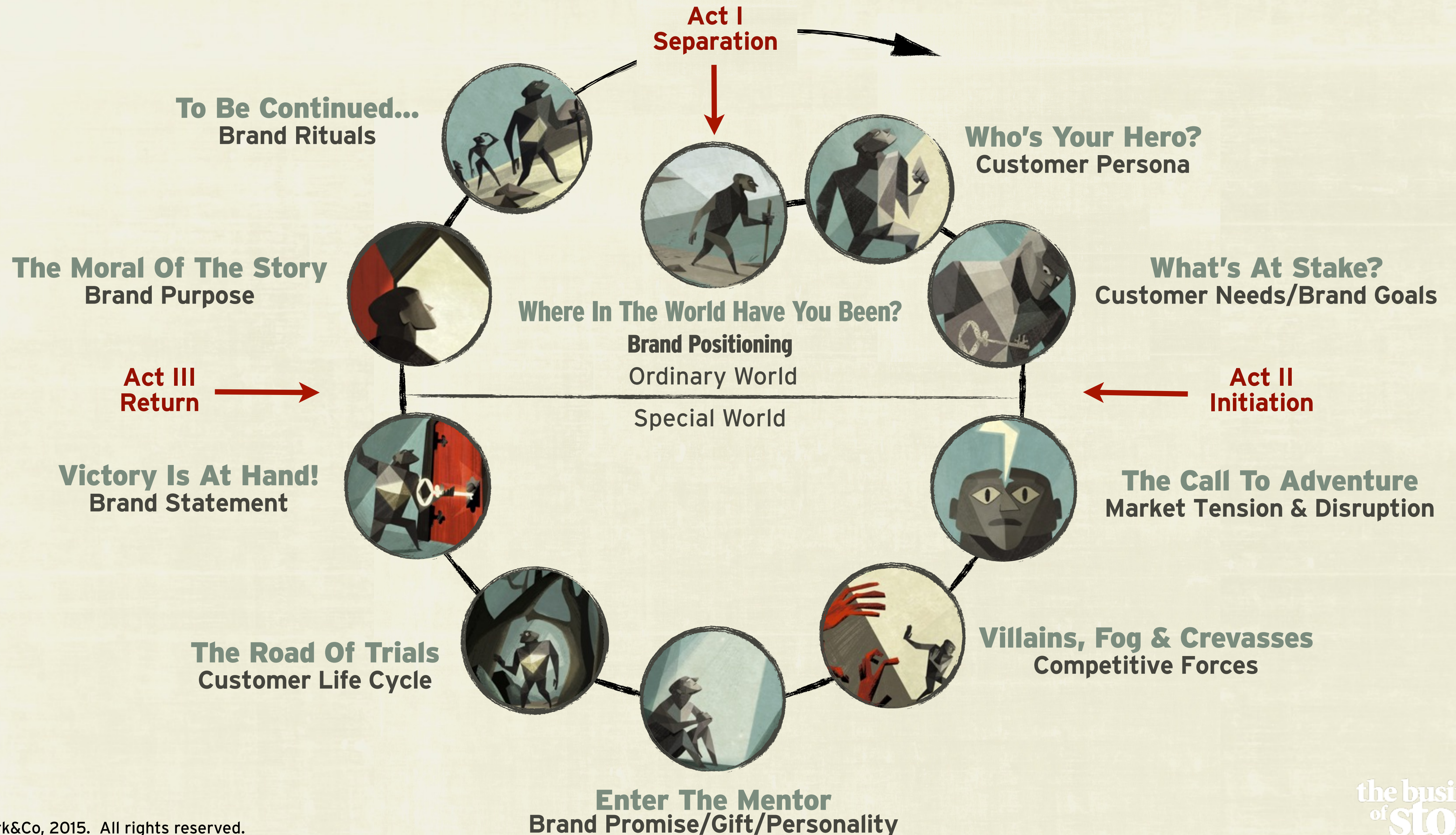




Now that you have explored the Story Cycle for your personal story, turn the page and see how the 10-step process can help you author your brand story.

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The Story Cycle





To learn more about how to unlock the Story Cycle to help advance your personal and professional missions further, faster, please sign up for our free newsletter at thebusinessofstory.com

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What's Your Story?

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