



Book Genie

Jan Bear



Mapping Your Book

Plotting Fiction and Narrative Nonfiction



Warning

What you're about to learn could ruin your movie-viewing or reading experience.

Or it could make it so that your friends never want to watch a movie with you again.

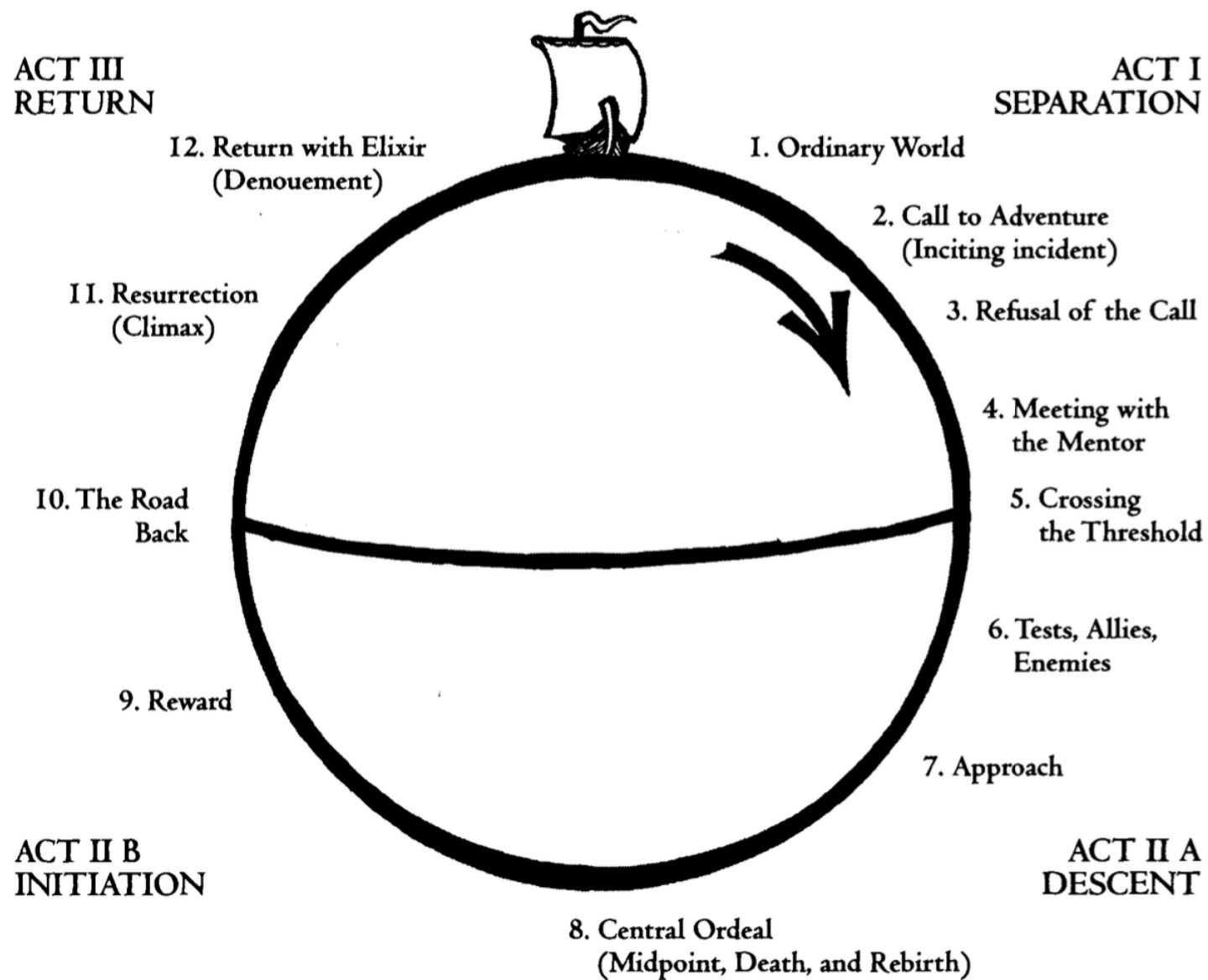
Ever.



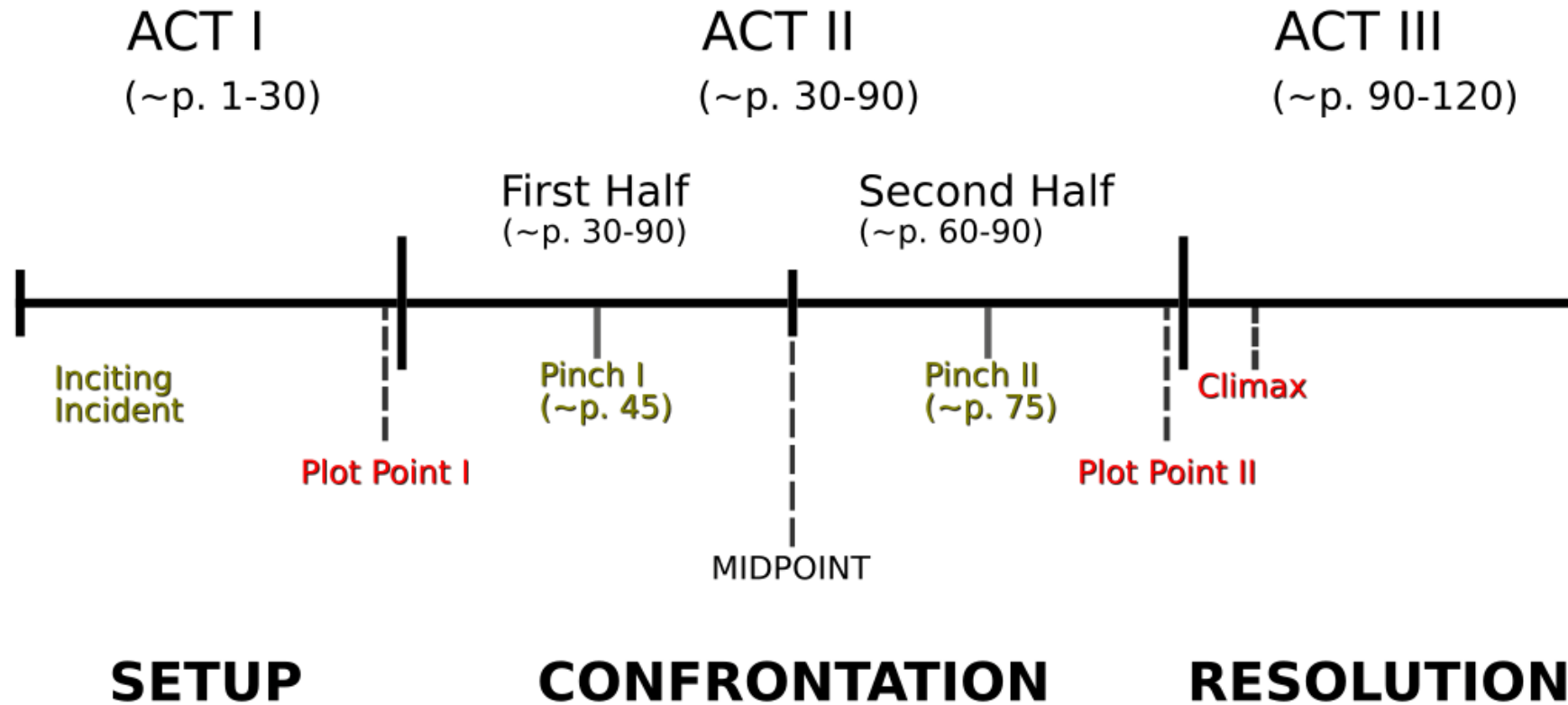
A Story Is a Journey

Photo by Suhash Villuri Unsplash

THE HERO'S JOURNEY



The Syd Field Paradigm



Legend:

Inciting Incident: sets the story in motion, usually knocks the character off balance

Pinch: concentrates the story toward the point which comes next

Plot Point: significant event that spins the action around in another direction

Plot Point I: the main character embarks on the journey and the story actually begins

Plot Point II: main crisis where it appears that all hope is lost

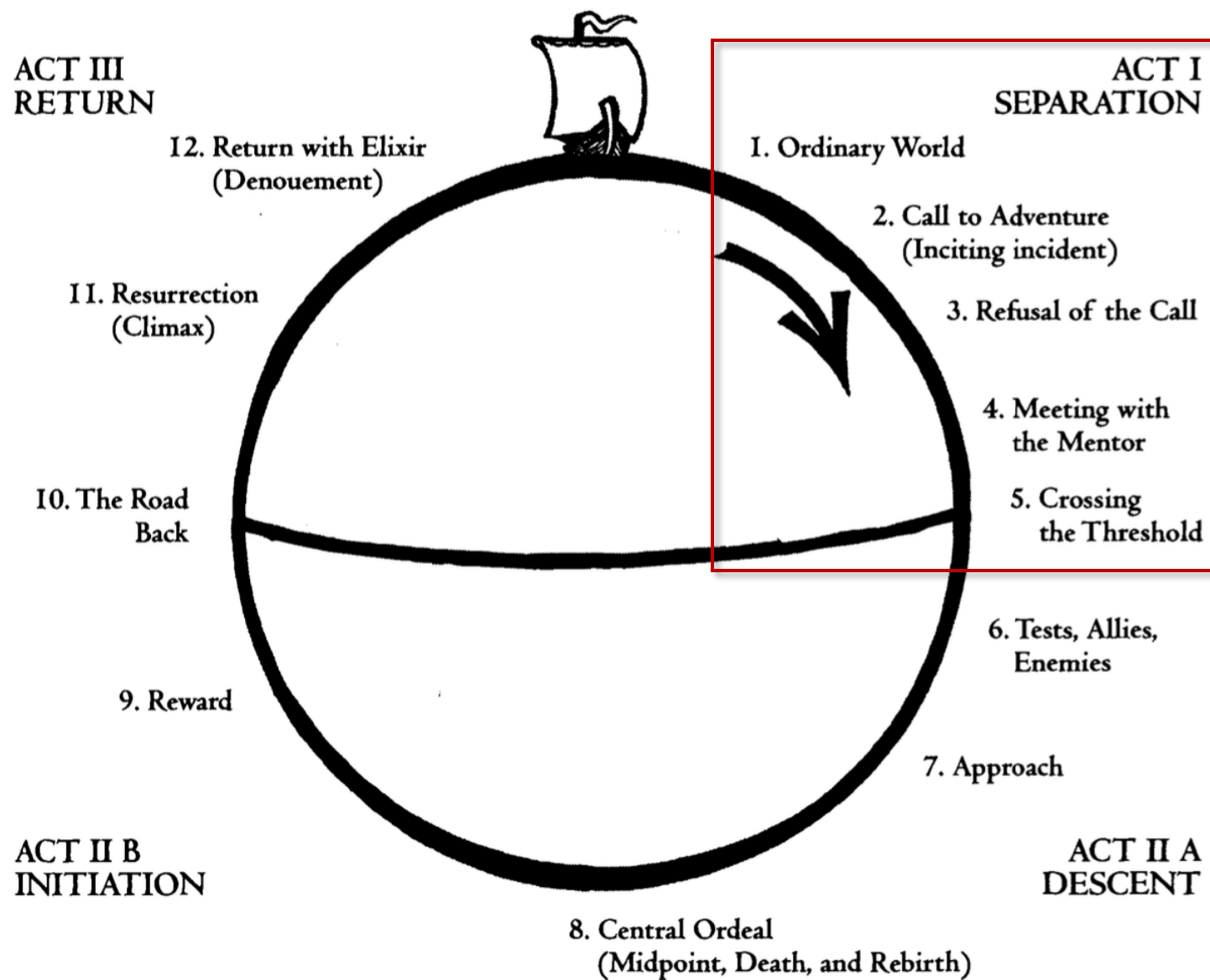
Climax: where the main tensions of the story are brought to their most intense point and the dramatic question answered

Midpoint: connects the halves of the Act II, often with a reversal or revelation that changes the direction of the story

A background of deep red velvet curtains with vertical pleats and a matching valance at the top.

Act I

THE HERO'S JOURNEY



Features of Act I

Characters

Hero (Protagonist)
Mentor
Threshold Guardian
Herald
Shapeshifter
Shadow
Ally (Sidekick)
Trickster

Setting

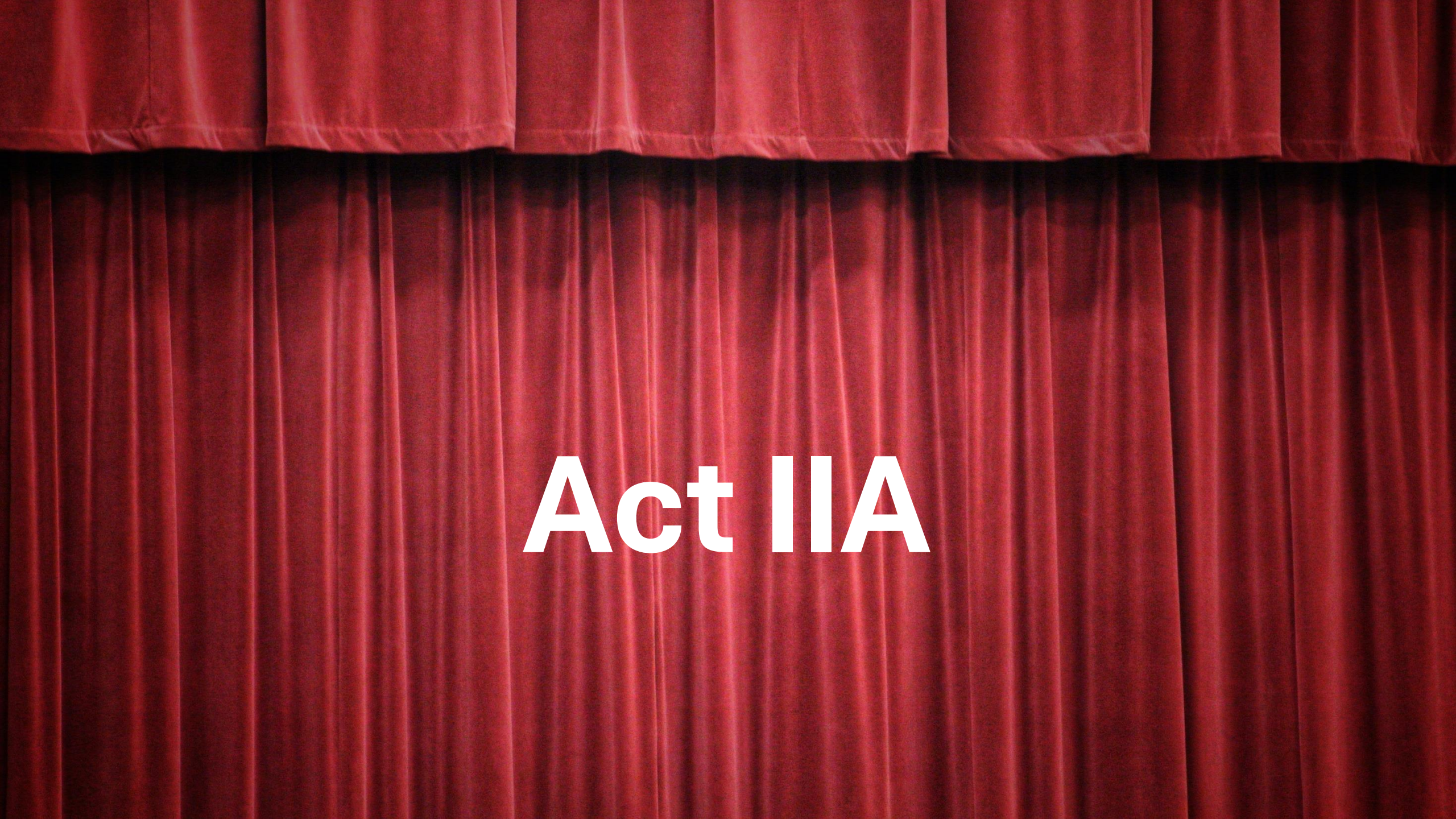
Time
Place
Culture
Status
Expectations

Situation

Stakes
Wants
Needs
Desires
Fears
Longing
Inner and Outer Conflict

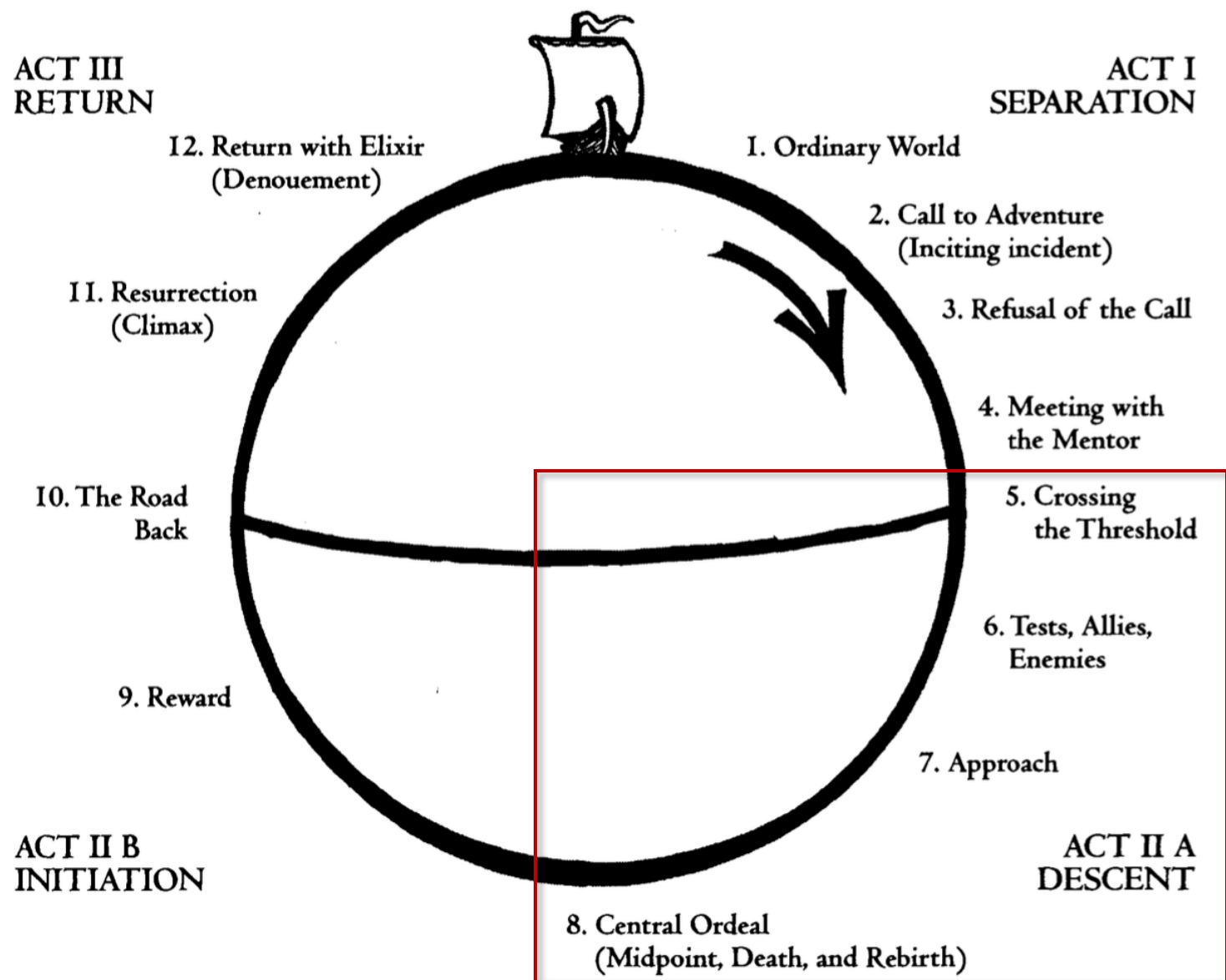
Beginning and End

Backstory
Future
World Changes
Character Changes
Return to . . .

A background of deep red velvet curtains with vertical pleats and a matching valance at the top.

Act IIA

THE HERO'S JOURNEY



Features of Act IIA

Crossing the Threshold

New situation
No turning back
Unfamiliar
Fish out of water

Tests, Allies and Enemies

Culture
People
Clothing
Proving

Approach to the Inmost Cave

Prep for battle
Courage
Commitment
Accepts stakes

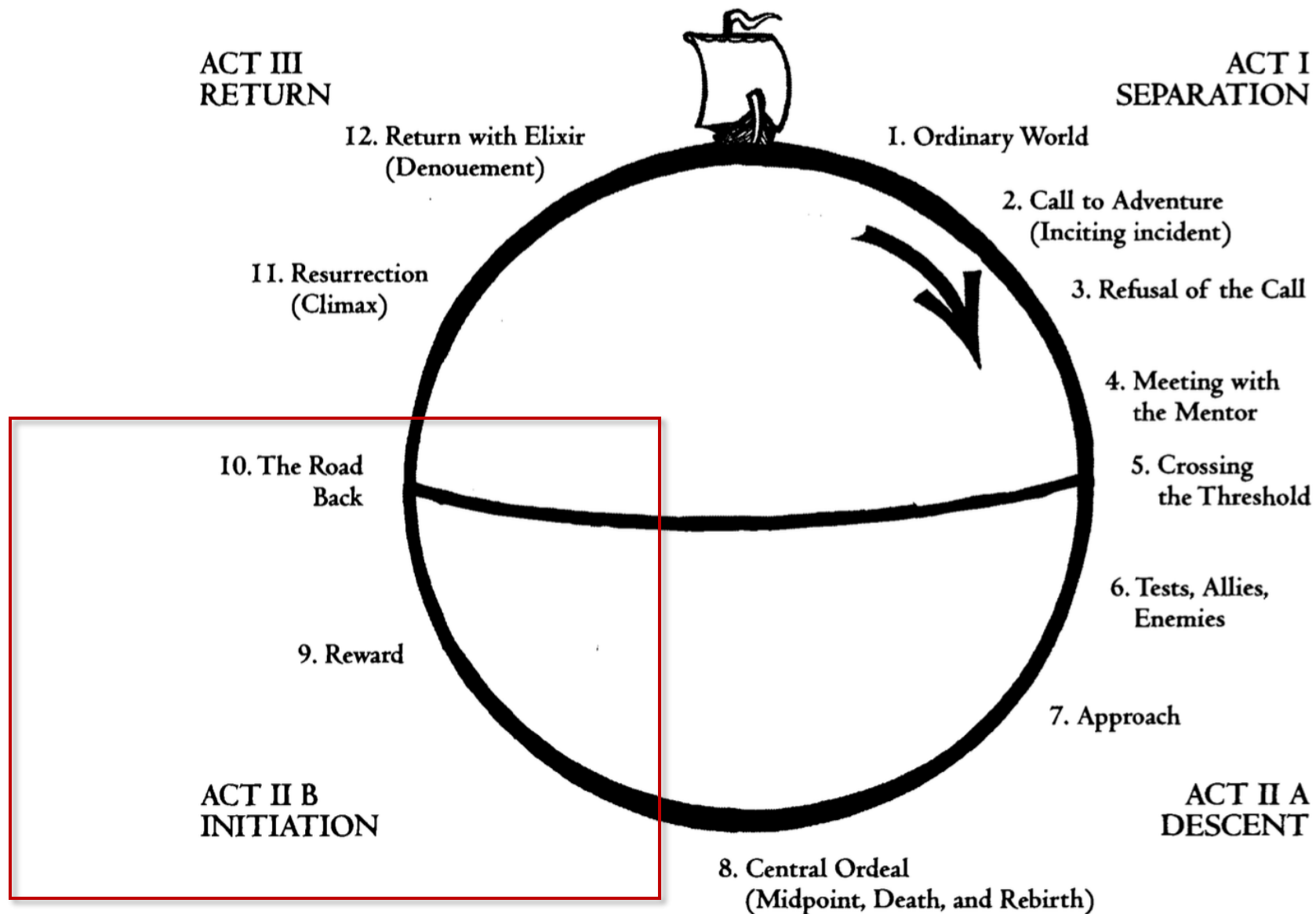
Death, Rebirth, Resurrection

Wins by losing
Death (symbolic)
Radical change
New person

A background of deep red velvet curtains with vertical pleats and a matching valance at the top.

Act IIB

THE HERO'S JOURNEY



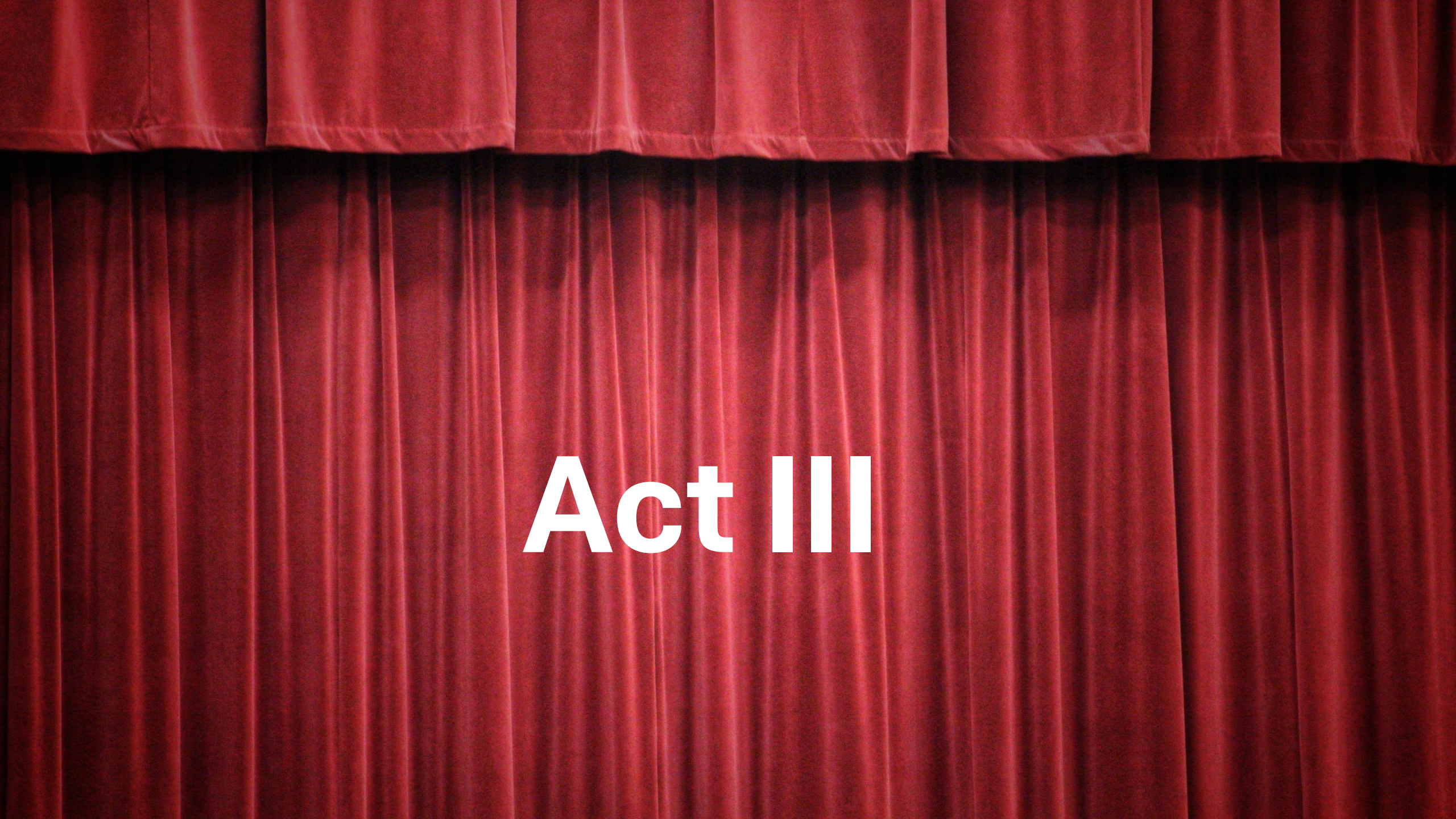
Features of Act IIB

Reward

Celebration
Campfire scenes
Romantic scenes
Taking possession
Seizing the sword
Elixir theft
Initiation
New perceptions
Epiphany
Last chance
Misstep
False claimant
Sacrifice
Incorporation
Fundamental change

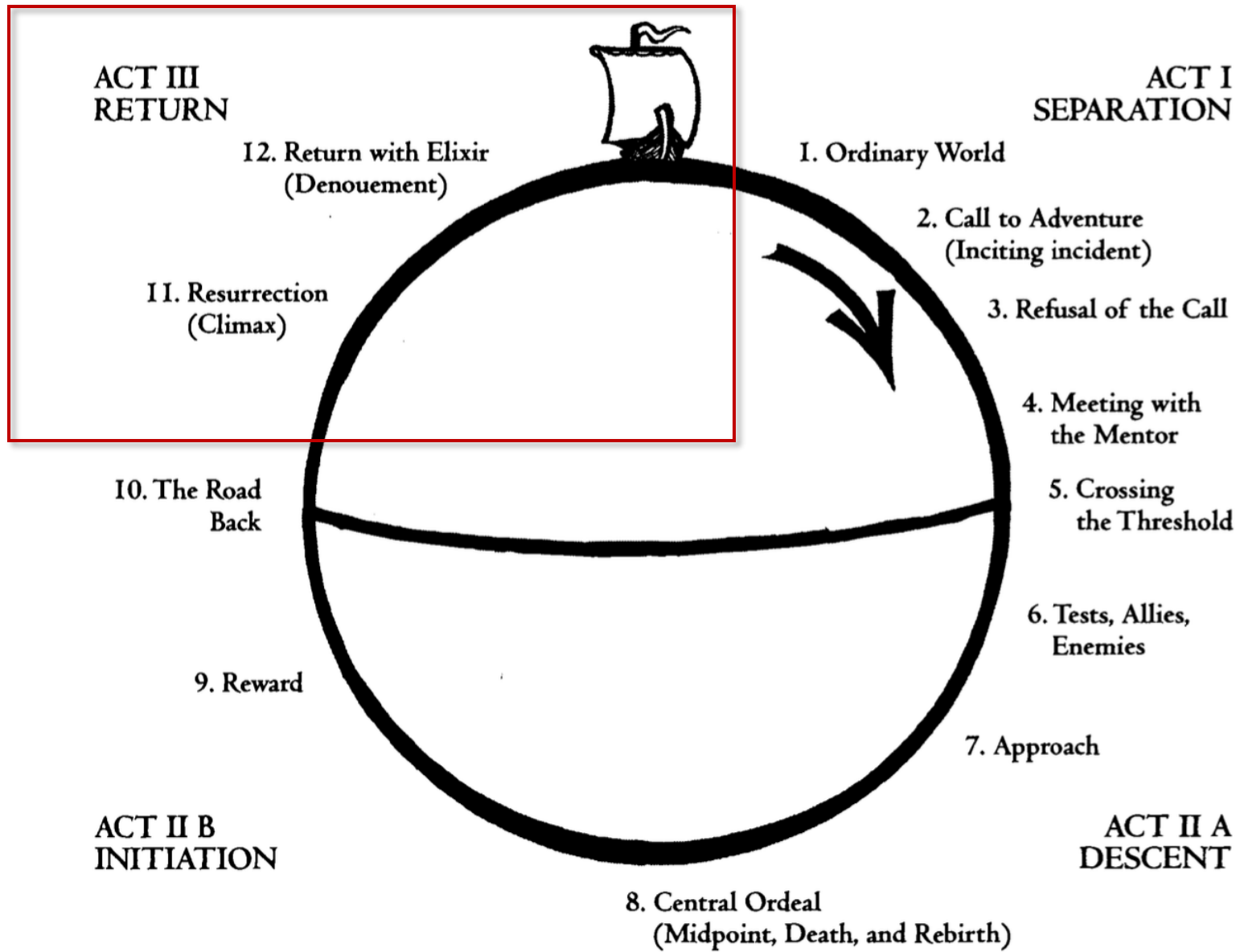
Return with the Elixir

Return
Denouement
Open-ended or circular
Achievement of perfection
Surprise
Reward and punishment
Old wounds cured
Love completed
World is changed
Tragedy
Sadder but wiser
Sadder but no wiser
Epilogue

A background of deep red velvet curtains with vertical pleats and a matching valance at the top.

Act III

THE HERO'S JOURNEY



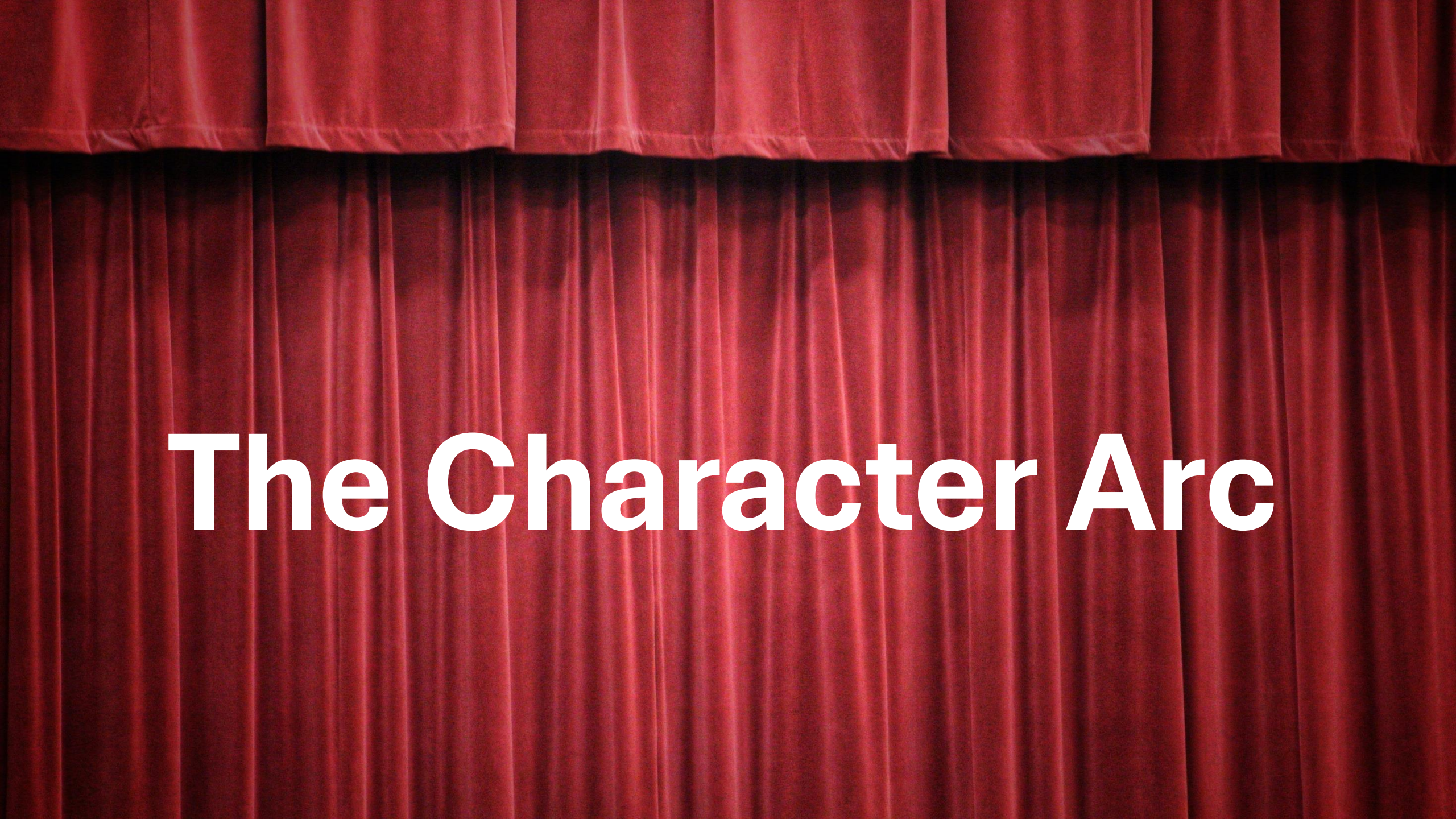
Features of Act III

Resurrection

- New personality
 - Cleansing
 - Second ordeal
 - Physical ordeal
 - Showdown
 - Choice
- Climax—violent or quiet
- Proof of transformation

The Road Back

- Crossing the threshold
- Return to ordinary world
- Character has changed
 - Chase scenes
 - Magic flight
- Pursuit by admirers
- Destroy the villain
- Villain escapes
- Setback

A background of red velvet curtains with vertical pleats and a horizontal valance at the top.

The Character Arc

Character Arc

1. Limited awareness of a problem



2. Increased awareness



3. Reluctance to change



4. Overcoming reluctance



5. Committing to change



6. Experimenting with first change



7. Preparing for big change



8. Attempting big change



9. Consequences of the attempt (improvements and setbacks)



10. Rededication to change



11. Final attempt at big change



12. Final mastery of the problem.



Story Arc

Ordinary World

Call to Adventure

Refusal

Meeting with the Mentor

Crossing the Threshold

Tests, Allies, Enemies

Approach to Inmost Cave

Ordeal

Reward (Seizing the Sword)

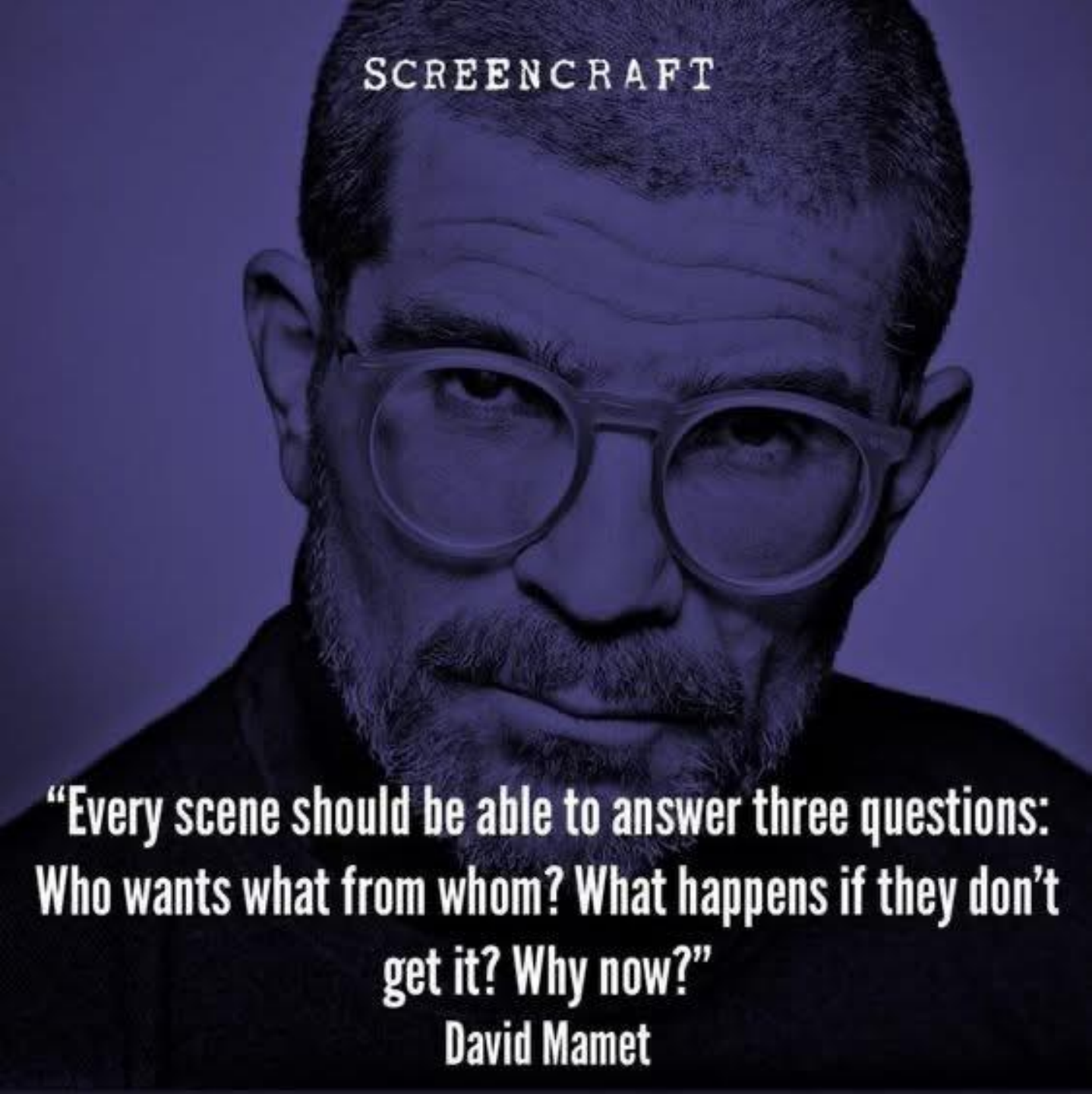
The Road Back

Resurrection

Return with the Elixir

A background of red stage curtains with vertical pleats and a horizontal valance at the top.

Scene Planning



SCREENCRAFT

**“Every scene should be able to answer three questions:
Who wants what from whom? What happens if they don’t
get it? Why now?”
David Mamet**

Planning Your Scenes

Every scene should be able to answer three questions:

- Who wants what from whom?
- What happens if they don’t get it?
- Why now?

A Scene Is a Story

- Goal: Your character is pursuing a goal.
- Conflict: Character faces conflict while trying to reach that goal.
- Outcome: There's an outcome, either positive or negative.
- Reaction: Your character reacts to the previous outcome.
- Reflection: They reflect on their options going forward.
- Decision: They make a decision, forming a new goal and beginning the cycle again.

A close-up, full-frame image of a red velvet curtain. The curtain has a plush, textured appearance with deep vertical folds and a rich, dark red color. The lighting is slightly uneven, creating subtle gradients of red across the fabric.

The End

Useful Resources

- *The Writers Journey*, 3rd Edition, Christopher Vogler
- *Techniques of the Selling Writer*, Dwight V. Swain
- *Story Engineering*, Larry Brooks
- *Story*, Robert McKee
- The Snowflake Method for Designing a Novel,
<https://www.advancedfictionwriting.com/articles/snowflake-method/>