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This is my story. What's yours?

The Perfect Premise

Use the worksheet to help create the Perfect Premise for your Novel.

One of the first steps in writing a novel after you've landed on an idea is to write the premise.

But what is a premise? The premise is a single sentence (but no more than a few) that summarizes the overall idea of your story. For a premise to work, you need three elements: the protagonist, the protagonist's objective, or goal, and the forces that will oppose them, i.e., the situation, crisis, or your antagonist.

With a solid premise, you'll have a clear idea of the story you want to tell before diving into your first draft. The premise is also a great tool to revisit if you ever find yourself stuck in the thick of writing when you feel like you've lost your way. By coming back to the premise, you can regain focus on what it is you want your story to accomplish.

Here's an example from a story we all know, *The Wizard of Oz*.

A young girl is swept off to a magical land by a tornado and must journey to find a wizard who is the only one who can help her find her way home.

Remember those three elements we talked about above?

The protagonist (described in two words, an adjective, and a noun): young girl

The goal (what does your protagonist want?) to find her way home

The situation/crisis/antagonist (usually standing in the way of the goal: in this case, the journey).

You try it with your work in progress!

The protagonist:

The goal:

The situation/crisis/antagonist

Now combine all three elements into a single sentence. That's your story's premise!