

Simplified into Five Core Narrative Principles



Once Upon a Time (OUT)

This period of the character's or characters' lives is marked by being undifferentiated. Pairs of young women, children or a single child, or young person; still somehow in the bosom of the family or tribe.



Rendered

This period begins the path of the Divided Woman. The character or characters are divided against themselves. If a single character her inner conflict begins here. If pairs of characters, then this is the period where they are separated from one another.



DANGER: Chase(d)/Hunted

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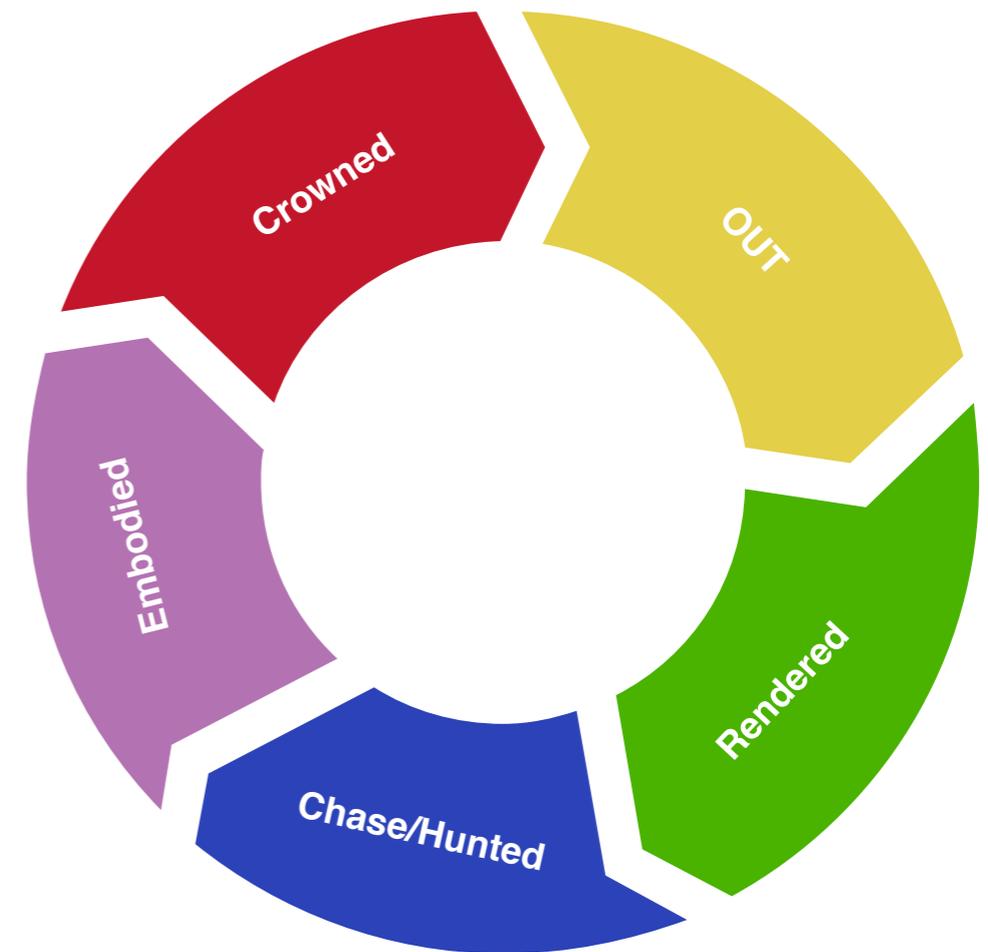
Embodied Transcendence

Character sees her reflection and confronts her divide, either in herself or her sister. She engages in an act of redemption, and comes to an illumination or awareness through a physical circumstance.



Crowned

Character or characters claims her role. In the story she can become an actual queen, or simply have sovereignty over her own life, actions, domain, etc.



Stage 1: Undifferentiated

Once Upon a Time (OUT)



This period of the character's or characters' lives is marked by being undifferentiated. Pairs of young women, children or a single child, or young person; still somehow in the bosom of the family or tribe.

If a single character, she will be blithely unaware of the circumstances of the world around her. She will see things as ideal or perfect.

If sisters or a pair, they will similarly be unaware of what's in the world. They will likely be bonded through love or hardship.

Examples



In Her Shoes: Backstory of characters, two sisters are taken by their mom on a brief adventure that the characters remember differently. The oldest sister's identity is propelled here by her feeling she will always have to take care of her younger sister.



Frozen: Elsa and Anna play in the snow and ice that Elsa makes to delight her little sister. Anna is injured by Elsa's magical power.



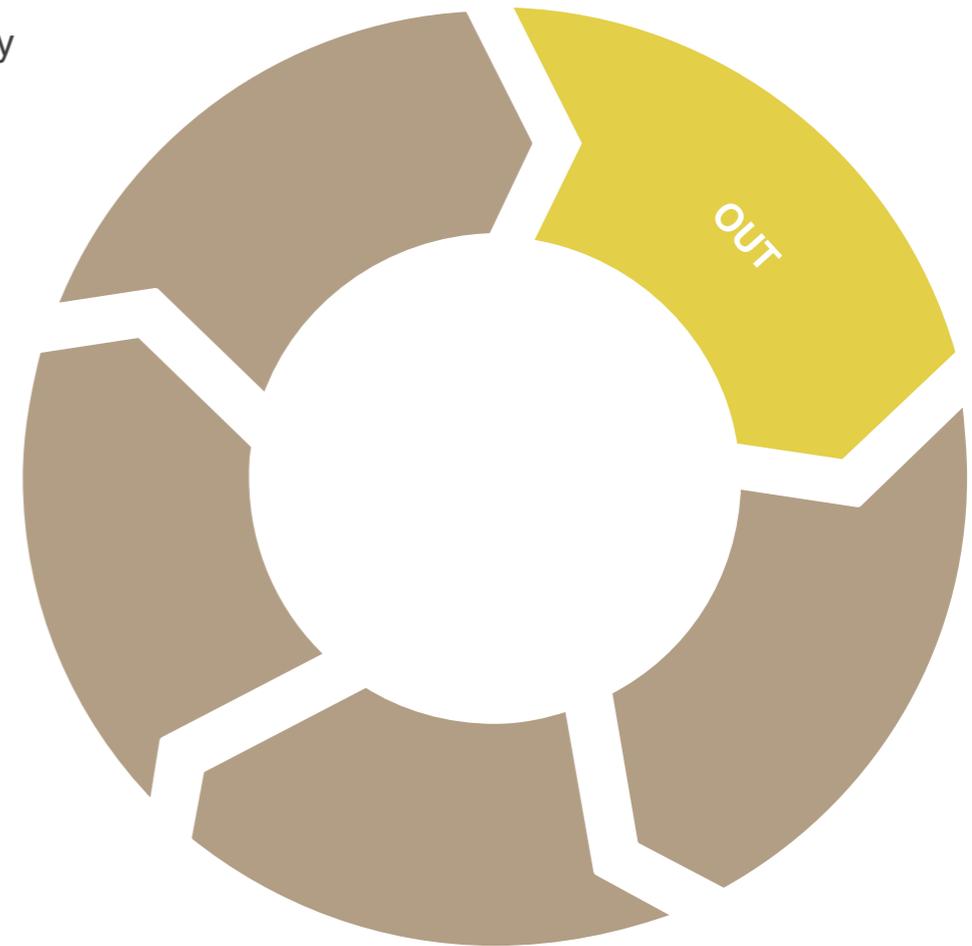
Peppermint: Riley North is a typical suburban mom and wife. She has no idea that her husband has been asked to participate in illegal activities.



The Handmaid's Tale: June Osborne doesn't see that the world changing around her will see her become a slave to the new regime.



Booksmart: Amy and Molly learn too late that their efforts to get into good colleges did not separate them from their peers who had fun throughout high school and still got into good schools.



2. Rendered (MISOR & MIPE)



Rendered

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Depending on the character's age she may resist the path that the world or her family is putting her on.

Character will find herself trying to understand the world she is now in, and how to navigate. She struggles against herself and the cultural forces that are pushing her into a lane. She doesn't see that both lanes are predetermined.

Examples

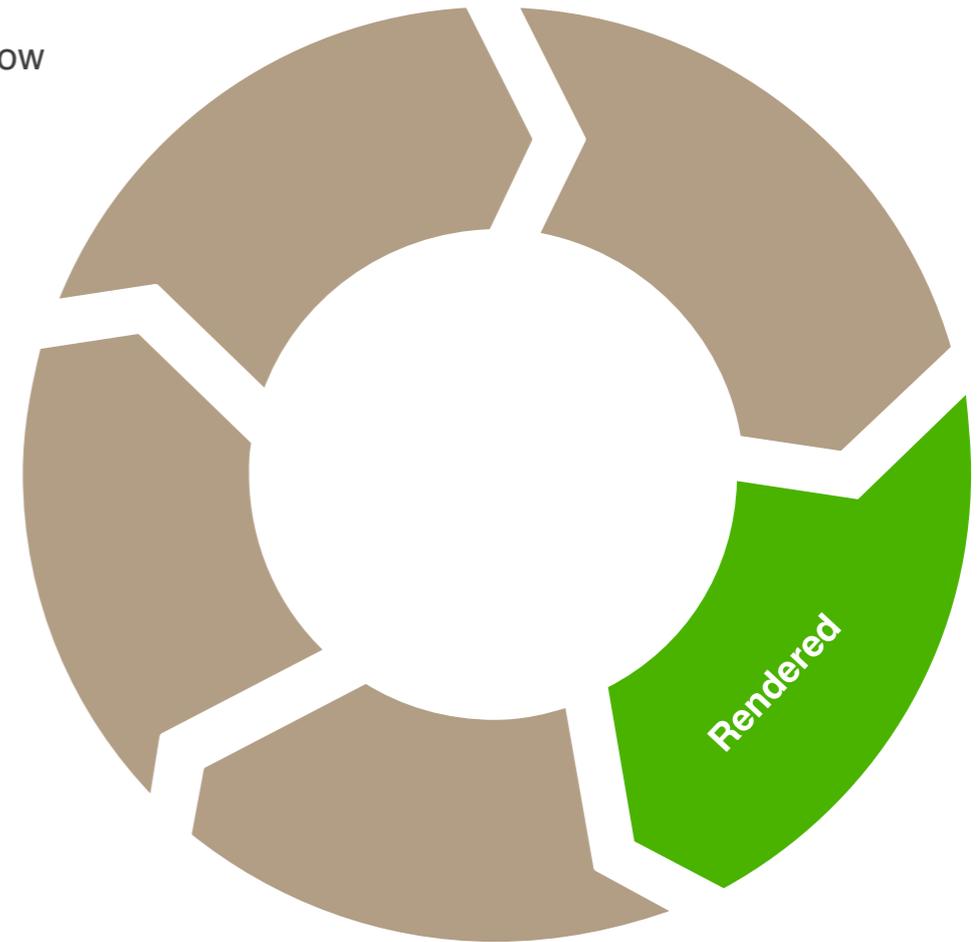
 *Frozen*: Anna and Elsa are separated from one another after Anna is injured.

 *The Color Purple*: Nettie and Celie are separated by Mister after Nettie rejects his sexual advances. He use physical force to separate the sisters, throwing rocks at Nettie to get her to leave.

 *Legally Blonde*: Elle realizes that she has become a pariah at Harvard. She has to separate herself from her former identity and come to understand herself differently.

 *Wonder Woman*: Diana joins the British forces and has to navigate between her identity as a warrior and the conservative cultural norms of the era.

 *Wicked*: Elphaba and Glinda are introduced to each other at Shiz University; their first instinct is to hate one another.



3. Danger: Hunt, Chase, HEA



Into the Depths and the Darkness

The character either chases someone or is hunted. She may go on a pursuit to get someone back, or she may be in exile. This is the most dangerous part of her journey. Everything can end right here, fairytales end right here.

MISOR is possibly chasing someone or something. MIPE is likely being hunted. This is not set in stone.

MISOR can be pursued as a bride or a sexual object. MIPE is often exiled by choice or by force.

One or both characters (if there are two) may find herself abjected.

Examples



Frozen: Elsa runs to the mountain and constructs her ice castle. Anna chases her through the forest.



Peppermint: Riley North is hunting drug dealers and they are hunting her.



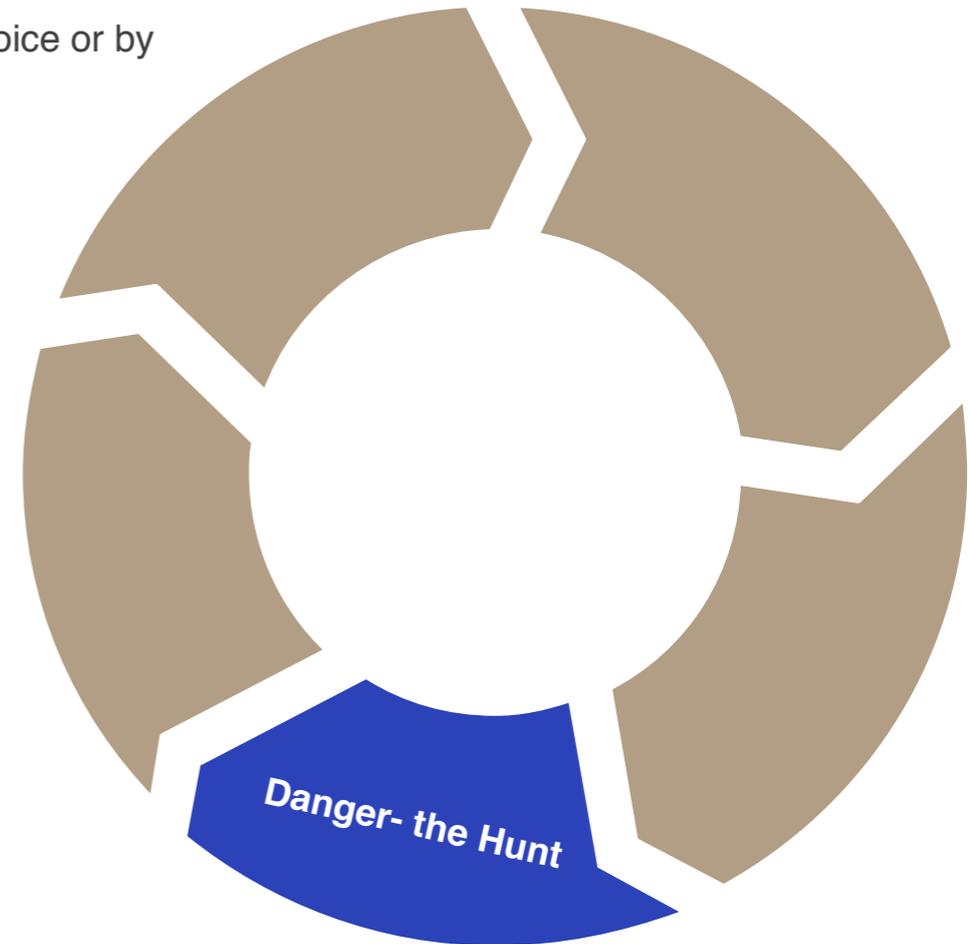
Moana: She leaves her island to restore the heart of T'Fiti, in an attempt to return life to the world. In the process she is hunted by T'ka, and is pursued in a positive way by the ocean and Maui.



I Feel Pretty: Renee goes after her dream job, and pursues a love interest. The leaders of the company, including the idealized daughter and her brother also pursue her (for different reasons).



Legally Blonde: Elle chases her boyfriend to Harvard, then pursues her goals. Her professor also makes a move on her trying to objectify her.



4. Embodied Transcendence



New ways of knowing

Woman sees her reflection and confronts her divide, either in herself or her sister. She engages in an act of redemption, and comes to illumination or awareness through a physical circumstance.

This is not usually a purely spiritual transcendence. There is inherent value in the experience of being a woman. The woman is changed because of her physical body, not in spite of it.

The body is the ground of being, and the character gets to experience her being as inherently valuable for what she brings the experience of culture, relationship, or power.

Examples



Waitress: Jenna realizes when she looks at her baby, Lulu, that she has the power to change her own life, and the life of her child. She will not depend on another person and risk her autonomy.



Maleficent: Aurora finds Maleficent's lost wings locked in her father's castle. She frees them and the wings return to Maleficent, restoring her power and confidence. She then frees Aurora and Diaval from the castle.



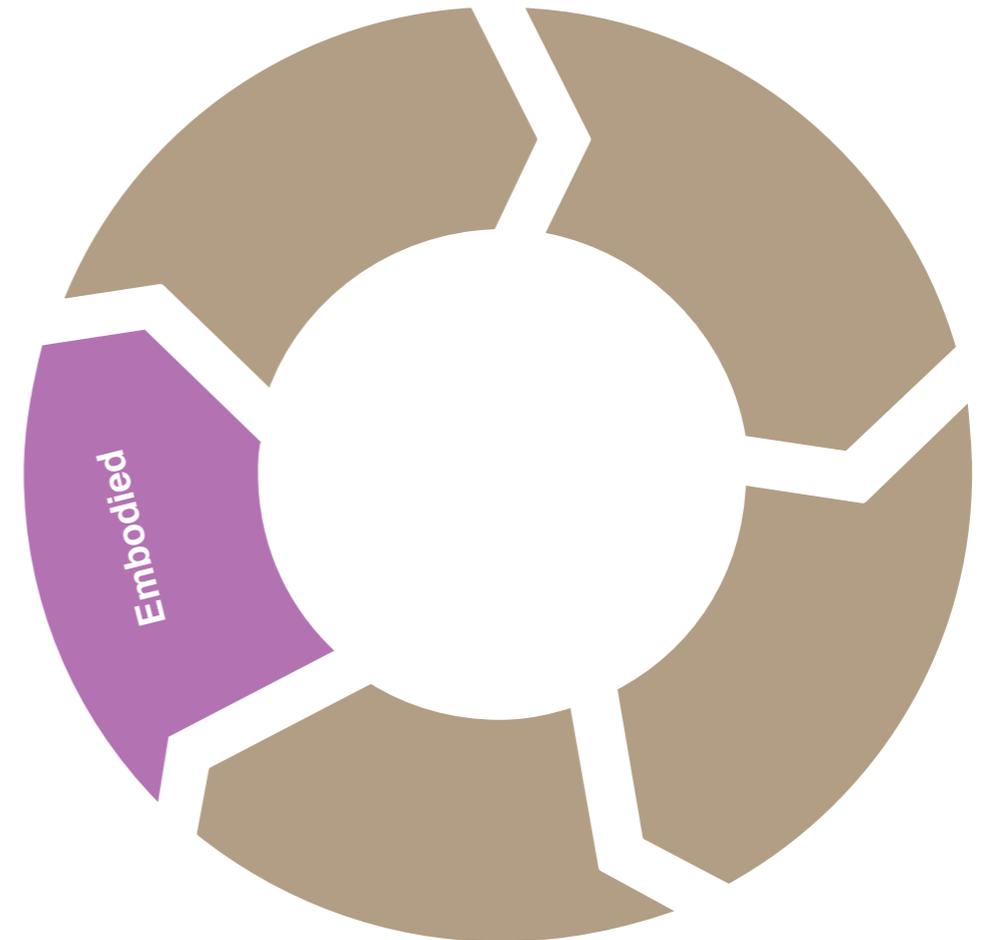
Frozen: Anna realizes that true love is not about her relationship to a man, but is about her love for her sister. She risks her own life to protect her sister from being killed by the evil Prince Hans. She is restored to her full health as a result of her sacrifice.



In Her Shoes: Maggie learns how to read with confidence. She reads aloud to someone who befriends her at her new job. This gives her the confidence to become a personal shopper for the women around her.



Legally Blonde: Elle realizes in court that she has the knowledge she needs to acquit her client. The knowledge is based on her fashion-plate, sorority girl life, and with it she has the confidence to confront the murderer on the stand.



5. Coronation/Crowned

Sovereignty



Woman claims her domain. In the story she can become an actual queen, or simply have sovereignty over her own life, actions, domain, etc.

In stories, the character(s) figure out that they need each other. Each woman whether from a sister pair, or the individual woman, defines her domain, and claims it as her own. This can be a geographical territory or a professional or personal domain. Usually the character's tribe has gathered around her.

The woman is officially “crowned” the head of her domain. Sometimes this is an actual crowning, or can be a symbolic crowning or ascension.

Examples



The Color Purple: Celie owns her own home. Her sister and children come back to her. Celie is surrounded by all of the people she has helped over the years. Note- in this image, both sisters are wearing “Crown” braids.



Frozen: Anna and Elsa invite the town of Arendelle to an ice skating party. Everyone recognizes her as Queen “as she is”. She displays her power without trepidation.



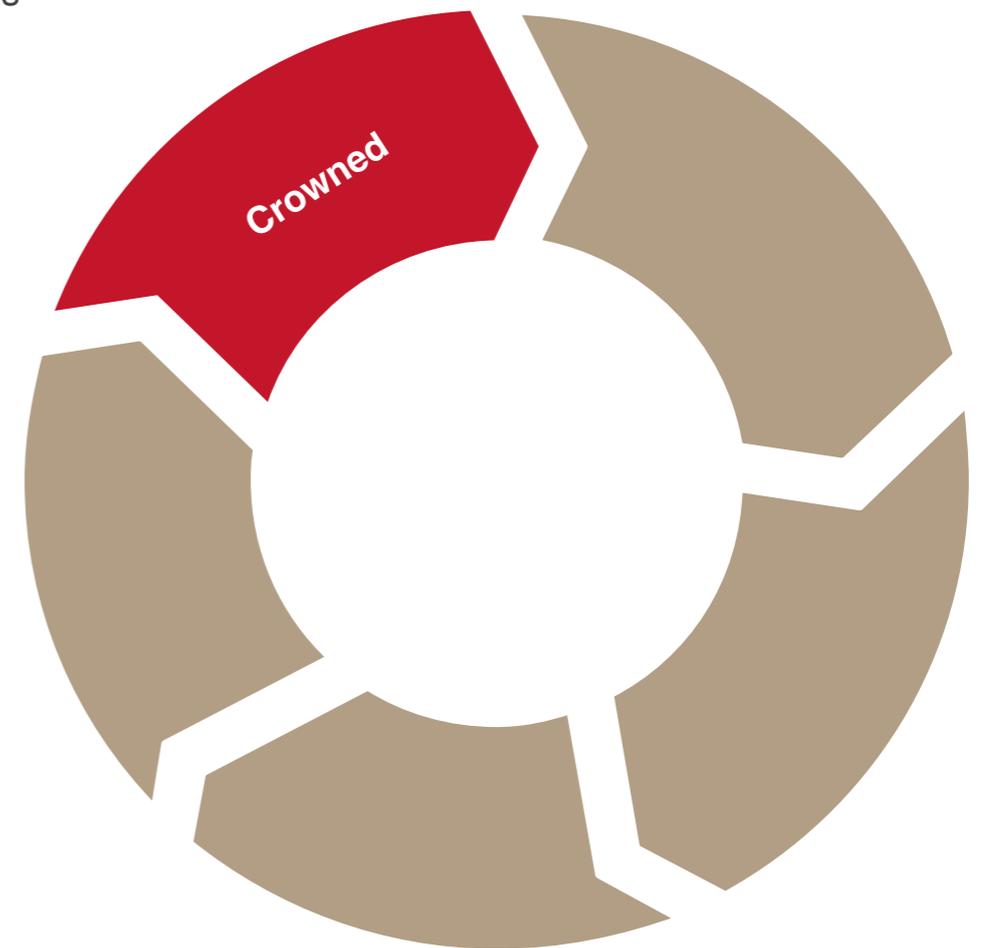
Peppermint: Riley North is given a key to free herself from her bonds in the hospital. She is informed that



Legally Blonde: Elle is “crowned” by her “Law School” graduation mortarboard and as their declared class speaker. In her graduation speech she acknowledges the important people in her law school journey.



Miss Congeniality: Gracie Hart is “crowned” Miss Congeniality by her group of pageant friends. She is elected and gives a moving speech about belonging to this group.



Three Act Structure



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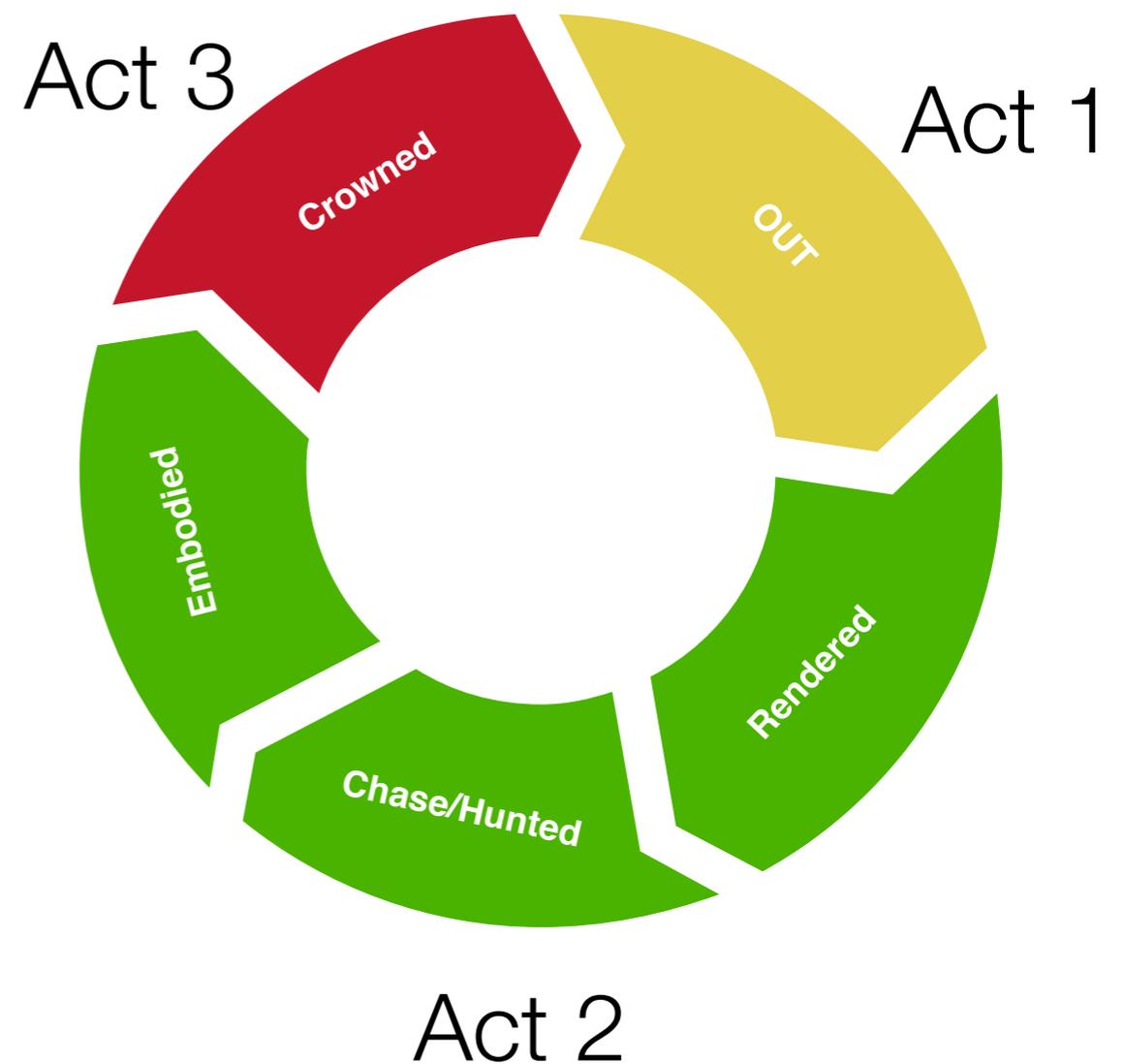
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