



# "Gone Girl" - A Model of Modern Story Structure: A Storyfix.com Tutorial

*Larry Brooks*

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You've heard of and probably read or viewed the bestselling novel and hit movie based on Gillian Flynn's "Gone Girl." Now you can look inside the structure of this story to see what makes it tick, not just in terms of suspense, characters and its disturbing themes, but at the very heart of what every story depends on to maximize its effect - story structure.

Modern story structure is a fluid yet sequential paradigm composed of key contextual parts separated by functional milestones. In modern genre fiction these are essentially the same parts and the same functional milestones, each and every time (especially in successful, bestselling stories), placed in locations within the narrative at prescribed locations and supported by solid narrative building blocks, each with a prescribed mission to fulfill.

Rather than this being a formula, it is more accurately viewed as a proven means of optimizing the physics of a story. It is no more formulaic than wings on an airplane or brains housed in the skulls of humans... they are required for function and life itself.

New writers can quickly assimilate an awareness and learning curve relative to these issues by using a known story as a laboratory, comparing the generic structural functions and terms to the applied art of the author. Readers rarely see it (in much the same manner that a patient on an operating table rarely sees the internal incisions, stitching and grafting that creates a healthy outcome), but writers (and, within that analogies, surgeons) who seek success need to understand structure as a means toward an end, rather than an obstruction to their process.

In this 2400 word tutorial article, author Larry Brooks ([www.storyfix.com](http://www.storyfix.com)) applies the principles of structure to "Gone Girl" in a way that creates a direct correlation between what the principles say should happen, and where within the sequence of a story, to the actual execution of this novel. The result is theory becoming reality, one that writers can finally understand and use in their own work with clarity and the assurance that they are harnessing what works, without the slightest compromise to either their process or their creative latitude in the telling of their stories.

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