Finding the Story: Beginning, Middle, End
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“A story has no beginning or end: arbitrarily one chooses that moment of experience from which to look back or from which to look ahead.”
— Graham Greene, The End of the Affair

Still, everyone knows a good story must be crafted with a beginning, middle, and end as a result of that arbitrary choice, but inspiration doesn’t always come in that order during the creative process. This workshop will examine the starting points to be discovered sometimes at the end or somewhere in the middle of a story and suggest ways to “get at” the beginning.

“The last thing one discovers in composing a work is what to put first.”
— Blaise Pascal, Pensées

I. Sometimes you have to know where you’re going: the end. Then you figure out how to begin.
A story about a bicycle wreck and how it (the story) came to be. . .
Deconstruction and discussion

II. With a thematic story, in particular, the beginning may actually come first and may even announce the theme.
Two stories dictated by themes imposed by someone else. . .
Deconstruction and discussion

III. Usually the “inciting incident” is somewhere in the middle. What’s the backstory? That’s where you begin.
Two stories structured on a traditional pattern. . .
Deconstruction and discussion

“When the creative impulse sweeps over you, grab it. You grab it and honor it and use it, because momentum is a rare gift.”
— Justina Chen, North of Beautiful

“The creative act is not performed by the artist alone; the spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deciphering and interpreting its inner qualifications and thus adds his contribution to the creative act.”
— Marcel Duchamp

Thanks for coming. Tell on!