BEAT SHEET TEMPLATE

Save the Cat Beat Sheet for Novels

Working title: _____ Genre: _____

Target length (words / chapters): _____ Hero: what they want: _____

Hero: what they need: _____ Theme in one line: _____

Act One

Chapter(s)	Beat	What happens	What changes for the hero
	1. Opening Image What does the hero's ordinary life look like, in one scene you can mirror at the end?		
	2. Theme Stated Who hints at the lesson the hero needs, and how does the hero brush it off?		
	3. Setup What does the hero want, what's their flaw, and who and what will the ending need?		
	4. Catalyst What happens to the hero that they can't take back?		
	5. Debate Why shouldn't the hero act, and what will acting cost them?		

Act Two, first half

Chapter(s)	Beat	What happens	What changes for the hero
	6. Break Into Two What does the hero choose to do, and what new world does it put them in?		
	7. B Story Who does the hero meet who will teach them the theme?		

Save the Cat! is Blake Snyder's story structure; Jessica Brody adapted it for novels in Save the Cat! Writes a Novel. Free template from litmemo.com/templates/beat-sheet

Act Two, first half (continued)

Chapter(s)	Beat	What happens	What changes for the hero
	8. Fun and Games What scenes did the reader pick this book up for?		
	9. Midpoint What looks like a win (or a loss) halfway through, and what does it raise?		

Act Two, second half

Chapter(s)	Beat	What happens	What changes for the hero
	10. Bad Guys Close In How does the opposition hit back, and how does the hero's flaw make it worse?		
	11. All Is Lost What does the hero lose, and what ends here?		
	12. Dark Night of the Soul How does the hero take the loss, and what is the easy way out?		

Act Three

Chapter(s)	Beat	What happens	What changes for the hero
	13. Break Into Three What realization gets the hero moving again?		
	14. Finale What's the plan, what goes wrong, and what does the changed hero do that the old one couldn't?		
	15. Final Image How does the last scene mirror the first, and what has changed?		

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BEAT → SCENES

Turn one beat into scenes

Beat: _____ Chapters: _____ What this beat has to deliver: _____

Scene	What the hero wants here	What's in the way	Where it could go off-plan	Chapter

Fill the goal and the obstacle before you draft. Leave the outcome open: use Where it could go off-plan to note where the character might take the scene instead.

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