



HOW TO FIND OBLIGATORY SCENES AND CONVENTIONS: THE REDEMPTION STORY
STORY GRID BLOG ARTICLE: DECEMBER 22, 2017

STORY PRINCIPLES	A CHRISTMAS CAROL (ALASTAIR SIM VERSION)	DRUGSTORE COWBOY (STORY GRID EXAMPLE)	GRAN TORINO	THE VERDICT	KRAMER V. KRAMER	THE LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
Global Genre (internal)	Morality > Redemption	Morality > Redemption	Morality > Redemption	Morality > Redemption	Morality > Redemption	Morality > Redemption
Secondary Genre (external)	Horror > Supernatural	Crime > Organized Crime	Action Epic > Savior	Crime > Courtroom	Love > Marriage	Performance > Sports
Obligatory Scenes:						
1. Wake Up Call (the Snap-Out-Of-It Scene)	Marley's ghost appears.	Police raid Bob's house.	Walt is forced to protect his property from gang members.	Mickey has had enough.	Joanna leaves Ted to care for their son.	Bagger Vance arrives.
2. Overt Refusal of the Call	Scrooge doesn't want to be visited by the Ghosts of Christmas past, present and future.	Bob continues to steal.	Walt doesn't want to be seen as the hero of the neighborhood.	Franks continues to drink and plans to settle the case.	Ted thinks the situation is temporary and that Joanna will be back soon.	Junuh bails on the match and leaves town in his pickup truck.
3. All is Lost	Scrooge collapses onto his headstone.	Nadine overdoses.	Sue is attacked	The check: Frank realizes the Archdiocese has his number.	Ted loses his job and with it, his chance to win custody of Billy.	3 strokes behind, ball in woods. Junuh feels defeated.
4. Protagonist Decides to Change	At the graveyard, Scrooge begs for pity and repents. He promises to change the shadows of things that will be.	After Nadine's death, Bob asks God for pity and promises to change if he doesn't get caught.	Walt chooses a non-violent solution to the gang situation – faces them unarmed. Previously, he'd used firearms (handgun, shotgun).	Frank can't take the money from the Archdiocese. Knows he'll be lost.	Ted puts Billy's needs ahead of his own, finds a job in 24-hours (on Christmas Eve) and accepts a demotion and pay cut.	Bagger literally tells Junuh that it's time to choose. Junuh decides to leave his past behind him, break free from the memories that have haunted him.
5. Wins but Loses / Loses but Wins	Scrooge saves his soul, but loses his money.	Bob gets clean, but loses his wife.	Walt learns how to care again, but loses his life.	Frank wins the case but loses the girl and the alcohol.	Wins son but loses wife and career.	Wins self-respect, loses guidance of Bagger Vance.
Conventions:						
1. A Self-Obsessed Protagonist	Scrooge's money is all that matters to him.	Bob values drugs more than everyone and everything else.	Walt has alienated himself from everyone. Cares more for his gnome than Thao's safety.	Frank is a drunk who wants his share of a big financial settlement.	Ted is completely focused on his career – wife leaves and his concern is for his career, not his son.	Junuh wallows in self-pity and has no concern for the financial troubles of Adele or the citizens of Savannah.
2. Spiritual Guide / Sidekick	Marley and the Ghosts of Christmas past, present and future.	Drugs. God. Father Murphy.	Dorothy (Walt's wife). Father Janovich.	Mickey. Deborah Ann Kaye. Laura Fisher (when she challenges Frank).	Billy (Ted's son).	Bagger Vance.
3. Improbable External Conflict	Are the ghosts real or imagined?	Bob gets away with the dead body.	Senior citizen takes on a gang and wins.	A drunk man takes on the Archdiocese with no admissible evidence, and wins.	A loving mother walks away from her young son, twice, even after winning custody.	Down-and-out golfer takes on 2 greatest players in the history of the game, and wins.



4. Protagonist Haunted by Past	Scrooge is ashamed of the choices he's made since his sister's death.	David shoots him.	Walt carries around the horrors he experienced during the Korean war.	The Lillibridge case, approx 12 years prior, colors antagonists' perception of Frank. (Archdiocese, Ed Concannon, Judge Hoyle)	Ted's prior admission that he felt responsible for Billy's playground accident, causes him to lose custody.	Junuh suffers from flashbacks from the war (WWI).
5. Help from Unexpected Sources	Tiny Tim.	Nadine (girl he dislikes) and Gentry (officer).	Sue Lor (young girl next door).	Deborah Ann Kaye (client, a complete stranger). Archdiocese (the defendant, holds a mirror up to Frank in the form of a check)	Margaret Phelps (Ted and Joanna's friend and neighbor).	Hardy Greaves (a boy who believes in him)
Point of Curiosity: Does the writer show that the protagonist was good once?	Yes. Scrooge was capable of love, kindness and affection.	No. Bob has been a drug addict his entire life.	Indirectly. He must have been if "the best woman who ever walked the planet" married him.	Yes. Frank was an excellent lawyer.	Yes. Joanna admits that the first two years of marriage were happy. Ted was a faithful husband who provided for his family and was not abusive in any way.	Yes. Junuh was the hero of Savannah (golf and war hero).