

Dramatic Storytelling Styles

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James Rosenberger, who as you know appears and contributes (thanks, James!) regularly to the Deliberate Storyteller group, pointed me the other day to another really interesting storytelling resource. Georges Polti was a 19th century French writer (in spite of the fact that he was apparently born in Providence, Rhode Island) who spent years studying dramatic styles and ultimately described them as 36 unique situations that are typically found in most stories. The provenance of the list (below) is a bit murky; it is apparently based on a list created by German writer and artist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe who in turn credits Italian playwright Carlo Gozzi.

Here are his 36 situation, including a discussion on each one. Incidentally, each of the terms is hyperlinked and will take you to a wonderful resource called [Changing Minds](#). Spend some time there – it's a terrific resource for all kinds of reasons.

1. [Supplication](#)
2. [Deliverance](#)
3. [Vengeance of a crime](#)
4. [Vengeance taken for kindred upon kindred](#)
5. [Pursuit](#)
6. [Disaster](#)
7. [Falling prey to cruelty or misfortune](#)
8. [Revolt](#)
9. [Daring enterprise](#)
10. [Abduction](#)
11. [Enigma](#)
12. [Obtaining](#)
13. [Enmity of kinsmen](#)
14. [Rivalry of kinsmen](#)
15. [Murderous adultery](#)
16. [Madness](#)
17. [Fatal imprudence](#)
18. [Involuntary crimes of love](#)
19. [Slaying of a kinsman unrecognized](#)
20. [Self-sacrificing for an ideal](#)
21. [Self-sacrifice for kindred](#)
22. [All sacrificed for a passion](#)

23. [Necessity of sacrificing loved ones](#)
24. [Rivalry of superior and inferior](#)
25. [Adultery](#)
26. [Crimes of love](#)
27. [Discovery of the dishonor of a loved one](#)
28. [Obstacles to love](#)
29. [An enemy loved](#)
30. [Ambition](#)
31. [Conflict with a god](#)
32. [Mistaken jealousy](#)
33. [Erroneous judgment](#)
34. [Remorse](#)
35. [Recovery of a lost one](#)
36. [Loss of loved ones](#)

A short one today, but have some fun with it. Thanks for reading.