

# FREYTAG'S PYRAMID

## INCITING INCIDENT

Jennifer, a married freelance photographer, has packed up her family's life in Sydney and is flying to Cairns Airport in Far North Queensland with young sons Jack & Jasper to begin a new life at Emerald Beach on the edge of the Daintree Rainforest. Her husband, Jonathon, has a new job as Acting GM with Mossman Council. On the plane, Jen is exhausted after spending the past month on her own packing up their lives. She has mixed feelings about leaving Sydney and reminisces about her old family house and the good times there, but is also excited to be making a fresh start. Hanging question – why has the family decided to move so far from Sydney?

## EXPOSITION (BACK STORY – REVEAL DIFF THINGS AT DIFF TIMES THROUGH RISING ACTION)

12 months earlier, Jonathon coerces his wife Jennifer to take the blame for a fatal car accident he causes on a road near their family home in Sydney which kills a heavily pregnant woman, Lisa and leaves her husband, Scott, in a coma. Jen escapes manslaughter charges but is deeply traumatised by the accident. She persuades Jon to move as far as possible from Sydney.

## GOOD

Jen and boys arrive in Cairns and hire friendly Aboriginal taxi driver, Pickles, who gives them an introduction to local culture/politics life. As they head further North, Jen is mesmerised by the area's natural beauty. Their new home is an externally austere but stunning, and the family is delighted to be reunited. Jen & Jon briefly escape the boys to christen their new bedroom, then the family walks down to their beach with a picnic (Jen inspired to bring her camera). They meet new neighbours, school principal Narelle & husband, Stretch + their 2 boys (Narelle pregnant) and sit beneath a tree while the kids hunt for Easter Eggs. On their way home through the darkening jungle, Jen thinks she sees a man's silhouette, but blames the diminishing light.

## GOOD AGAIN

Jon throws a party for Jen's birthday. He hires a babysitter and invites colleagues, neighbours and Blythe, as a surprise for Jen. The party is a hit with everyone excited about Carnivale. Jen & Blythe's friendship's rekindled, Narelle is helpful, Stretch is political & doesn't see eye to eye with Jon. We meet Mayor Liz, who has big plans for Jon's job. Jon gifts Jen a 4WD for her birthday. After everyone leaves, Jon and Jen make love but then argue after Jon lets slip he doesn't intend the family remain in FNQ long-term but that they'll return to Sydney.

## GOOD

Jen is shocked to find a letter from Scott in her PO Box. He asks her to tell him what happened the night of the accident & during Lisa's last minutes alive. Jen immediately writes back, discovering relief and solace in sharing her repressed memories. Jen begins to strengthen in other ways – she embraces her photography, socialises with Blythe; she gets her groove back & life is good.

## BAD AGAIN

Jen calls the detective again and discovers coma victim Scott has been discharged from hospital. She tells Jon, who is furious she has remained in contact with detectives. Jen gives Blythe Scott's name and asks her to use her journalistic contacts to find out his address. Tormented by her guilt, Jen pays for a PO Box in her name only and writes Scott a secret letter, introducing herself and asking for his forgiveness. Meanwhile, protestors take over the Carnivale Street Parade, calling on Jon to do more to stop the Shire from being merged.

## BAD

Narelle tells Jen Jasper is drawing violent pictures at school. Jen confesses family involved in a car accident. Jon won't agree to Jasper getting counselling & refuses to discuss accident. Jen looks thru old news articles & we learn she was responsible for the accident. Jen makes a phone call to a detective, but then hangs up when she answers.

## GREAT

Janelle gives birth to a healthy baby girl. Jon straightens up and finds a major hole in the State's justification for merging the Shire, getting himself back in the Mayor's good books & re-securing his job security. The State abandons its merger plans; the shire celebrates; Jon is a hero. Scott writes to Jen to tell her he's abandoned his hypnotherapy. Jen is relieved.

## TERRIBLE

Jen discovers a large quantity of cocaine hidden in the house. She confronts Jon about using again. They fight. She runs to the beach with the cocaine and throws it in the ocean. Jon tries to stop her. Janelle & Stretch find them rolling in the water, fighting. Janelle goes into early labour. Douglas Shire Council loses its fight to stop the forced merger from going ahead. Mayor Liz makes moves to sack Jon. Scott tells Jen he's begun therapy with a hypnotherapist to try to regain his memory of the night of the accident. Jen feels torn and terrified of Scott regaining his memory and finding out the truth about what happened the night of the accident.

## BLACK TIME

Jen returns home to find Jon pacing and sweating, high on cocaine. In his hand are Scott's letters. We find out Jon was driving the night of the accident and this is the truth he's been desperately trying to hide. Jen tells him it was him she should have run from, not Sydney. Enraged, Jon begins to strangle Jen. He does not see the strong, facially scarred stranger swing a heavy vase over his head from behind him, knocking him out.

## SERIOUSLY BAD

Scott writes to Jen to tell her he no longer wishes to write to her but gives no reason as to why. Jen is crushed and confused and realises how much she has come to value her friendship with Scott.

## RESOLUTION (FINAL SUMMARY)

After Jon is sentenced to 25 years' jail at Sydney Magistrate's Court, Jen decides to return to FNQ to live, realising she's found true peace, happiness and a sense of community there. Scott promises to remain in contact with her. On the plane heading back, she opens a final letter from Scott asking if she'd mind if he visited her and met her boys. He tells her she feels like family.

## DENOUEMENT (TIE ALL LOSE ENDS TOGETHER)

Jon is charged with the manslaughter of Lisa and baby Ben. He is also charged with Jen's attempted murder and cocaine possession. Key evidence of Jon's guilt is found on Jen's mobile phone, which she'd used to record her last conversation with Jon about the accident, during which he openly discussed the truth about the accident. Or does Scott find his phone amongst his possessions and Lisa had been recording their trip to hospital when the car accident happened. Scott found the phone, had it repaired and found the video, which he now submits to the court as evidence of Jon's cover-up.

## CLIMAX (WHERE MC CHANGES)

Scott cradles Jen in his arms but she pulls away and finds her phone. She calls the detective and tells her she's ready to tell her the truth about what happened the night of the accident. The detective tells her she'll need evidence. Scott tells her his memory has returned and he will back up her version of events. The detective arranges to send local police to arrest Jon. In the meantime, Jen goes to Janelle's place to get the boys while Scott ties Jon's hands and feet together so he doesn't escape when he regains consciousness. Once the police have taken Jon away, Jen brings the boys home and tells them it's okay to talk about the truth now.