

The Story Grid

The Silence of the Lambs by Thomas Harris

The *red band* represents the progression of the external value at stake in the thriller genre—Life. It moves from the dominance of Life at the very beginning of the story quickly to Unconsciousness, which represents disorientation and serious threat. The band increases in width to represent the presence of Death (scene six) as it progressively moves ever more negative. By novel's end, the value goes to the end of the line, from the threat of Damnation at midpoint to actual Damnation at its stunning finale.

The *blue band* represents the progression of the novel's internal value at stake—the protagonist's Worldview. At the beginning of the novel, Clarice Starling has a Blind Belief in the meritocracy and justice of the FBI and of the world in general. As she successfully performs her duties, her faith is affirmed. Her Blind Belief grows ever more positive to Justified Belief by midpoint. However, at scene thirty-one, she begins to doubt the institution as it has betrayed her trust. Her Worldview grows ever more negative from midpoint onward until she's reached Disillusionment by novel's end.

