

BEAT SHEET

Example: a filled-in beat sheet for an invented story

Title	Low Tide Bakery	Writer	Example
Logline	A burned out city pastry chef inherits her late aunt's failing bakery on a tiny island and has one winter to save it before the ferry stops running and the bank takes the building.		

THE 15 BEATS

Beat	Pages	What happens in your story
1. Opening Image A snapshot of the hero before anything changes.	1	Mara Quill plates a perfect dessert in a loud city kitchen, alone, and throws it away when the head chef sends it back.
2. Theme Stated Someone says what the story is really about.	5	Her aunt's old letter, read at the funeral: "Bread is just patience you can eat."
3. Set-Up The hero's world, flaws and stakes.	1 to 10	Mara is gifted, lonely and then fired. Her aunt's will leaves her a bakery on Gull Island and a pile of debt.
4. Catalyst The event that knocks life off course.	12	The bank gives her until the last ferry of the season to pay, or the bakery is sold.
5. Debate Should I go? The hero hesitates.	12 to 25	She plans to sell up and leave. Then she finds her aunt's recipe book, half the pages missing.
6. Break into Two The hero chooses and enters a new world.	25	She cancels the sale, unpacks her knives and opens the shop for one morning to see what happens.
7. B Story A new relationship that carries the theme.	30	Tom Varga, the grumpy ferry captain, is the only customer who comes back. He hated her aunt's rivals more than her bread.
8. Fun and Games The promise of the premise.	30 to 55	Burnt loaves, a stolen sourdough starter and a village that will not buy from an outsider. She bakes through it, and slowly they start to come.
9. Midpoint A false win or false loss. Stakes go up.	55	A food writer stuck on the island praises the bakery in print. Orders pour in, and Mara stops listening to anyone.
10. Bad Guys Close In Pressure from outside and inside.	55 to 75	She hires no one, works all night, and pushes Tom away. The rival bakery copies her and undercuts her prices.
11. All Is Lost The lowest point. Something dies.	75	The oven fails on the day of the island festival order. She loses the order, the money and Tom.
12. Dark Night of the Soul The hero sits with the loss.	75 to 85	Alone in the dark shop, she finds the missing recipe pages tucked in Tom's old ferry log. Her aunt never baked alone.
13. Break into Three The answer, often from the B story.	85	Mara asks the village for help, the thing her aunt always did.
14. Finale The hero applies the lesson and wins or loses.	85 to 110	The whole island bakes in borrowed kitchens for the last ferry crowd. She pays the bank with an hour to spare.
15. Final Image The mirror of the opening image.	110	Mara plates a simple loaf for a full room, and Tom sends nothing back.

NOTES: THEME, OPEN QUESTIONS, WHAT CHANGES

Theme: you cannot do it alone. Mirror: the plate sent back on page 1 against the loaf nobody sends back on page 110. Open question: is the rival bakery a person or a chain?

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