



HEROES, THIEVES, AND SPACE WIZARDS

WRITING FOR AN ENSEMBLE CAST AND
WHY IT'S HARDER THAN YOU THINK

INTRODUCTION



ROAD MAP

- What is an ensemble cast?
- The Basics of Novel Writing
- Multi-Arc Stories
- The Best Genres for writing ensemble casts
- Questions



WHAT IS ENSEMBLE CAST?

An **ENSEMBLE CAST** is a group of **PRIMARY CHARACTERS** who contribute and participate equally in the story with individual, unique **POINTS OF VIEW**. Usually written in limited or omniscient **THIRD PERSON POINT OF VIEW**.



WHAT IS ENSEMBLE CAST?



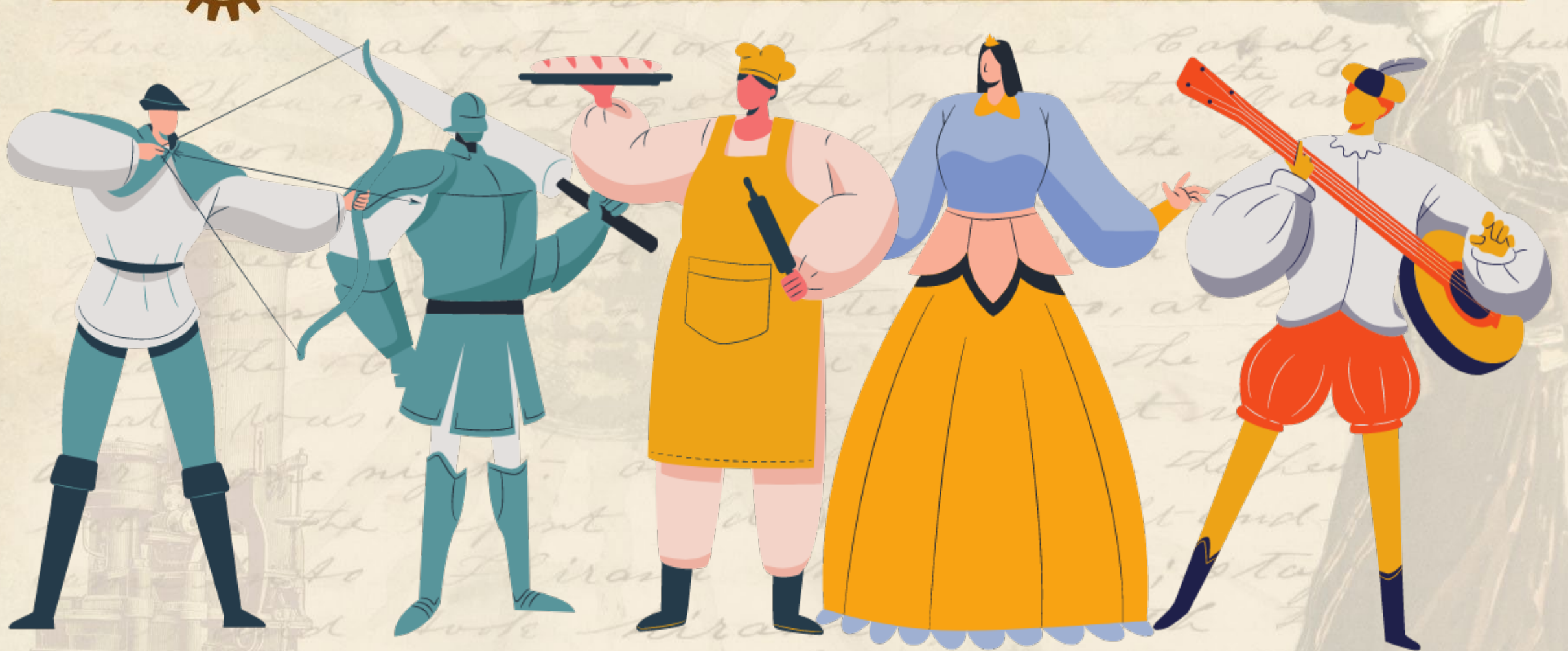


WHAT IS ENSEMBLE CAST?





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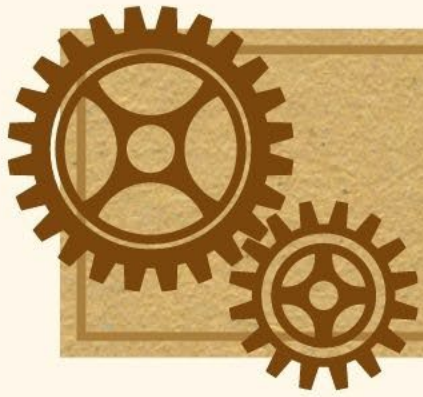
WHAT IS ENSEMBLE CAST?

How many POVs make an ensemble cast?

- Usually 4 or more
- Game of Thrones begins with 8 before adding **MANY** more
- Lord of the Rings focuses on 7

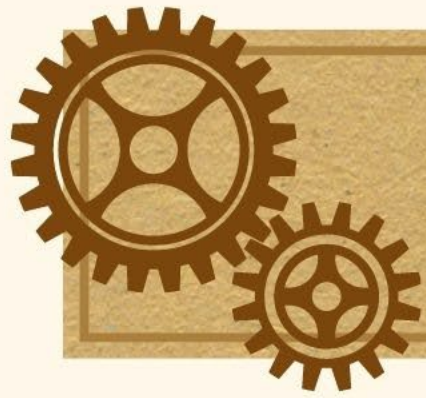


THE BASICS



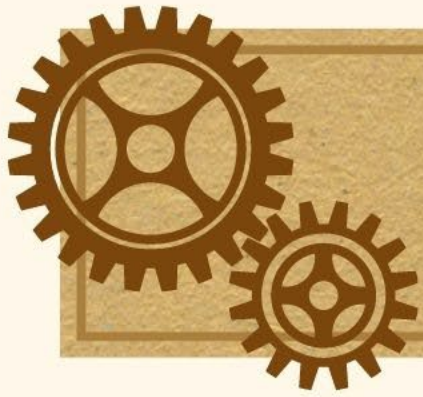
NOVEL WRITING BASICS

- **Writing Craft**
- **Character Voice**
- **Character Arc**
- **Plot Structure**



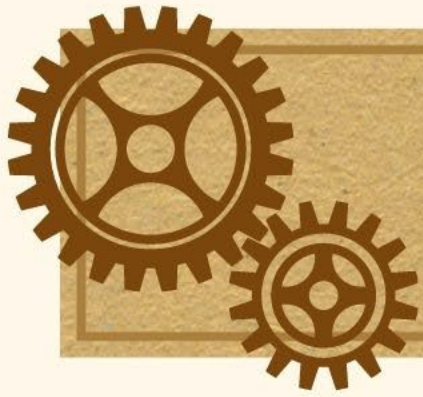
WRITING CRAFT

- **Show versus Tell**
- **Exact and Vivid Verbs and Adjectives**
- **Sensory Detail in Setting**
- **Active versus Passive Voice**



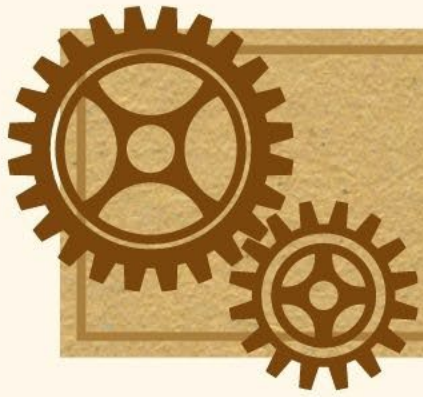
CHARACTER VOICE

- **Idiom and language**
- **Non-verbal Communication**
- **Internal Dialogue**
- **Personality Traits**



CHARACTER ARC

- What do they want?
- Why is their goal important to them?
- What is at stake if they fail?
- What do they need?

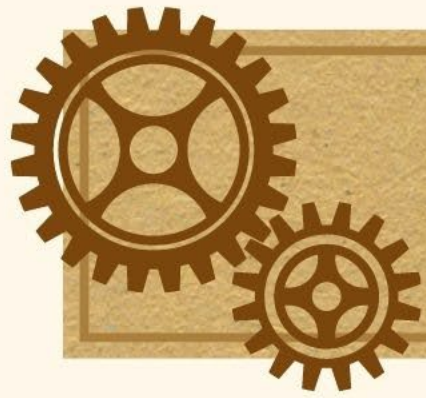


PLOT STRUCTURE

- How does your story **BEGIN**?
- How does your story **END**?
- What goes wrong in the middle?
- Why does any of it matter to us?

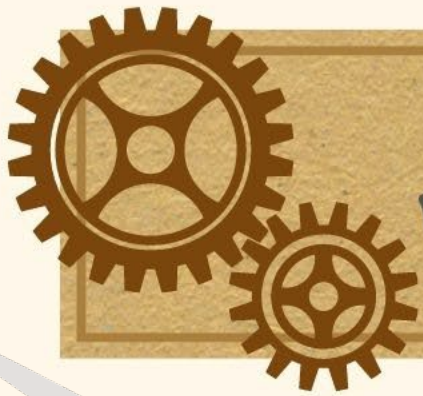


MULTI-
ARC
STORIES



MULTI-ARC STORY NEEDS

- Juggling multiple character arcs
- Balancing multiple plot points
- Translating multiple character voices



JUGGLING MULTIPLE ARCS

Trauma

Lie (Ghost/Wound/Hurt)

Flaw/Fear

Want (External Goal)

Need (Internal Goal)

Trauma

Lie (Ghost/Wound/Hurt)

Flaw/Fear

Want (External Goal)

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BALANCING MULTIPLE PLOTS

Story Goal
Midpoint Goal
Crisis Point
Resolution/Setup



TRANSLATE MULTIPLE VOICES



- Brave
- Reckless
- Intense
- Never laughs



- Anxious
- A bit cowardly
- Light-hearted
- Laughs too much



- Morose
- Lazy
- Only sings funeral songs



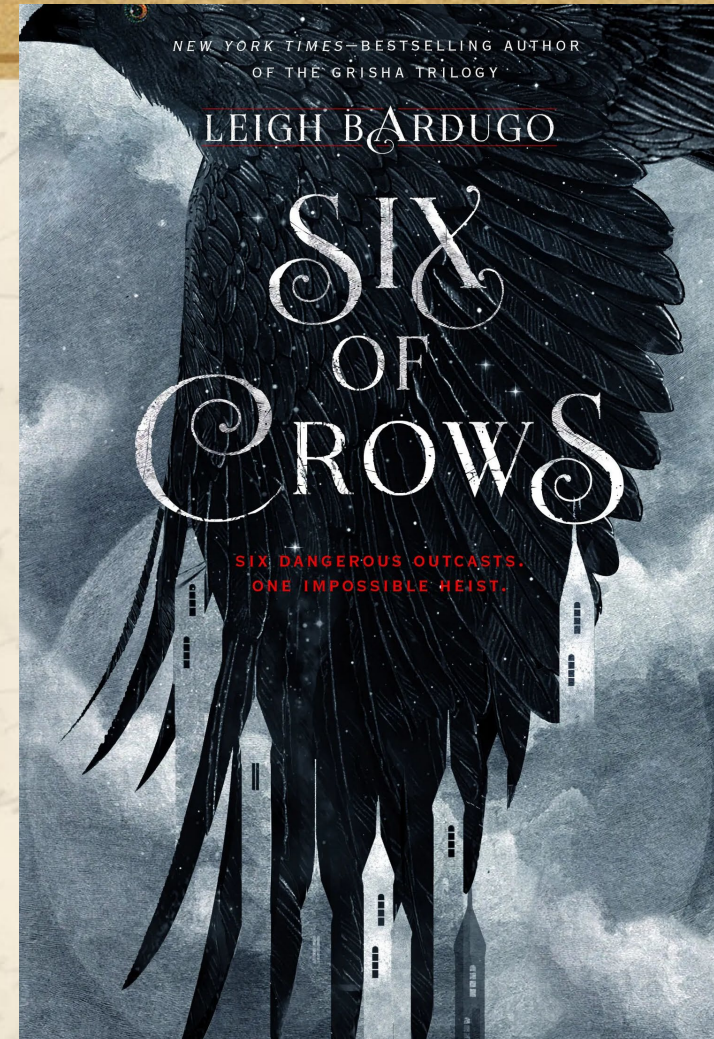
- Bubbly
- A helper
- Talks to animals
- Never walks, only skips



THE
BEST
GENRES

HEIST NOVELS

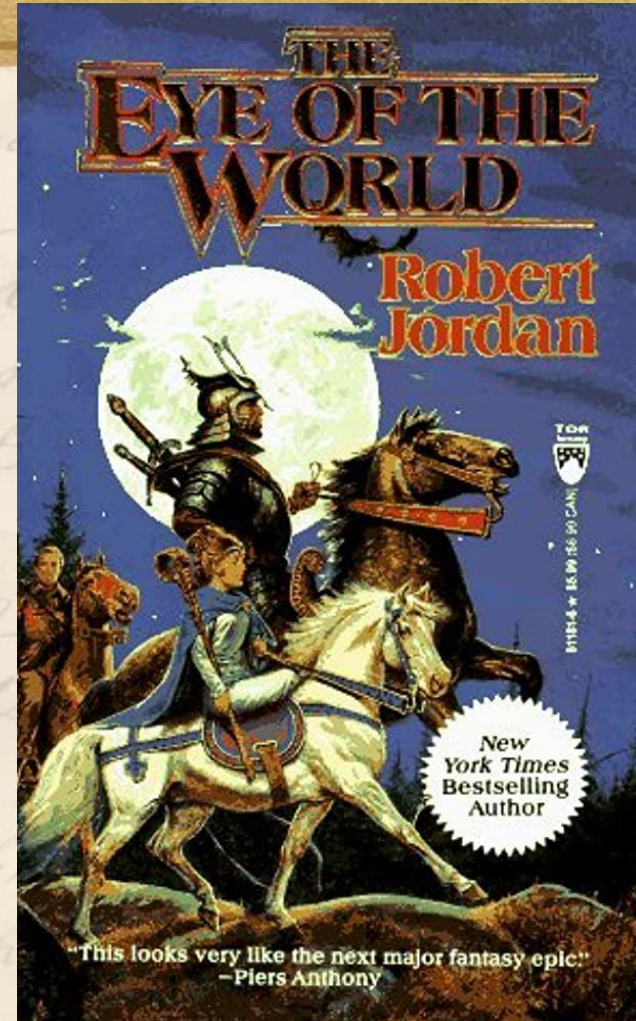
- A Leader
- A Team
- A Motive / A Goal
- A Plan
- A Twist
- A Success or a Failure





FANTASY/EPIC NOVELS

- A non-earth setting
- A world-level conflict
- A hero
- Fantastic creatures
- Magic

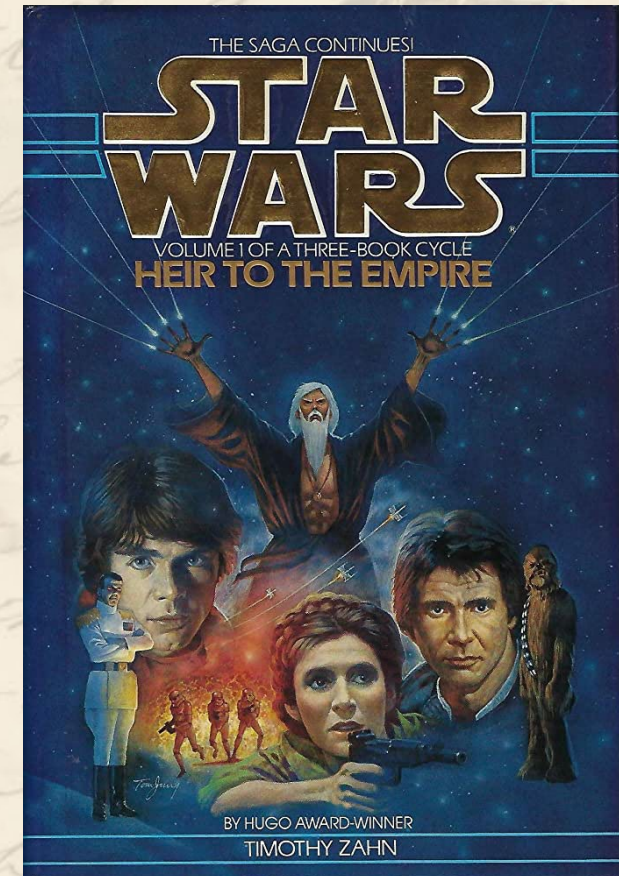
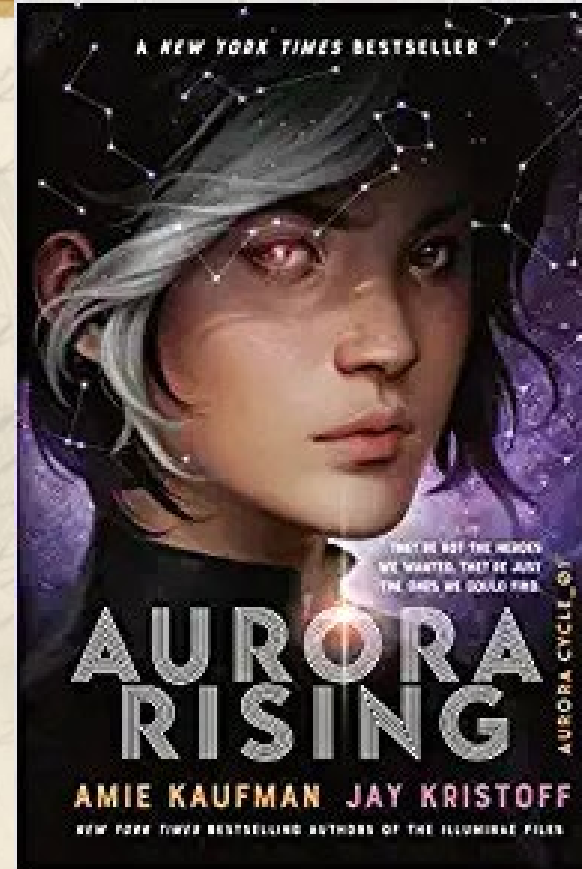


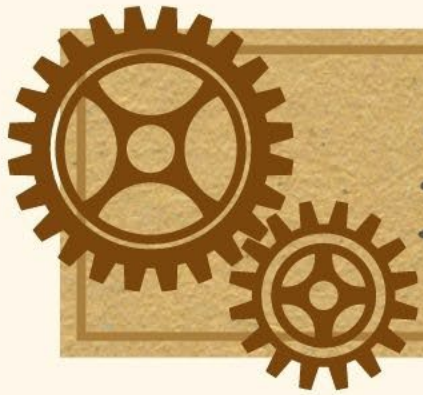


SCI-FI/SPACE OPERA NOVELS

SPACE OPERA

- Intergalactic battles
- Rise/fall of worlds
- Alien species
- Space adventures
- Character-focused





POINT OF VIEW POINTERS

- Get a journal for each character
- Interview every character
- Test your characters in different scenarios to see what they do
- Read their dialogue out loud



QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU!

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