



STORY MAPS
BACK TO THE
FUTURE

Structure for Screenwriters:
A complete breakdown of the classic film.

DANIEL P. CALVISI
WILLIAM ROBERT RICH

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Written by Robert Zemeckis & Bob Gale

Directed by Robert Zemeckis

Running time: 112 minutes

Year: 1985

BASIC STORY MAP

PROTAGONIST: Marty McFly, a 17-year-old aspiring rock star

CHARACTERIZATION / MAIN MISBEHAVIOR: Always late / Lacks confidence

EXTERNAL GOALS: To get back to 1985 / To make his parents fall in love / To save Doc

INTERNAL GOAL: To find worth in his father, George

MAIN DRAMATIC CONFLICT: George / Lorraine / Biff

THEME: If you put your mind to it, you can accomplish anything.

CENTRAL DRAMATIC QUESTION: Will Marty secure his existence and get back to 1985 in enough time to save Doc's life?

ENDING: Marty helps his parents fall in love, gets back to 1985, and saves Doc.

LOGLINE: With the help of an eccentric scientist, a teenage time traveler must get his parents to fall in love to save his existence and get back to the future.

STORY ENGINES

ACT I

Marty discovers his eccentric friend and scientist, Doc Brown, has not only built a time machine out of a DeLorean, but also swindled a group of Libyan terrorists. Moments before Doc is set to travel time, he is gunned down by the Libyans. Marty is forced to flee in the DeLorean and accidentally transports himself to 1955.

ACT II-A

In 1955, Marty saves George from the path of an oncoming car, inadvertently altering his family history. Doc comes up with a plan to send Marty back to the future, but Marty must first get his parents to fall in love or be erased from existence.

ACT II-B

Marty conceives a plan to set up George as Lorraine's hero at the high school dance, but the plan is sabotaged by Biff. Much to Marty's surprise, George stands up to Biff and saves Lorraine. With Marty backing the band on guitar, George kisses Lorraine on the dance floor and secures Marty's existence.

ACT III

In 1955, Marty sets his arrival back ten minutes early to warn the future Doc about the Libyans, but when he arrives in 1985, the DeLorean breaks down. Marty arrives in time to witness Doc be gunned down, but later, Doc surprises Marty, revealing a bullet proof vest and Marty's warning letter from 1955.

EPILOGUE

Marty wakes up at his home in 1985 and discovers he has altered his family's destiny for the better.

FULL STORY MAP

ACT I

Sequence I: Marty is late for school due to one of Doc Brown's clock experiments. At school, Principal Strickland cites Marty for his tardiness, coldly stating his band has no future because he comes from a family of losers.

1 - OPENING IMAGES: Clocks...lots and lots of clocks.

2 - MISSING PLUTONIUM SETUP / VENGEFUL LIBYANS SETUP: A **TV REPORTER** announces that a Libyan terrorist group has claimed responsibility for a recent plutonium theft at The Pacific Nuclear Research Facility.

3 - An inventor's home: different Rube Goldberg machines turn on the TV, make coffee and feed the dog.

4 - MISSING PLUTONIUM PAYOFF 1: MARTY MCFLY lets himself inside with a key from under the rug. He doesn't notice his skateboard roll into a case of plutonium hidden under the bed.

4 - Marty straps a guitar to his body, cranks a giant amp, and destroys it with one earsplitting chord.

5 - Doc Brown calls and asks Marty to meet him at Twin Pines Mall at 1:15AM.

6 - RINGING CLOCKS interrupt Marty and Doc's call. Doc's experiment worked: all the clocks are running twenty-five minutes slow. Marty hangs up in a hurry -- he's late for school.

7 - "Power of Love" plays as Marty hitches rides behind cars on his skateboard, getting to school as fast as possible.

8 - Outside the high school, Marty's girlfriend, **JENNIFER**, intercepts him. If Marty's caught, it will be four tardies in a row.

8 - *SLACKER SETUP*: **PRINCIPAL STRICKLAND** berates Marty for his tardiness and association with Doc Brown. Marty smarts off and Strickland gets in his face...

STRICKLAND

You've got a real attitude problem, McFly. You're a slacker. You remind me of your father when he went here---he was a slacker, too.

MARTY

(bored with this)

Can I go now, Mr. Strickland?

STRICKLAND

I notice you're on the roster for the dance auditions after school. Why even bother, McFly? You don't have a chance. You're too much like your old man. No McFly has ever amounted to anything in the history of Hill Valley.

MARTY

Yeah? Well, history's gonna change.

Sequence II: Marty's band fails their audition for the high school dance. His girlfriend, Jennifer, encourages him to send the band's music to radio stations.

9 - *DANCE BAND SETUP*: Marty's band, **THE PINHEADS**, fails the audition for the upcoming high school dance.

10 - *FEAR OF FAILURE SETUP / CHUCK BERRY SETUP*: After the failed audition, Marty feels he'll never accomplish anything in music.

10 - *THEME STATED / YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING SETUP 1*: Jennifer reminds Marty of Doc Brown's advice: "If you put your mind to it, you can accomplish anything."

10 - *4x4 TRUCK SETUP*: Marty fantasizes about owning a black Toyota 4x4 truck.

11 - *CLOCK TOWER SETUP*: A **CLOCK WOMAN** asks for a donation to save Hill Valley's clock tower after a lightning strike thirty years ago. Marty makes a donation and receives a flyer in return.

12 - Marty tries to kiss Jennifer, but her father, a cock-blocking pro, rolls up blaring his car horn. Jennifer writes her grandmother's number on the back of the clock tower flyer and kisses Marty goodbye. That's the power of love, kids.

Sequence III: Marty discovers Biff Tannen, George's boss, wrecked George's car, ruining Marty's upcoming camping trip with Jennifer. Later, Lorraine reminisces on the high school dance where she fell in love with George.

13 - *BIFF THE BULLY SETUP*: Marty comes home and finds his father's car has been wrecked. Inside, **BIFF TANNEN** bullies Marty's father, **GEORGE MCFLY**, even though Biff wrecked the car.

15 - Marty confronts George over the car. Now, Marty can't go on the camping trip with Jennifer. All George can do is apologize.

15 - *UNCLE JAILBIRD JOEY SETUP*: At dinner, Marty's mother, **LORRAINE MCFLY**, drops a cake on the table: Her brother, Joey, didn't make parole.

16 - *LORRAINE THE HYPOCRITE SETUP*: **LINDA**, Marty's sister, informs Marty that Jennifer called. Lorraine, boozed up on Vodka, immediately chimes in...

LORRAINE

I think it's terrible, girls chasing boys. When I was your age, I never chased a boy, or called a boy, or sat in a parked car with a boy.

17 - *HOW I MET YOUR FATHER SETUP*: Linda asks Lorraine how she can meet someone special if it's not proper to ask a boy out.

LORRAINE

Well, it'll just happen. Like the way I met your father.

LINDA

That was so stupid! Grandpa hit him with the car.

LORRAINE

It was meant to be.

18 - *MOMMY HOTS SETUP / DANCE KISS SETUP*: Lorraine tells the tale of how she fell in love George...

LORRAINE

Anyway, your grandpa hit him with the car and brought him into the house. He seemed so helpless. Like a little lost puppy. And my heart just went out to him.

LINDA

Yeah, Mom, we know. You've told us this story a million times. You felt sorry for him, so you decided to go with him to the Fish Under the Sea Dance.

LORRAINE

No, no. It was the Enchantment Under the Sea Dance. Our first date. I'll never forget it. It was the night of that terrible thunder storm. Remember, George?

George doesn't hear Lorraine -- he's too busy watching The Honeymooners.

LORRAINE

Your father kissed me for the very first time on that dance floor. It was then that I realized that I was gonna spend the rest of my life with him.

Sequence IV: Marty discovers Doc Brown has not only built a time machine out of a DeLorean, but also swindled a group of Libyan terrorists from their plutonium. Moments before Doc is set to travel time, he is gunned down by the Libyans. Marty is forced to flee in the DeLorean and accidentally transports himself to 1955.

18 - At 12:28AM, Marty wakes to a call from Doc, asking him to bring the video camera.

20 - Marty arrives at Twin Pines Mall...

We hear an ENGINE REV UP---the truck engine?

The rear truck doors suddenly open and a SLEEK STAINLESS STEEL DELOREAN drives down the drop gate, onto the parking lot. It's been modified with coils and some wicked looking units on the rear engine.

20 - **DOCTOR EMMETT BROWN** emerges from the DeLorean. Marty films the experiment.

21 - Doc loads his dog, **EINSTEIN**, into the DeLorean. He places a watch around Einstein's neck, documenting for the camera that his control watch and Einstein's watch are synchronized.

21 - Doc drives the DeLorean with a remote control to a marked spot the distance. He then positions both Marty and himself directly in its path.

BROWN

If my calculations are correct, when this baby hits 88 miles per hour, you're gonna see some serious shit.

22 - The DeLorean races toward Marty and Doc. Seconds before it's sure to run them over, it disappears, leaving flaming tire tracks between both of their legs.

23 - INCITING INCIDENT: The DeLorean is a time machine. Doc's ecstatic. Marty's in shock.

MARTY
(shocked)
Jesus Christ! You disintegrated Einstein!

BROWN
Calm down, Marty! I didn't disintegrate anything.
The molecular structure of both Einstein and the car
are completely intact.

MARTY
Then where the hell are they?

BROWN
The appropriate question is: WHEN the hell are they?
You see, Einstein has just become the world's first
time traveler.

25 - The DeLorean bursts back into the present. Doc opens its ice-covered door and finds Einstein perfectly safe. Einstein's watch is one minute behind Doc's control watch.

26 - *FLUX CAPACITOR SETUP:* Showcasing his invention, Doc keys in important dates, stopping to reflect on the date he created time travel...

BROWN
Yes, of course...November 5, 1955...

MARTY
What? I don't get what happened?

BROWN
That was the day I invented time travel. I
remember it vividly: I was standing on the edge
of my toilet, hanging a clock. The porcelain was
wet; I slipped and hit my head on the edge of the
sink and when I came to, I had a revelation---a
vision---a picture in my head. A picture of THIS...

Brown points to a particular centerpiece unit mounted inside the DeLorean.

Marty aims the video camera and gets it on tape. He continues taping as Dr. Brown explains.

BROWN
This is what makes time travel possible: the
Flux Capacitor.

27 - *1.21 JIGOWATTS SETUP:* Doc informs Marty the time machine requires a nuclear reaction to generate the 1.21 jigowatts of electricity needed for time travel.

27 - *MISSING PLUTONIUM PAYOFF 2*: Doc confesses ripping off the plutonium needed to generate the nuclear reaction from a group of Libyans.

BROWN

Of course---from a group of Libyan nationalists. They wanted me to build them a bomb, so I took their plutonium and in turn gave them a shiny bomb casing full of used pinball machine parts!

28 - Both men wear radiation suits as Doc loads the time machine with plutonium.

29 - About to embark on his journey, Doc remembers he forgot to pack extra plutonium...

BROWN

What was I thinking of? I almost forgot to bring extra plutonium. How'd I ever expect to get back? One pellet, one trip. I must be out of my mind!

29 - *VENGEFUL LIBYANS PAYOFF*: The Libyans show up before Doc can load the extra plutonium. He shouts at Marty to run.

30 - END OF ACT ONE TURN: The Libyans kill Doc.

30 - Marty seeks refuge in the DeLorean.

32 - DECISION: Speeding away from the Libyans at 88-miles-per-hour, Marty activates the time machine and transports himself to 1955.

ACT II-A

Sequence I: Marty is mistaken for an alien and nearly killed by a frightened family. After he enters downtown Hill Valley, he realizes he's in 1955.

33 - Marty transports into a farm field and crashes the DeLorean into a barn.

33 - *SPACE ZOMBIE FROM PLUTO SETUP*: Woken from their sleep, **THE PEABODY FAMILY** discovers the DeLorean in their barn. The boy shows his family a comic book, its cover depicting an alien emerging from a spaceship similar in appearance to the DeLorean. Marty emerges from the DeLorean wearing an alien-like radiation suit and scares the family.

34 - *LONE PINE MALL SETUP*: Marty tries to apologize for the wreck, but **OLD MAN PEABODY**, believing Marty an alien, begins shooting at Marty. Marty escapes in the DeLorean, running over one of Peabody's two pine trees in the process.

35 - Outside the gates of Lion Estates, Marty finds no homes and a nearby billboard promoting the new development. He reads the time machine's display destination and present time: November 5, 1955. He can't believe it.

36 - Marty walks into downtown Hill Valley.

37 - *MAYOR BUM SETUP*: Mayor Red Thomas' campaign car drives by.

37 - After hearing the bells of the clock tower, Marty reads a paper: It's November 5, 1955.

Sequence II: Marty stumbles upon George and witnesses Biff bully him. Later, Marty saves George from the path of an oncoming car, but is struck by the car and knocked out cold.

38 - At Lou's Cafe, Marty tries to call Doc, but gets no answer.

40 - FIRST TRIAL / FIRST CASUALTY (INTERNAL): BIFF THE BULLY PAYOFF: Marty sits down at the cafe. He doesn't realize he's sitting next to George until Biff bursts in and begins bullying him.

41 - *STAND TALL SETUP*: Marty confronts George, but is interrupted by one of the cafe's employees, **GOLDIE WILSON...**

GOLDIE

Say, what do you let those boys push you around for?

GEORGE

Well, he's bigger than me...

GOLDIE

Stand tall, boy. Have some respect for yourself. Don't you know if you let people walk over you now, they'll be walking' over you for the rest of your life.

42 - After losing George, Marty finds him up in a tree, spying on a woman underdressing through her window.

42 - FIRST TRIAL / FIRST CASUALTY (EXTERNAL) / MCFLY SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES SETUP:

George falls out of the tree and into the street, directly in the path of an oncoming car. Marty saves him, but is struck by the car and knocked out cold.

Sequence III: Marty regains consciousness in a dark room with the voice of his mother soothing him. He believes he's experienced a nightmare until the lights come on and he sees Lorraine is his age. After an awkward dinner with Lorraine hitting on him, he rushes to find Doc.

43 - Marty wakes up in a dark room. Lorraine applies ice to his forehead and consoles him...

MARTY

I had a horrible nightmare. I dreamed that I went back in time. It was terrible.

LORRAINE

Well, you're safe and sound now back in good 'ole 1955.

MARTY

1955?!

44 - *MOMMY HOTS PAYOFF 1*: The lights come on and Marty discovers Lorraine. She's his age and very interested in him... sexually.

46 - *UNCLE JAILBIRD JOEY PAYOFF*: Downstairs, Marty sees his Uncle Joey in a crib.

MARTY

(whispers to him)

So you're my Uncle Joey. Better get used to these bars, kid.

STELLA

Oh, yes, little Joey just loves being in his pen. He cries whenever we take him out, so we just leave him in there all the time.

48 - Lorraine asks her parents if Marty can stay the night.

LORRAINE

Mother, with Marty's parents out of town, don't you think he oughta spend the night? I mean, after all, Dad almost killed him with the car.

She gives him a flirtatious smile.

STELLA

That's true, Marty. I think maybe you should spend the night. I think you're our responsibility.

MARTY

Well, gee, I don't know.

LORRAINE

And he can sleep in my room.

UNDER THE TABLE, Lorraine puts her hand on Marty's leg.

Marty immediately jumps to his feet.

48 - The Baines talk about Marty's behavior after he leaves.

STELLA
(shaking her head)
A very strange young man.

SAM
He's an idiot. Comes from upbringing. His parents are probably idiots, too. Lorraine, you ever have a kid that acts that way, I'll disown you.

Sequence IV: Marty locates Doc. Doc doesn't believe his story until Marty reveals details about the flux capacitor.

50 - Marty knocks on Doc's door and Doc answers with a bizarre contraption on his head. Before Marty can speak, Doc attaches a suction cup to his forehead. After a few failed attempts from Doc to read his mind, Marty reveals the purpose of his visit.

MARTY
Doc, listen: I'm from the future. I came here in a time machine you invented---now I need your help to get me back to the year 1985.

Brown stares at him in utter amazement for a moment.

BROWN
My God. Do you know what this means?

He pauses dramatically, then removes the contraption from his head.

BROWN
It means that this damned thing doesn't work at all!

51 - *ERASED FROM EXISTENCE SETUP*: In an attempt to prove he's a time traveler, Marty shows Doc a picture of himself with Dave and Linda. Dismissing the photograph as proof, Doc nonchalantly comments the top of Dave's head has been removed from the photograph.

51 - *FLUX CAPACITOR PAYOFF*: Brown grows bored with Marty and runs to his garage. Marty chases after him, begging for help.

BROWN

I've had enough of your practical jokes for one evening. Good night, "Future Boy."

Brown slams the door in his face. We hear it lock.

Marty stands there for a moment, then gets an idea. He yells at the closed door.

MARTY

That bruise on your head! I know how you got it! It happened this morning! You fell off your toilet and hit your head on the sink. And then you came up with the idea of the Flux Capacitor, which is what makes time travel possible!

After a moment, we hear the door unlock. Brown opens the door, looks at Marty with new interest and rubs his bandaged head.

Sequence V: With DeLorean safe in Doc's garage, Doc tells Marty the only capable energy source for time travel is a bolt of lightning. Marty shows him the clock tower flyer and Doc has the basis for his plan, but Marty intervening with his parents' meeting has made the problem much more complex: Marty must get his parents together or be erased from existence.

52 - Marty takes Doc to the time machine at Lyon Estates. Doc stands in awe of his invention. He pauses to show Marty a sketch of the Flux Capacitor...

Marty raises the gull wing door and points out the real thing.

Brown stares: It matches his drawing perfectly. His eyes light up and he jumps and shouts with joy.

BROWN

Ha! It works! It works! Finally I invented something that works!

54 - *1.21 JIGOWATTS PAYOFF*: Back at Doc's garage, Marty plays Doc video explaining the nuclear reaction required to generate 1.21 Jigowatts of electricity needed for time travel. Doc freaks out and runs away.

55 - *CLOCK TOWER PAYOFF*: Doc informs Marty that he's stuck in 1955, as there's no contemporary power source capable of generating 1.21 Jigowatts of electricity.

BROWN

Marty, I'm sorry, but the only power source capable of generating 1.21 jigowatts of electricity is a bolt of lightning.

MARTY

(suddenly has an idea)

What did you just say?

BROWN

A bolt of lightning. Unfortunately, you never know when or where lightning is going to strike.

MARTY

We do now!

Marty turns over the note Jennifer wrote---it's the clock tower flyer. He shows it to Brown.

INSERT - NEWSPAPER XEROX

The headline is "CLOCK TOWER STRUCK BY LIGHTNING. CLOCK STOPPED AT 10:04." The date is Sunday, November 13, 1955.

BACK TO SHOT

Brown snaps his fingers. He's getting an idea.

BROWN

(very excited)

This is it! This is the answer. According to this, lightning is going to strike the clock tower at precisely 10:04 p.m. next Saturday night! If we could somehow harness this lightning...channel it into the flux capacitor... it just might work! Next Saturday night, we're sending you back to the future!

56 - MIDPOINT / MCFLY SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES PAYOFF 1 / ERASED FROM EXISTENCE PAYOFF

1: Doc instructs Marty that he must not interact with anyone, as his actions may have serious consequences on future events. Marty's reaction prompts Doc to question him...

BROWN

(concerned)

Marty, who else did you interact with today. Besides me?

MARTY

Well, nobody, really. I just sort of bumped into my parents...

BROWN

Great Scott! Let me see that picture again, of your brother!

Brown takes Marty's wallet and looks at the picture. His expression becomes grim.

MARTY

What's the problem?

BROWN

It's happened. This proves my theory. Look at your brother.

Brown shows it to him.

INSERT - PHOTOGRAPH

Marty's brother Dave has no head!

BACK TO SHOT

MARTY

His head's gone...like it's been erased.

BROWN

Erased from existence...

ACT II-B

Sequence I: Marty attempts to get his parents together, but Lorraine's infatuated with him instead of George. Doc helps formulate a plan: Marty must somehow get his parents to kiss and fall in love at the Enchantment Under the Sea Dance.

57 - *SLACKER PAYOFF*: Doc and Marty go to the high school and find George being picked on by other students. Strickland intervenes, berating George in front of the other students.

58 - *MOMMY HOTS PAYOFF 2*: Marty introduces George to Lorraine, but Lorraine is far more interested in him. Doc is forced to bring this to Marty's unsuspecting attention...

BROWN

This is more serious than I thought. Apparently your mother is amorously infatuated with you instead of your father.

59 - ACT II-B GOAL STATED: Marty must get his parents to kiss and fall in love at the Enchantment Under the Sea Dance.

Brown notices a hand-painted banner in the hall announcing the "Enchantment Under The Sea Dance" this Saturday night.

BROWN

Look---there's a rhythmic ceremonial ritual coming up.

Marty sees the sign and has a revelation.

MARTY

That's right! "Enchantment Under The Sea!" They're SUPPOSED to go that dance---that's where they kiss for the first time!

BROWN

All right, kid: you stick to your pop like glue and make sure he takes her to that dance.

Sequence II: In an attempt to protect his mother from Biff, Marty strengthens Lorraine's infatuation for him and pushes George further from the goal. When George refuses to ask her out, Marty is forced to improvise.

60 - FEAR OF FAILURE PAYOFF & DARTH VADER SETUP: In the cafeteria, Marty finds George writing on a notepad. Marty's surprised when George reveals he writes science fiction.

MARTY

Get out of town! I never knew you did anything creative. Let me read it.

GEORGE

Oh, no. I never let anybody read my stories.

MARTY

Why not?

GEORGE

What if they didn't like 'em? What if they told me I was no good?

Marty is having a bad case of deja vu.

61 - Marty lies to George, insisting Lorraine wants George to take her to the dance. George won't ask her, believing she'd rather go with someone else.

62 - Across the cafeteria, Biff gropes Lorraine. Marty steps in to defend her and squares off against Biff. Strickland breaks up the confrontation.

62 - *DARTH VADER SETUP 2*: Marty follows George and begs him to ask Lorraine to the dance.

MARTY

George, I'm telling you, if you don't take Lorraine to that dance, I'm gonna regret it for the rest of my life.

GEORGE

But I can't go. I'll miss my favorite television program: "Science Fiction Theatre."

MARTY

Come on, George, Lorraine really wants to go with you.

They're now in front of George's house.

GEORGE

Look, I'm just not ready to ask Lorraine out. And not you or anybody else on this planet is going to make me change my mind!

63 - *SPACE ZOMBIE FROM PLUTO PAYOFF / DARTH VADER PAYOFF 1*: Dressed in his yellow radiation suit, Marty slips headphones over George's ears as he sleeps. He hits play on his Walkman and blasts Edward Van Halen into George's head!

GEORGE AWAKENS SCREAMING! He opens his eyes and reacts in further terror: He sees...

A FRIGHTENING YELLOW MONSTER...Marty, in full radiation suit...at the foot of his bed!

WIDER

Marty turns off the music. When he talks, his voice is distorted through the mouth filter in the hood.

MARTY

Silence, Earthling!

GEORGE

Who---who are you?

MARTY

(imitating Darth Vader)

My name is Darth Vader. I am an extra-terrestrial from the planet Vulcan!

Sequence III: Marty's Darth Vader stunts works: George attempts to ask Lorraine out, but is interrupted by Biff. Marty defends George and decks Biff. Biff and his goons chase Marty around the town square, but he ultimately wrecks his car in an attempt to take out Marty.

64 - *DARTH VADER PAYOFF 2*: Though completely terrified the night before, George misses school, sleeping the majority of the day (in the screenplay, Marty gives George chloroform before he leaves). He finds Marty in downtown Hill Valley and begs for help asking Lorraine out.

ON MARTY AND GEORGE

as they walk past the record store, toward Lou's.

MARTY

So, George, what made you change your mind?

GEORGE

Last night, Darth Vader came down from Planet Vulcan and told me if I didn't take Lorraine out, he'd melt my brain.

64 - Outside Lou's cafe, George panics: He hasn't a clue how to approach Lorraine. Ironically, Marty gives his father a few tips on how to pick her up.

66 - In the middle of asking Lorraine out, George is interrupted by Biff. As Biff approaches, Marty trips him. Before Biff can pummel Marty, Marty decks him and darts out of the cafe.

66 - Outside, Marty intercepts two kids on scooters. Thinking fast, he breaks the wooden crate off one of their scooters and creates a skateboard.

67 - Biff and his goons hop in their car and chase Marty around the town square.

68 - Marty clings to the front of Biff's car as Biff races toward a parked truck. At the last moment, Marty runs up the hood and over the back of the car. Distracted by Marty's fast thinking, Biff crashes his car into a manure truck and fills it full of shit.

68 - *BIFF'S REVENGE SETUP*: Covered in manure, Biff swears revenge on Marty.

Sequence IV: After Doc demonstrates his plan to send Marty back, they are interrupted by Lorraine, who asks Marty to the dance. Later, Marty meets with George, revealing that he'll purposely put Lorraine in danger at the dance to set up George as her hero.

69 - *BROWN SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES SETUP 1*: Back at Doc's garage, Marty finds Doc watching the portion of the tape before the Libyans kill him.

MARTY

Doc, there's something I haven't told you about what happens on the night we make that tape...

BROWN

Please, Marty, don't tell me. No man should know too much about his own destiny.

MARTY

But, Doc, you don't understand.

BROWN

I do understand. If I know too much about my own future, I could endanger my own existence, just as you've endangered yours.

71 - Using a model of the town square, Doc shows Marty the plan for sending him back home. A cable runs from the clock tower to the street, running parallel to the street between two lampposts. The DeLorean must hit the cable using a hook connected to the Flux Capacitor at the exact moment lightning strikes the clock tower.

71 - Doc's simulation starts a fire.

72 - *LORRAINE'S MAN SETUP*: A knock on the door reveals Lorraine. She asks Marty to be her date to the dance.

MARTY

What about George?

LORRAINE

George McFly? Well, he's kind of cute and all, but he's...well,

(moving closer to him)

I think a man should be strong...so he can stand up for himself and protect the woman he loves. Don't you?

74 - ASSUMPTION OF POWER / YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING SETUP 2: Marty comes up with a plan: He'll purposely put Lorraine in danger to set up George as her hero.

GEORGE

Why is she gonna get angry with you?

MARTY

(it's hard for him to say)

Well...because...well...nice girls get angry at guys who...who try to take advantage of 'em.

GEORGE

You mean you're gonna...touch her on her---

MARTY

No. George, it's just an act. So, 9 o'clock you're strolling through the parking lot and you see us...

(gulps)

...struggling in the car. You walk up, you open the door and you say...?

George doesn't say anything.

MARTY

Your line, George.

GEORGE

Oh. Uh..."Hey, you! Get your damn hands off her."

(pause)

You really think I outta swear?

MARTY

Yes, definitely, goddammit George, swear. Ok, so now you come up, you punch me in the stomach, I'm out for the count, and you and Lorraine live happily ever after.

GEORGE

You make it sound so easy. I wish I wasn't so scared.

MARTY

There's nothing to be scared of. All it takes is a little self-confidence. You know, if you put your mind to it, you can accomplish anything.

Sequence V: Marty writes a letter to Doc detailing the event that takes his life. At the dance, Marty is unable to execute his plan with Lorraine, and Biff, not George, interrupts. Biff's goons lock Marty in the trunk of the dance band's car while Biff has his way with Lorraine.

76 - The night of the dance and thunderstorm, Marty tries one last time to tell Doc about the future, but Doc refuses to hear it.

BROWN

No, Marty. We've already agreed that having knowledge of the future can be extremely dangerous. Even if your intentions are good, it backfire drastically. Whatever it is you want to tell me, I'll find out through the natural course of time.

76 - *BROWN SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES SETUP 2*: In the cafe, Marty writes a letter detailing Doc's murder. He seals it and writes "Do Not Open Until 1985" across the envelope.

76 - Marty slips the letter into Doc's coat pocket.

78 - *LORRAINE THE HYPOCRITE PAYOFF*: Marty pulls up in the parking lot with Lorraine. He quickly discovers she's not a prude, and that she drinks and smokes.

80 - Marty can't go through with it. Lorraine ends up kissing him, but pulls away, claiming that kissing him reminds her of kissing her brother. At that moment, Marty is yanked out of the car. Unfortunately, it's not George; it's Biff.

81 - *BIFF'S REVENGE PAYOFF*: Biff's drunk, seconds away from beating Marty senseless for the damage to his car when he sees Lorraine. Biff jumps in the car with Lorraine and his goons cart Marty away.

82 - Biff's goons toss Marty in the open trunk of the band's car and lock him inside.

Sequence VI: George finally stands up to Biff and saves Lorraine, but to secure Marty's existence, George and Lorraine must still kiss on the dance floor. When the band's guitar player hurts his hand, Marty agrees to play as his substitute.

83 - George arrives at the car, but finds Biff and Lorraine. Lorraine pleads with George to help her.

83 - Biff calmly instructs George to leave, but George stands up to him for the first time. George throws a punch, but Biff counters and gets the upper hand.

83 - *JOHNNY B GOODE SETUP*: **MARVIN BERRY**, the band leader, slices his hand with a screwdriver opening the trunk for Marty. Marty pops out and runs to help Lorraine.

84 - END OF ACT TWO TURN (INTERNAL) / LORRAINE'S MAN PAYOFF: George overcomes Biff and knocks him out.

EXT. PACKARD

Biff twists George's arm harder.

LORRAINE

Stop it, Biff. You'll break his arm!

She tries to pull him away. He pushes her down.

Biff laughs.

Now Marty arrives just in time to witness...

George's expression immediately goes from pain to rage---intense rage... and George lets go with a **TREMENDOUS LEFT HOOK, SMACK INTO BIFF'S FACE!**

Biff hits the ground, out cold!

84 - END OF ACT TWO TURN (EXTERNAL): Arriving late, Marty finds George standing over Biff. He looks at the photo and discovers Dave has completely disappeared and half of Linda is gone, too.

Stopping Biff was only part of the solution. George must kiss Lorraine on the dance floor to fall in love and secure Marty's existence.

85 - Marty pleads with the band to finish the dance...

DRUMMER

Look at Marvin's hand. He can't play with it like that and we can't play without him.

MARTY

But you've gotta play! You see, that's where they kiss for the first time---on the dance floor. And if there's no music, they can't dance. And if they can't dance, they can't kiss. And if they can't kiss, they can't fall in love and I'm history.

MARVIN

Hey, man, the dance is over...unless you know somebody else who can play the guitar.

Sequence VII: Marty plays in the band to assist George's final challenge, which he overcomes. George kisses Lorraine on the dance floor and secures Marty's existence.

85 - DECISION / DANCE BAND PAYOFF: Marty plays "Earth Angel" with the band.

86 - On the dance floor, George and Lorraine are interrupted by **DIXON**, another bully, who cuts in and pulls Lorraine away from George.

86 - *ERASED FROM EXISTENCE PAYOFF 2:* On stage, Marty's unable to play guitar. His image begins to fade from the picture and his hand becomes transparent.

87 - *DANCE KISS PAYOFF:* George pushes Dixon to the floor and kisses Lorraine. Marty immediately comes back to life and the picture is restored to what it once was.

87 - George waves to Marty from the dance floor, a sense of genuine gratitude on his face. Lorraine's in love with George McFly now.

88 - Marvin asks Marty to perform one more song, "something that really cooks!" With a little encouragement from the crowd, Marty agrees.

88 - Marty steps up to the mic and rips into "Johnny B Goode."

89 - *JOHNNY B GOODE PAYOFF:* From backstage, Marvin Berry makes a call...

INT. BACK STAGE - PUBLIC TELEPHONE

MARVIN BERRY is on the phone.

MARVIN

(into phone)

Chuck? This is Marvin!

(pause)

Your cousin: Marvin Berry! You know that new sound you lookin' for? Well, listen to this!

He holds the phone toward the music.

90 - Marty throws himself into the music. Mixing Townsend, Hendrix, and Van Halen, he doesn't realize the band has stopped and the entire crowd is staring at him until the song is over.

Marty suddenly realizes he's gone too far. He smiles sheepishly and steps up to the microphone.

MARTY

I guess you guys aren't ready for that yet. But your kids are gonna love it.

91 - Lorraine approaches Marty after the dance and asks if George can take her home. Marty is thrilled.

ACT III

Sequence I: In the midst of arguing about the letter, a branch snaps and disconnects a cable from the clock tower. Doc works the cable issue and Marty gets into the DeLorean, as there isn't a minute to spare.

92 - *DON'T CON ME SETUP*: True to character, Marty shows up late at the clock tower.

Marty shows Brown the fully restored snapshot.

MARTY

Yeah, old man really came through. He knocked out Biff with one punch. I didn't know he had it in him. He's never stood up to Biff in his life.

Brown examines the snapshot.

BROWN

Never?

93 - Doc's programmed the time circuits to have Marty arrive at the exact time he left. He instructs Marty to depart from a marked point down the road. The moment an alarm goes off, Marty needs to hit the gas for the clock tower.

94 - *BROWN SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES SETUP 2*: As Marty hugs Doc goodbye, Doc finds Marty's letter and rips it up. Doc refuses to know about his destiny.

95 - In midst of arguing, a falling branch and disconnects a cable from the clock tower.

96 - With Doc atop the clock tower fixing the cable, Marty attempts to tell him about the Libyans as the clock strikes 10 o'clock. Unfortunately, there's no time: Marty has less than four minutes.

Sequence II: Marty sets the time circuits back ten minutes to give himself enough time to warn the future Doc about the Libyans. Doc reconnects the cable at the last possible second and Marty is transported back to 1985.

98 - **POINT OF NO RETURN**: Marty pulls to the starting point. In his frustration, he realizes he has a time machine and programs the time circuits to go back ten minutes early.

98 - Without notice, the DeLorean shuts down and won't start.

99 - Doc nearly falls off the tower, but manages to grab hold of the clock's hour hand.

99 - The alarm goes off, but the DeLorean won't start.

100 - The DeLorean starts and Marty takes off.

100 - Doc encounters another problem when the cable becomes stuck on a branch. He pulls too hard and disconnects it from the lamppost.

101 - The DeLorean races toward the town square...

101 - Doc creates a zip-line and slides down the cable...

INT. MOVING DELOREAN

THE SPEEDOMETER passes 85!

The INDICATOR LIGHTS behind MARTY begin registering.

EXT. STREET

BROWN grabs the socket cable and PLUGS HIS CABLE IN!

INT. DELOREAN

THE SPEEDOMETER HITS 88!

EXT. CLOCK TOWER

THE MOST SPECTACULAR BOLT OF LIGHTNING IN THE HISTORY OF CINEMA STRIKES THE LIGHTNING ROD!

SERIES OF CUTS

The connecting cable becomes electrified!

The DeLorean passes under the cable between the lampposts.

The trolley hook on the DeLorean MAKES CONTACT with the electrified cable!

The Flux Capacitor GLOWS and DISCHARGES!

EXT. STREET

The DeLorean's time coils light up and the vehicle is sent BACK TO THE FUTURE!

101 - CLIMAX A (EXTERNAL): Marty is sent back to 1985!

102 - Doc runs up the street and screams with joy: the plan worked!

Sequence III: The DeLorean breaks down and prevents Marty from warning Doc in time. Marty arrives at the mall in time to witness Doc be gunned down. Moments later, Doc surprises Marty, revealing a bullet proof vest and Marty's letter from 1955.

104 - *MAYOR BUM PAYOFF*: Marty gets out of the DeLorean, ecstatic he's not only safe in 1985, but also has enough time to save Doc. He tells a bum, "Red, you look great."

104 - The DeLorean breaks down again as the Libyans drive past. Marty runs for the mall.

104 - *LONE PINE MALL PAYOFF*: Completely exhausted, Marty arrives at the mall (now called Lone Pine Mall) the moment the Libyans gun down Doc.

105 - Marty witnesses his past-self sent to 1955 and the Libyans crash their van.

105 - Marty cries at Doc's side, but Doc pops up: he's still alive!

106 - CLIMAX B (EXTERNAL): Doc reveals a bullet-proof vest and Marty's letter from 1955.

MARTY
But how did you know?

Brown smiles, reaches into his pocket and pulls out the **LETTER THAT MARTY WROTE---SCOTCH TAPED TOGETHER!** It's yellow and brittle: 30 years old!

MARTY
(smiles, shaking his head)
What about all that talk about screwing up future events and the space-time continuum.

BROWN
(shrugs)
Well, I figured, what the hell.

106 - Dropping Marty off at the McFly residence, Doc says he's going into the future 30 years.

EPILOGUE

Sequence I: Marty wakes up at his home in 1985 and discovers he has altered his family's destiny for the better.

108 - Marty wakes up in his bed, again believing he experienced a nightmare.

108 - Walking into the kitchen, Marty discovers everything has changed. Dave is now an executive and Linda can't keep track of all the men calling her.

109 - George and Lorraine enter...

Now GEORGE and LORRAINE enter from outside. They're tanned and healthy, dressed in TASTEFUL CLOTHES. George carries himself with an air of confidence, and Lorraine looks terrific---thin and svelte, radiantly healthy and positive. This is a happy marriage.

109 - Lorraine comments how much she likes Jennifer. When she expresses excitement for the camping trip, Marty brings up the fact that the car is wrecked.

110 - *STAND TALL PAYOFF / DON'T CON ME PAYOFF*: George calms everyone down. He opens the front door and reveals Biff outside waxing the car.

EXT. MCFLY HOUSE

BIFF is in the driveway, waxing a new BMW. Biff is working diligently; his rough edges and arrogance are all gone.

GEORGE

Uh, now Biff, I wanna make sure we get two coats of wax this time, not just one.

BIFF

I'm just finishing up the second coat now.

GEORGE

Now, Biff, don't con me!

BIFF

Uh, I'm sorry, Mr. McFly, I meant I was just starting on the second coat.

110 - CLIMAX (INTERNAL) / YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING PAYOFF: George's new book arrives.

INSERT - BOOK

It's called "A MATCH MADE IN SPACE," and the cover shows a bedroom with a space alien talking to a couple in bed---very reminiscent of Marty's "Darth Vader" visitation to George. The style indicates it's a science fiction romance novel. The author's name, GEORGE MCFLY, is in big letters.

BACK TO SHOT

George hands Marty a copy of the book.

GEORGE

Like I've always told you: you put your mind to it,
you can accomplish anything.

110 - Biff hands Marty a set of car keys, telling him he's waxed up and ready for the night. George and Lorraine smile...

111 - *4x4 TRUCK PAYOFF:* Marty finds the 4x4 truck in the garage. Jennifer appears behind him. They kiss. He looks back at his parents and comments that "everything is great."

112 - The DeLorean barrels into the driveway! Doc flies out, insisting that Marty and Jennifer come with him to the future because their kids need help.

INT. DELOREAN

Jennifer sits on his lap. She closes the door.

MARTY

Hey, Doc, we better back up. We don't have enough
road to get up to 88.

BROWN

Roads? Where we're going, we don't need roads.

Brown hits a new switch on the dashboard.

EXT. STREET

The DeLorean speeds down the street, then **BLASTS OFF INTO THE SKY LIKE A STREAK!**

Once again, the coils glow and the DeLorean is enveloped in the familiar white glow and disappears into the future.

112 - THE END.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Daniel P. Calvisi is a story analyst, screenwriter and the author of *Story Maps: How to Write a GREAT Screenplay* and co-author of *Story Maps: The Films of Christopher Nolan*. He lives in Los Angeles. See ActFourScreenplays.com for more about Story Maps.

William Robert Rich is a story analyst, screenwriter, co-author of *Story Maps: The Films of Christopher Nolan* and the Founder and Editor of ScreenplayHowTo.com. With Dan Calvisi, he moderates the Story Maps Screenwriting Podcast. He is currently based in Austin, Texas.

LEARN MORE ABOUT STORY MAPS

[Story Maps: How to Write a Great Screenplay](#)

[Story Maps: The Films of Christopher Nolan](#)

[The Story Maps Screenwriting Podcast](#)