

We're on the road to... somewhere.

[Scott Myers](#)

A really long-ass bridge... story outlines... and YOU!



During the three years I attended Yale University Divinity School and obtained my M.Div. degree, I would sojourn south during holidays to visit my parents in Virginia Beach. In order to save 2 hours driving time, I avoided taking I-95 through Baltimore, Washington D.C., and Richmond, instead veering east onto the Delmarva peninsula (Delaware-Maryland-Virginia) and used the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel which brought me directly to Hampton Roads,

Virginia.

Opened in 1964, the CBBT is a 23-mile, 4-bridge, 2-tunnel fixed link across the Chesapeake Bay. That's all great... except for this:



During the day when you hit the middle, you cannot see land on any side. Not behind you. Not in front of you.

It is a bizarre experience. You're rolling along at 50 miles per hour. On a bridge. Seemingly heading nowhere.

To me, this is an apt metaphor for the writer's experience working on a story, especially when we get into the middle of Act Two. What we've written is behind us. What we have *not* written lies ahead of us. That expanse directly in front are the few scenes we have in mind to write next. But

beyond that...

Who knows.

When you drive the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, you have faith that it will eventually drop you off in Virginia Beach (if you're heading south) or the Delmarva peninsula (if you're heading north). Why do you know this? Because there is the foundation of the bridge-tunnel system.

For writers, our bridge-tunnel system is our outline. When we get to the middle of the page-writing process, anxiety may creep into our consciousness — *how will we ever get to FADE OUT when we can't even see it.*

But we've broken the story in prep. We have a scene-by-scene outline. That's our bridge. If we keep writing, page by page, scene after scene, the land on the other side will become visible and eventually we will reach THE END.

So many scripts crash and burn when the writer gets into Act Two. If you don't have an outline, it's like building a bridge which gets you to the middle of the bay... and that's it.

If, however, you've worked out your story scene-by-scene, even though you're on that bridge and you can't see land on any side...

You **know** it's there... awaiting you on the other side. Just keep moving forward, page after page, mile after mile...

And ultimately, you will reach your destination: FADE OUT.

Onward!