

How to Transform a Good Book Into a Great Book

Robin Perini
Romance Writers of America, July 19, 2018

+ Take What You Want ...and Leave the Rest

What a writer ... "wants is a set of rules on what to do and what not to do in writing fiction....when one begins to be persuaded that certain things must never be done in fiction and certain other things must always be done, one has entered the first stage of aesthetic arthritis, the disease that ends in pedantic rigidity and the atrophy of intuition."

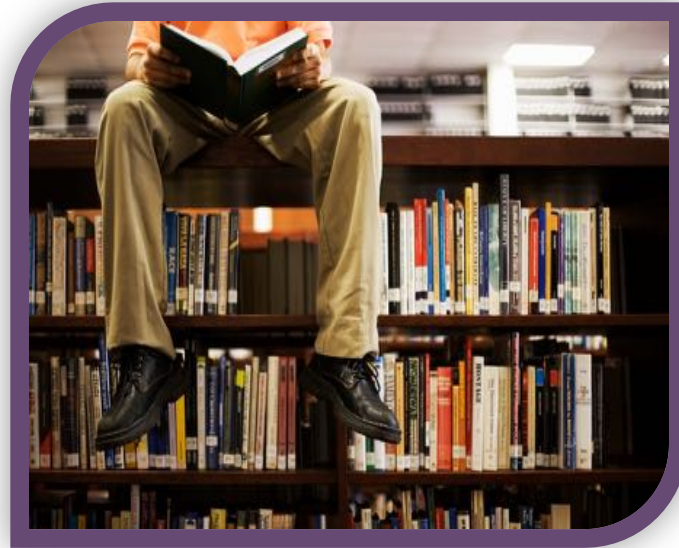
— John Gardner, *The Art of Fiction*





How do you write?

■ Pantsters, Plotters and Planners

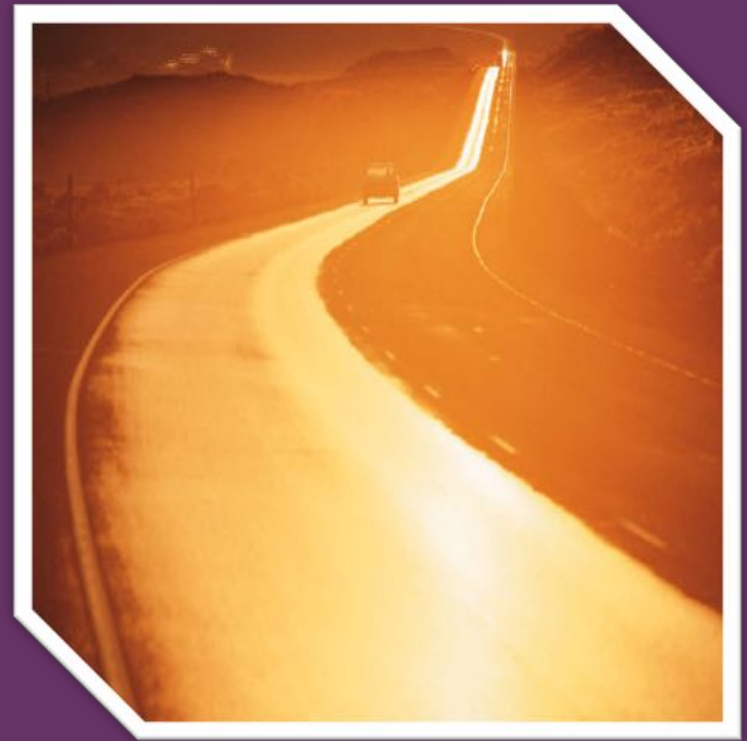


■ What we have in common: Elements of Story

- Character
- Plot
- Theme
- Voice

+

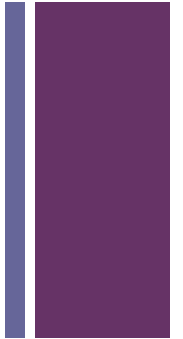
Non-Craft





Non-Craft

- Life-long learning (you, your critique group) – challenge yourself.
- Discover **YOUR** process
 - Strengths and Weaknesses
 - Plot, Character, etc.
 - Robin's journey
 - Discovering Story Magic
 - W-Diagram
 - Alexandra Sokoloff





Uncover YOUR Emotional Cues

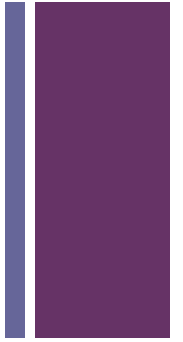
(Laura Baker – www.fearlesswriter.com)

- Authentic writing comes from authentic emotion
 - Emotions connect character and structure
 - Embrace the emotions that ‘speak’ to you
 - Write what you ‘know’
- List your 3 most powerful childhood memories
 - Define three key emotions in each memory





What do you Look for in a Read?



- Name two authors whose work you love!
 - What are the key emotions they explore?
 - Write down 2 for each author if possible

- Identify your favorite 'keeper book'
 - Who is your favorite character in that book?
 - Identify 3 key emotions of that person.





Your Writing

- Identify the book that was easiest for you to finish? (If you haven't finished a book yet, identify another 'keeper'; or use the book that you've written on the most).)
- List 3 prominent characteristics of this book
- Identify the most compelling character
- List 3 prominent characteristics of this character

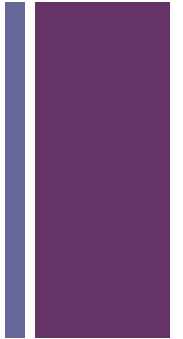
COMPARE THE LISTS
OF EMOTIONS





Aha Moment

- Is there a common thread?
 - Similarities?
 - Opposites?
- Consider the book you have been UNABLE or STRUGGLED to finish?





Take Away



- Embrace your emotional cues
- Leverage the power of your emotions
- Consider merging this emotional identity with your author brand

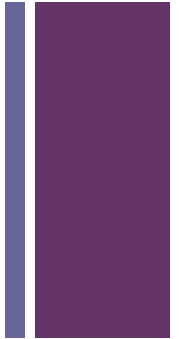


+ Exploit Tension and Suspense

(Not the Dead Body Kind)

+ Suspense - Definition

- Keeps the reader turning the pages until 4 AM
 - Builds apprehension and anticipation in the minds of your readers
 - Think: Worry equals suspense
 - Always have an unanswered question in the reader's mind (What happens next?)
- Suspense builds as danger approaches and we care!



+ Keep Them Reading!

- If you don't hook your readers, they won't get into the story.
- If you don't drive the story forward by making readers worry about your main character, they won't have a *reason* to keep reading.
- The basic narrative fuel is always the **slow unveiling of the final answer**. (Lee Child) – if you want to build suspense, postpone it
 - Suspense happens in the moments between the promise of something dreadful and its arrival.



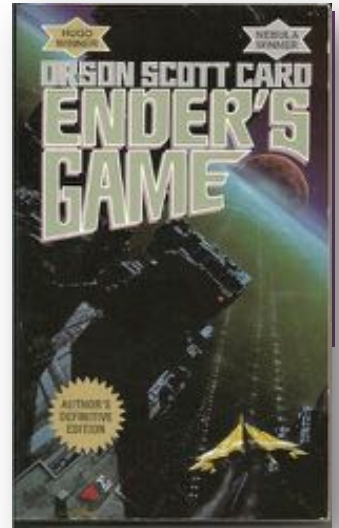
Hook the Reader



- Beginning Hooks (chapters and scenes)
 - Openings are critical
- Ending Hooks (first page, third page, scene, chapter, book):
 - Threat of Danger (Emotional or Physical)
 - Shock Factor
 - Ending Question
 - Ending Prediction
- Let's look at some hooks!
- Resource: Mary Buckham's Activating Hooks

+ Dialogue Only

Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card



"I've watched through his eyes, I've listened through his ears, and I tell you he's the one. Or at least as close as we're going to get."

"That's what you said about the brother."

"The brother tested out impossible. For other reasons. Nothing to do with his ability."

"Same with the sister. And there are doubts about him. He's too malleable. Too willing to submerge himself in someone else's will."

"Not if the other person is his enemy."

"So what do we do? Surround him with enemies all the time?"

"If we have to."

"I thought you said you liked the kid."

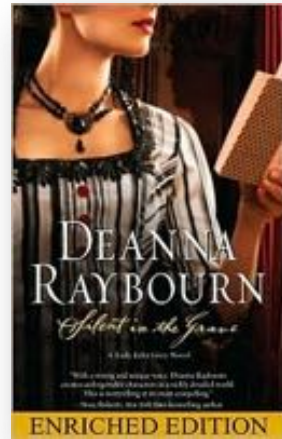
"If the buggers get him, they'll make me look like his favorite uncle."

"All right. We're saving the world, after all. Take him."

Type of Hook – Threat of Danger, Shock Factor

+ First person

Silent in the Grave by Deanna Raybourn



London 1886

Other sins only speak; murder shrieks out.—John Webster, The Duchess of Malfi

To say that I met Nicholas Brisbane over my husband's dead body is not entirely accurate. Edward, it should be noted, was still twitching upon the floor.

I stared at him, not quite taking in the fact that he had just collapsed at my feet. He lay, curled like a question mark, his evening suit ink-black against the white marble of the floor. He was writhing, his fingers knotted.

I leaned as close to him as my corset would permit.

"Edward, we have guests. Do get up. If this is some sort of silly prank—"

"He is not jesting, my lady. He is convulsing."

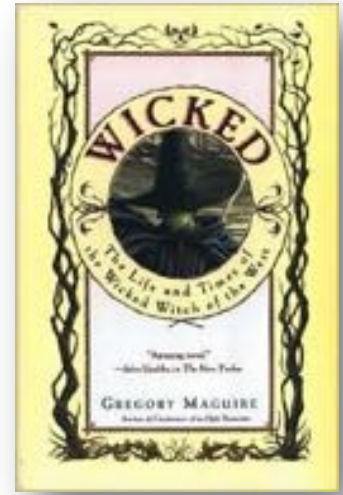
Type of Hook – Shock Factor

+ Omniscient

Wicked: The life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the west by Gregory Maguire

On the Yellow Brick Road

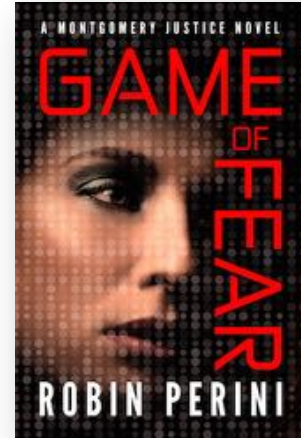
A mile above Oz, the Witch balanced on the wind's forward edge, as if she were a green fleck of the land itself, flung up and sent wheeling away by the turbulent air. White and purple summer thunderheads mounded around her. Below, the Yellow Brick Road looped back on itself, like a relaxed noose. Though winter storms and the crowbars of agitators had torn up the road, still it led, relentlessly, to the Emerald City. The Witch could see the companions trudging along, maneuvering around the buckled sections, skirting trenches, skipping when the way was clear. They seemed oblivious of their fate. But it was not up to the Witch to enlighten them.



Type of Hook – Ending Prediction

+ Third Person

Game of Fear by Robin Perini (2014)



“You’ve figured it out already, haven’t you, Zach?”

The excrement-flinging fan was winding up now.

“Spell it out for me. I’m feeling a little slow.”

Whitney paled, then raised her chin. “Somehow I doubt that.” She clicked her seat belt into place. “I’m your half sister,” she said, her tone professional. “And before you ask, I’ll tell you everything I know. Your parents separated for a short while. Your father got drunk, took my mother to bed one time, and I’m the result. Now that that little turd has been dropped into the punch bowl, we have more important things to worry about. Can we talk about Winslow?”

Type of Hook – Shock Factor, Ending Question



Is this a hook?



It was a cold and rainy day.
Lyssa Cafferty walked
down the street going
home for the evening.



Suspense Through Words



- *“Don’t tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass.” –Anton Chekhov*
- *“The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.” – Mark Twain*

Secret Obsession (August 2014)

Specificity

Power

Words

Imagery

Compelling

Dialogue

End Hooks

Deep POV

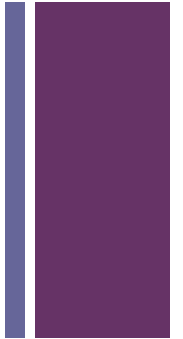
The **sting** of frozen rain **pricked** Lyssa Cafferty's cheeks, **another attack she couldn't prevent.** She hurried from the L station toward her small Chicago apartment. **If only she could pull her hood over her head,** duck down and avoid the **piercing needles of ice on her face,** but then she'd lose her peripheral vision.

She couldn't afford to allow comfort to trump safety.

Not now. Not ever.



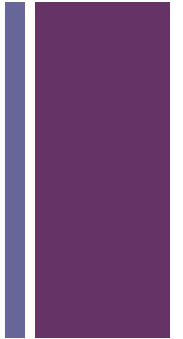
Hooks and Application of SPICED



- Openings - Set the tone of your story
- Openings - Set reader expectations
- All - Hook them in and keep them hooked!



+ Create Characters Readers Care About



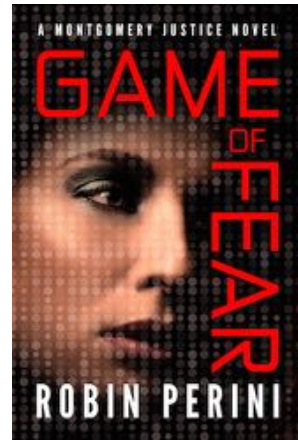
- ❖ Put them in jeopardy (physical and/or emotional)
 - ❖ Make it personal (not just a world in danger, Grandma lives there)
 - ❖ Isolate the character so choices are limited
- ❖ GMC
 - ❖ Goal: How much a character cares about his goal is in direct proportion too how much the reader will care (Laura DeVries)
 - ❖ Motivation – why he wants it and what makes it important
 - ❖ Conflict – what's stopping him from getting it and what are the stakes (what terrible consequences will result if he doesn't get it?)
- ❖ Character Arc
- ❖ Surprise the Reader

+ Writing so Readers Care: Use S-P-I-C-E-D

- ❖ **S**pecificity (including senses)
- ❖ **P**owerful Verbs, etc.
- ❖ **I**mage-making and picture-forming words
- ❖ **C**ompelling Dialogue (Inner/Spoken)
- ❖ **E**nding Hooks (And Openings) aka Surprises!
- ❖ **D**eep Point of View



+ Showing Character with Deep Point of View – An Example from Game of Fear (August 2014)

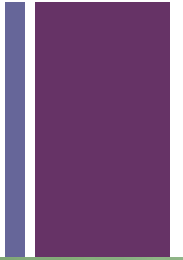


Finally reaching the landing, Deb slipped her key into the lock. **Ashley better have a good reason for being here and not at her Air Force Academy dorm where she belonged.**

Deb shoved the door open. Her sister jumped up from the beige corduroy couch **like a gun had exploded in her ear.** The textbook vaulted from her hand landing five feet away.



What do you know about Deb?

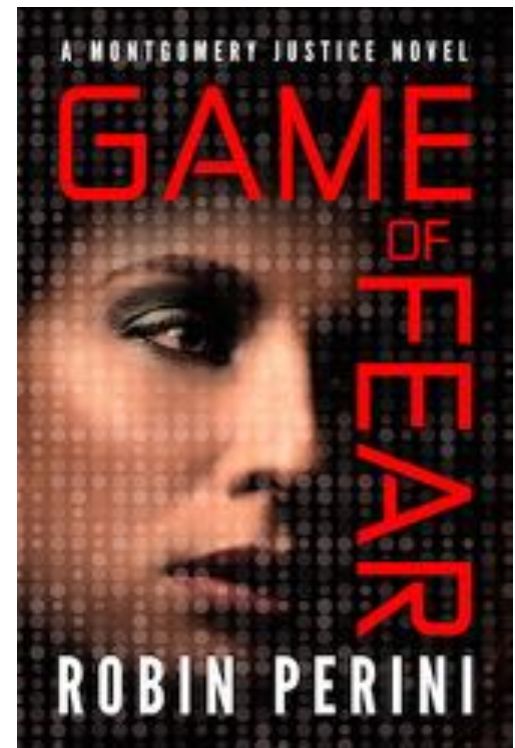




GAME OF FEAR



- ❖ SPICED in a single scene from Game of Fear – Montlake Romance, August 2014
- ❖ Brilliant kids from all over the country are disappearing after mastering the video game, *Point of Entry*—but no one knows why. Until now.
- ❖ Deb Lansing - Heroine



+ Care about the Character

SPICED – Image-making and Picture-forming words

The whirr of the circling Bell 212 helicopter rotors echoed through the cockpit. New Mexico's Wheeler Peak, barely visible in the dusk, loomed just east, its thirteen-thousand-foot summit laden with snow. Deborah Lansing leaned forward, the seat belt straps pulling at her shoulders.

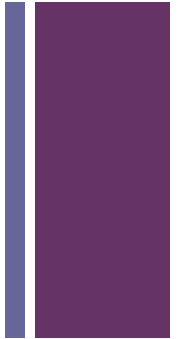
Far, far to the west, the sun was just a sliver in the sky.

"It's almost dark, Deb. We have to land," Gene Russo, her local Search and Rescue contact, insisted.

Why do we care? Search and rescue, in jeopardy



Characters Must Have GMC



■ GMC

- Goal: How much a character cares about his goal is in direct proportion too how much the reader will care (Laura DeVries)
- Motivation – why he wants it and what makes it important
- Conflict – what's stopping him from getting it and what are the stakes (what terrible consequences will result if he doesn't get it?)

+ Care about the Character: GMC

SPICED - Compelling Dialogue (Inner/Spoken)

Deb squinted against the setting sun; her eyes burned with fatigue. They'd been at it for hours, but she couldn't give up. Not yet.

"All the other choppers have landed, Deb. **This is too dangerous.** Besides, **do you really think your spotlight's going to find a snow-covered bus** on the side of the mountain with all these trees?"

"Five more minutes. That's all I'm asking."

A metallic glint pierced through a thick carpet of snow- packed spruce.

"There! I saw something." Deb's adrenaline raced as she shoved the steering bar to the right and down, using the foot pedals to maintain control.

"Holy crap, Lansing. What are you doing?" Gene shouted, holding on to his seat harness. **"You trying to get us killed?"**



Surprise the Reader

- ❖ Character Surprises – character vs. characterization
 - ❖ Who your character appears to be, isn't who he is.
 - ❖ Emotional responses
- ❖ Plot Surprises
 - ❖ Set up expectations and keep your promises in unexpected ways
 - ❖ List of 20
 - ❖ Shift the character's reality
 - ❖ Push the readers' emotional buttons





Character Surprise

SPICED – Deep Point of View (Character)

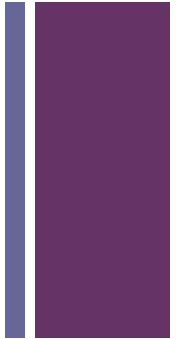
He [Russo] didn't understand. The bird knew exactly what Deb wanted, and **she didn't leave people behind to die. Not after Afghanistan. She had enough ghosts on her conscience.** She tilted the chopper forward and came around again, sidling near the road toward Taos Ski Valley where the church bus had been headed before it had vanished.





Plot Surprises

SPICED – Powerful Verbs, etc.



She **dipped** the chopper, **scouring** the terrain with the spotlight. A metallic flash **pierced** her gaze once again. “Gene, did you see that? Just south?”

The gray-faced spotter **shook** his head. “No, I’m too busy trying not to **puke** all over your windows.” He **swallowed** deeply and adjusted his microphone. “Could you **fly** this thing steady for a while?”

+ Drive the Story Forward

SPICED – Specificity (including senses)

Gene groaned. “Deb, I know you’re used to Denver terrain, but you can’t treat the **Sangre de Cristo Mountains** this way. These **gullies and drafts can buffet a chopper**, especially in some of the gorges. Your lift will disappear, and you’ll fly into the mountain.”

A peak rose toward them, and Deb **pulled up on the collective control stick**. The Bell followed her lead easily, but the sun was gone now. The near-total darkness made flying treacherous. The moon was the only thing making the deadly terrain remotely visible outside the spotlight’s range.

“At least **there aren’t Stingers or RPGs shooting** at us,” she said.

+ Drive the Story Forward

SPICED - Ending Hooks (And Openings) aka Surprises!

The chopper touched down, and Deb jumped to the snow-packed ground, ignoring the cold around her. For now, she had people to save. As Deb and Gene yanked out the sled to transport the wounded, two men ran toward her, one whose forehead was caked with dried blood.

“Please, we need help. Some of the kids are hurt bad. They need a hospital.”

Deb scanned the inside of the chopper. How many could she fit and safely make it back? If she left equipment behind, she could carry someone extra. Her boss would be furious she'd taken the risk, but she'd worry about her job later.



What do you know about Deb and the Story?





Turning Points and Reversals



What are Turning Points?

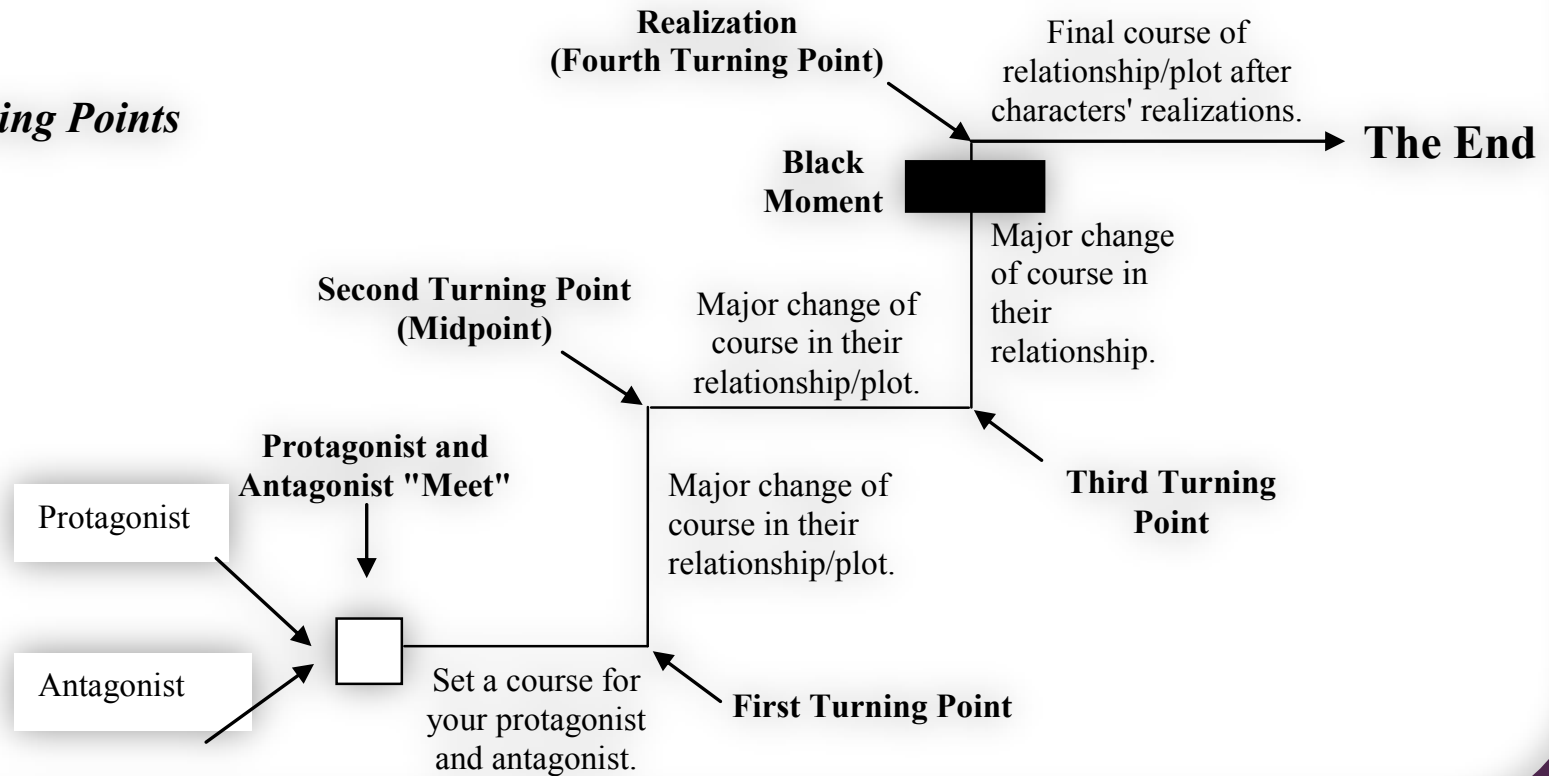


- Significant and surprising scene or series of scenes which change the direction of your plot or subplot **FOR THE CHARACTER** and the reader.
- Turning points illustrate deep character, theme, braiding of internal/external conflict, layering through conflict, action, emotion and surprise
- Attack your character's flaw
 - Layer internal and external conflict (i.e. events AND character/emotion) and theme
 - The greatest danger to the character is **not** the external plot but the character's flaw
 - The villain is the personification of the danger to the protagonist (Swain)
 - The attacks continue until the black moment forces an irrevocable change in the character (the realization)
- Escalate the stakes as you go from turning point to turning point. (escalate tension)



Turning Points

Turning Points



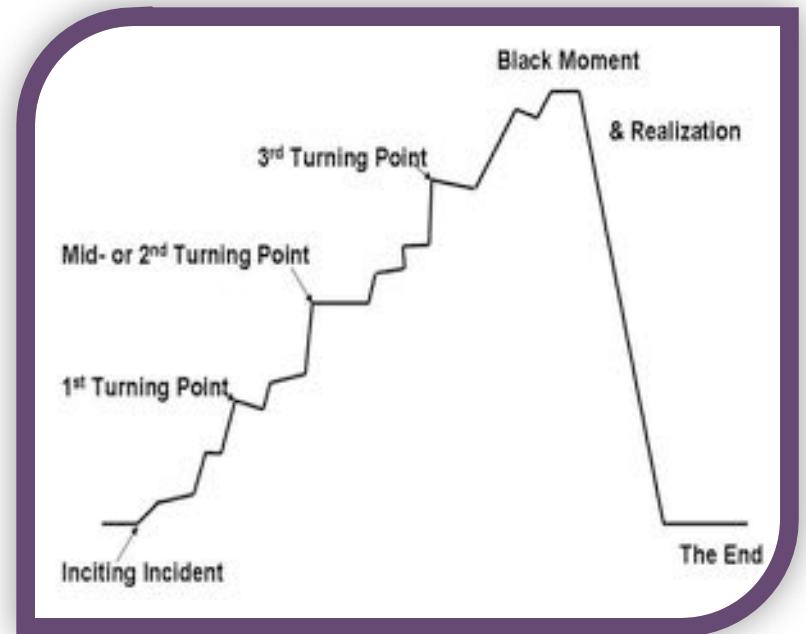
+ Types of Turning Points

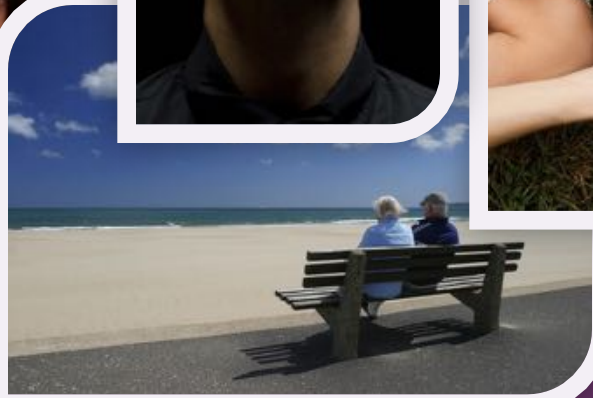
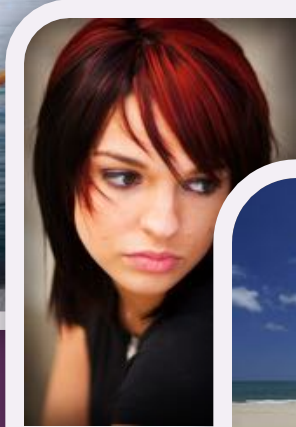
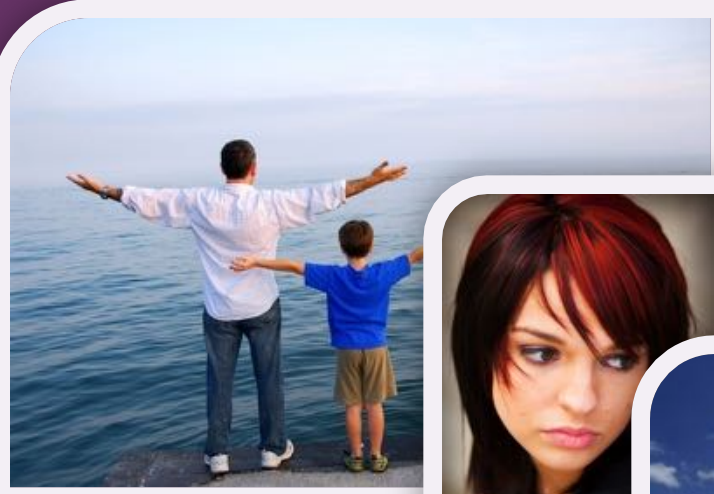
- Major turning points of the story--dependent on the protagonist *and* the genre.
 - Scenes of significant plot AND character development
 - Result in intense emotion by character and reader
- Minor turning points (between major turning points) and even within chapters (reversals)
- Subplot turning points
- Other characters' turning points



Turning Points are about Character as much as plot

- No matter which plotting or writing method you choose, ask: do the turning points scene(s) include all turning point elements of plot **AND emotion**?
- A good rule of thumb: 1 MAJOR turning point every 25,000 words
- Could a kiss be a turning point? Why?



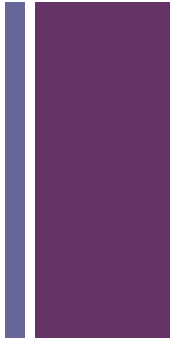


Make Your Characters Special

No matter what inspires the story, a story begins and ends with character



Strong Character Goals



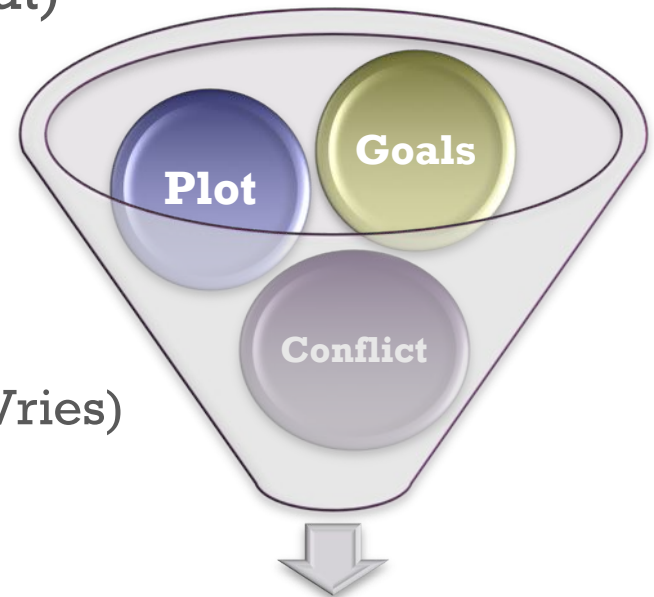
■ Story is character.

- Character is the metaphor for a human being
- A character's goals tell us a lot about their deep character. Ask **WHY?**

■ Character Sketch (see end of handout)

■ Make the Reader Care

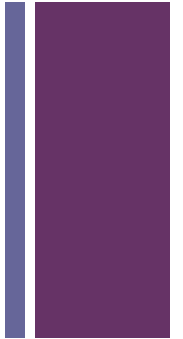
- How much a character cares about his/her goal is in direct proportion to how much the reader will care (Laura DeVries)
- Long and Short-Range Goals



Emotional Journey



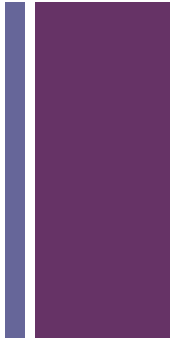
Character vs. Characterization



- **Characterization** - Sum total of observable traits and qualities
 - Age, sex, education, profession
 - Introverted, extroverted, optimistic, pessimistic
- **Character** - Deep true nature of your character, revealed by making choices under pressure
 - Shift the character's reality
 - Ask yourself what your character would NEVER do, and then figure out a way to make them do it.
 - Each time you remove an obstacle, uncover one more.
- **The key question: WHY?**
- It always comes back to the same necessity: go deep enough and there is bedrock of truth, however hard.
— May Sarton



Look beneath the surface



■ Favorite book or movie character

- What do they seem to be at the beginning of the story
- Who do we discover they are?

Name	Characterization	Character
James Bond	Lounge Lizard	Hero
Indiana Jones	Professor	Hero
Eve Dallas	Tough Cop	Caring and personally vulnerable
?		



+ Duality of character

× Character's strength is their weakness

Self-Image Worksheet

Strength	Character Flaw	Weakness
Strong-willed, deals w/people & ideas skillfully	Needs to Control	Manipulative
Lives in the Present	Fears the Unknown	Controlled by Circumstances
Self-Reliant	Needs Independence	Can't Rely on Others, Unreliable
Earnest, with conviction and purpose	Believes End Justifies Means	Ruthless
Strategist, careful, prepared, can be relentless	Fear of Failure	Tentative, Relentless
Power of Convictions	Needs Justice	Judgmental, Vengeful, Righteous
Intuitive understanding of others	Believes World there to be manipulated	Egotistical
Intuitive, Trusts inherent human judgment	Needs to Trust	Unrealistic
Faithful, Steadfast, Unflappable	Fears Chaos	Uncompromising, Resistant to change
Compassionate	Needs to Please	Failure to know oneself
Challenges Oneself	Need to Prove Worthiness	Self-Involved
Spontaneous	Needs Freedom	Undisciplined, Unpredictable
Perfectionist	Fears Misjudgment	Defensive
Fearless, Intrepid	Needs to Take Risks	Reckless
Independent	Fears Emotional Attachment	Distrusting
Cautious	Needs to be Safe	Fearful
Honest	Needs the Truth	Unemotional
Analytical	Needs Logic	Distrusts intuition, calculating, shrewd, cunning
Self-sacrificing	Needs Love	Submissive
Ability to be someone else (wears masks)	Believes Flawed	Covers Flaw with Mask
Adaptable	Needs Balance	Indecisive, Obedient
Flexible, Diplomatic	Fears does not know best	Pliant, Deferential
Optimistic	Needs to hope for the best	Naïve
Resourceful	Believes own needs surpass everyone	Predatory
Fearless, no fear of consequences	Fears Unredeemable	Pessimistic, Fatalistic
Faithful, Steadfast	Believes the best	Follows others blindly
Places no expectations	Believes love conditional	Fears Emotions
Free from bias, open-minded	Needs Fairness	Gullible
Patience	Believes to endure is to conquer	Compulsive, can't let go

+ Braid Plot and Character

Whether you start with an idea, setting or scene.





Plot ≠ Story

■ A Plot

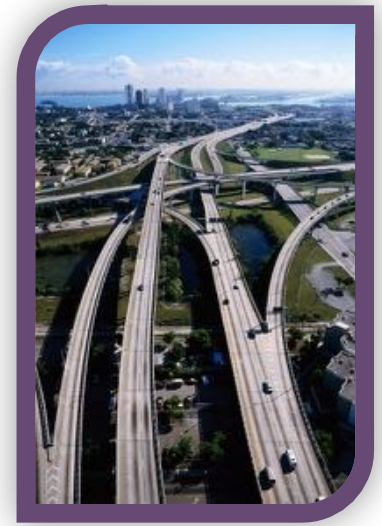
- Is what happens
- Provides the action
- Provides motion
- Road it takes to get you there

■ A Story

- Is what it does to the 'who' it happens to.
- Provides the reactions
- Provides emotion
- Journey to truth

■ A Story...

- *Recounts events that must be translated into feelings. It concerns ... someone's reactions to what happens; his feelings; his emotions; his impulses; his dreams, his ambitions; his clashing drives and inner conflicts. Plunge the character into a pre-planned situation that challenges the part of him that cares, that threatens the thing he feels is important. — Dwight V. Swain, Techniques of the Selling Writer.*



+ Emotions Connect Character and Structure

- Why is this the only character for this story?
 - Choose plot to exploit character
 - Take it to another level: Villain personification of protagonist's flaw
- Actions don't drive the story. Actions drive emotions. Emotions drive the story.
 - How the characters feel, create should change choices → plot
 - Motivated Drama



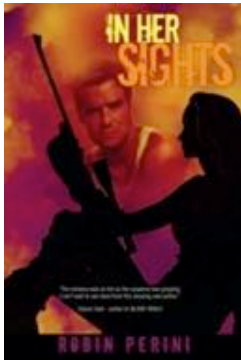


Braid Overarching Message & Emotion

- Step 1: Identify the protagonist's character flaw/internal conflict (based on emotion)
 - **Jazz Parker** (protagonist) will [now or eventually] have to face and get past that he/she NEEDS/BELIEVES/

FEARS **Fears she can't protect those she is responsible for (those she loves)**
because she didn't in her past

Step 2: What does your character learn to overcome their flaw? = Your THEME!



The past does not dictate who I am. I am not my past...I am my own actions.



EXERCISE!



Show, Don't Tell



Show, Don't Tell Emotions

- Identify a key word from the Emotion Exercise

Sacrifice

Redemption

Joy

Betrayal

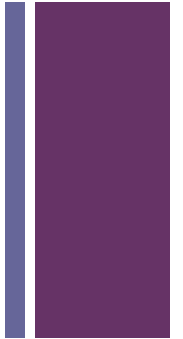
Forgiveness

- Write a paragraph showing this emotion without using the word (or a form of the word)





Show Don't Tell Through Narrative and Description



- Significant Detail based on emotion, not research
- Choose a setting. Choose two opposite emotions. Write a paragraph illustrating the emotions through significant details, without using the specific words (or a form of the word).



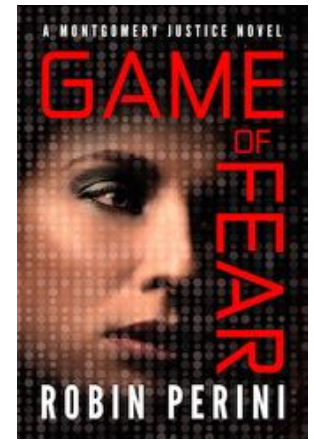


Show Don't Tell Through Deep Point of View

- The character tells the story, not the author
- Imagery based on character

Finally reaching the landing, Deb slipped her key into the lock and opened the door. Ashley better have a good reason for being here and not at her Air Force Academy dorm where she belonged.

*Her sister threw her textbook to the floor and jumped up from the beige corduroy couch **like a gun had exploded in her ear.***

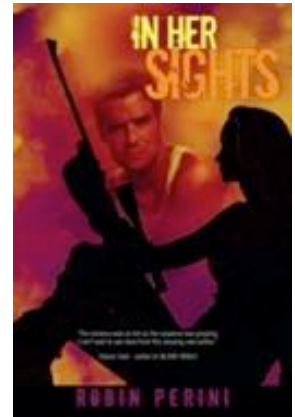


+ Deep Point of View: Take 2

Luke Montgomery kept to the shadows, studying the surroundings for potential threats and quick exits. He preferred covert operations, but stealth wasn't an option here. Even he couldn't blend his six-feet-four-inch frame in this cracker box. Though he hadn't set foot in the joint in a couple of years, too many people would recognize him.

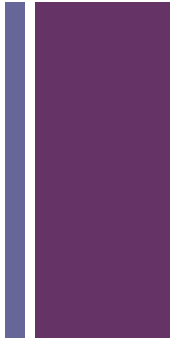
A sharp rap of the cue ball hitting its target echoed like a gunshot over the raucous laughter. Nope, Sammy's Bar hadn't changed. Neither had the clientele.

Cops. And some of them were on the take.





Watch Out



- 's/he felt,'
- 's/he thought,'
- 's/he saw,'
- 's/he wondered,'
- 's/he realized...

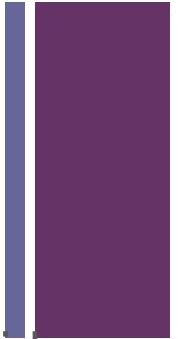




+ Be Aggressive During
Revision



Revision: Big Stuff & Small Stuff



■ Read for pacing and compelling storytelling

- Dialogue is the best way to show character and emotion. Get rid of introspection if possible.
- Is there a "zinger" on every page?
- Is the POV character the right one?
- Can you tell whose POV character it is on every page?
- Symptoms of Lack of Conflict
 - Is there repetitious dialogue? (no conflict development)
 - Tack on other issues
- Have I braided internal and external conflict (do they lead to each other?)

■ Three Versions (Activate the story (from telling to showing))



First Draft - The Cerebral Version

Weakness
• **Distance**
• **Telling**

Damn Richard St. James to hell. He'd slaughtered them--he'd slaughtered them all.

Jaw clenched with fury, ~~Jonathan Price urged the horse he'd commandeered at the last posting stop forward.~~ His hands and cloak were soaked with blood. He had to get home. He could only pray he wasn't too late.

The sky billowed with black clouds, and little light illuminated the old Roman road he raced down. His heart pounded, and agony ripped through his chest.

He'd witnessed carnage during the war. Waterloo had been a bloodbath, but Anne should never have witnessed the massacre she'd seen tonight. Until a few hours ago, his fiancée had known nothing of the brutality of man.

St. James had changed her--forever. The bastard.

Anne's family--murdered in cold blood. All of them, down to her young sister barely out of the crib.

Jonathan's stomach wretched at the memory of the Cavanaugh's laid out in front of their home like some gruesome message, their throats torn open as if an animal had feasted. But even that hadn't shredded his heart like Anne's mewling cries as he'd cradled her in his arms. He just prayed her family in York would be able to heal her mind, even if her heart were forever broken.



Second Draft

Weakness

- Distance
- Telling
- Happened in past

Damn Richard St. James to hell.

He'd slaughtered them. He'd slaughtered them all save one.

A mist of night smoldered the burning remains of the Price family home, and Jonathan blinked through the soot streaking the land that had once been the family's pride and joy. He breathed in, willing the nausea churning his stomach to not desecrate this place. They deserved better.

Jaw clenched, he forced himself to stare into their sightless eyes one by one. His father, his mother, his young sister. Lined up in a row, their bodies were darkened with ash, the only color, the red seeping from their shredded throats.

But that wasn't the worst of it. St. James hadn't just killed them--he'd tortured and humiliated them. Jonathan couldn't bear the thought of what the bastard had done. His young brother, Edward, by happenstance still at Eton, would never know, Jonathan vowed.

With care, he covered his young sister's bare body, and concealed his mother's naked torso with her decimated gown. As for Jonathan's father, St. James had emasculated him, the blood soaking his pants.

Deep fury, like Jonathan had never imagined, even on the bloodiest Waterloo battlefield, skewered his gut like a thousand splinters of glass.



Activated Draft

Jonathan Price hurled himself through the fiery hallway, clutching his sister's limp body close to his heart. "Don't give up, Elizabeth." His desperate plea was swallowed by the hellish roar of the inferno crackling around him. Blistering heat seared his hands and face. Black roiling smoke scorched his lungs.

Maddened with grief, he kicked the flaming debris from the doorway and burst into the rainy night. He staggered across the muddy yard, and coughing and hacking, fell to his knees before laying his sister on the sodden grass.

The fire illuminated the vicious wound on her neck, and then her sightless eyes.

Dear God, what manner of beast had done this? Torn the very skin from her throat, killed her with no mercy?

He whirled toward Price Manor. The blaze erupted from every window and door, scarlet serpents of flame devouring all in their path, engulfing everything.

Where was the rest of his family? The servants, the butler, even the scullery maid? Had they escaped or had the beast killed them, too?

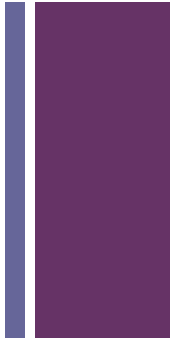
"Please." He raced back toward the house, only to be grabbed and flung to the cobblestones. Dazed and gasping for air, Jonathan peered up at the cloaked shape looming over him.

"You cannot save anyone, you fool. They're all dead. Your family, and Lady Anne's as well."

Weakness

- A few telling phrases
- Small Stuff Editing

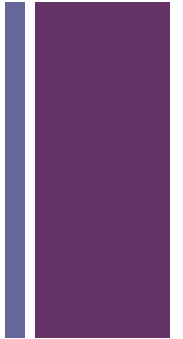
+ Activate Your Writing



- Use powerful, picturing-forming and image-making words
- Evoke emotions with your word choices
- Excuse me, your research is showing....
- Interpreting scenes through the genre and the viewpoint characters' emotions
- Deep Point of View – critical to active and emotional writing



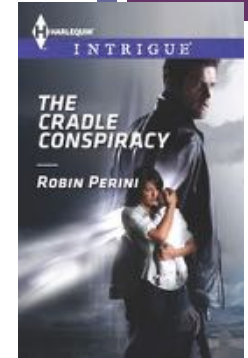
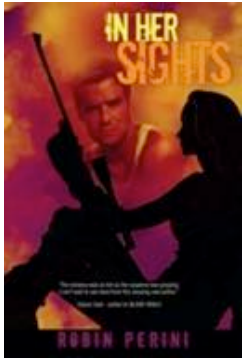
Conclusion



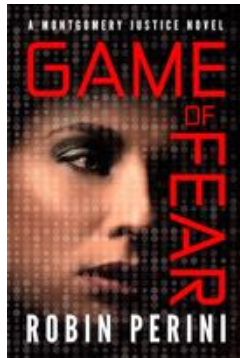
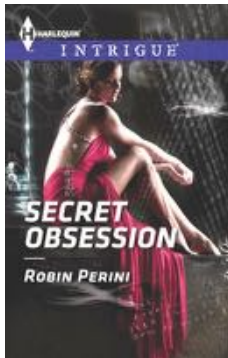
- ❖ **Trust your instincts**
- ❖ **Find Your Own Process and Don't Edit Out the Passion**
 - ❖ **Let your Voice Shine Through.**
 - ❖ **It's YOUR story, but always ask WHY?!**
 - ❖ **Ray Bradbury says, "There is only one type of story in the world-
-YOUR story."**



+ Q&A and Drawing



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Backups

+ VERSION 1

(The Cerebral Version)

"Remind me again why you thought spending Thanksgiving with them would be a good idea?" Josh Wentworth grumbled, as he flipped on the windshield wipers to batten away the snowflakes that were coming down faster. The SUV curved through the Denver traffic and he took the Quincy exit. "It'll be a disaster. It always is. I don't want Joshua's first Thanksgiving to be more like a root canal than a celebration."

Emily Wentworth shot her husband a frustrated glance. "Our one-month old won't be warped. Besides, your parents deserve to get to know their new grandson." An overwhelming sense of rightness filled her as she glanced at the baby in the backseat, his cheeks rosy with warmth as he slept. "With Ryan deployed overseas, your family's all he's got."



VERSION 2

(Honing in on More Important Details)

Eric Wentworth was dying. He didn't have to see the stop sign's shaft penetrating his chest or the blood pulsing from the wound. Strange, though. He felt no pain, but he could feel his life slipping away as surely as the ravaging winter wind whistled through his crumpled car.

He wasn't ready to die. Not yet. He had a wife who loved him and a new baby boy he'd just met. He couldn't leave them alone and unprotected.

"Eric?"

He struggled to turn his head toward his wife's weak cry.

+ VERSION 3 – Final Version

(Active Writing Utilizing Deep Point of View)

This is the prologue that won the Golden Heart in 2011 and sold to Harlequin Intrigue.



Icy wind howled through the SUV's shattered windshield, spraying glass and freezing sleet across Eric Wentworth's face. He struggled in and out of consciousness. Flashes of memory struck. Oncoming headlights on the wrong side of the road. Skidding tires on black ice. The baby's cries. Emily's screams.

Oh, God.

Why couldn't he focus? Above the wind, he heard only silence, then an ominous gurgling sound from his lungs. He shifted his head slightly to check on his wife, and a knifelike pain seared his neck. He stopped, staring in horror at the shaft of metal guardrail penetrating his chest. Blood pulsed from the wound, but he couldn't feel it. He couldn't feel anything.

Eric was dying. And it was no accident. He hadn't taken the threats seriously, hadn't told Emily what he'd done. Why they were all in danger.