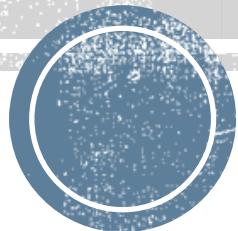
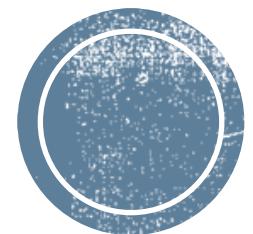


What Happens Next

Increasing Conflict and Romantic Tension
by Jacie Floyd and Mariah Lynne





Definition of Conflict

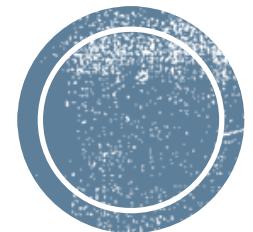


Definition of Conflict

- Conflict is arguably the most important element in fiction.
- The conflict in any type of fiction is a situation or meeting between characters (probably) that results in challenge and opposition to the achievement of a stated or assumed goal.
- Without conflict there is no movement and no narrative drive.
- Every story--every SCENE in every story--should include conflict. (Few exceptions.)

Definition of Conflict

- One clear method for staying on the conflict path derives from author/editor Debra Dixon's longtime best seller: ***Goal, Motivation, and Conflict***. For a satisfying, compelling story, the antagonist and protagonist (IN EACH SCENE and as an overall story arc), must each have a physical or tangible goal, a motivation for wanting the goal, and a conflict that prevents them from getting that goal.
- In the simplest terms: What do they want? Why do they want it? Why can't they have it?



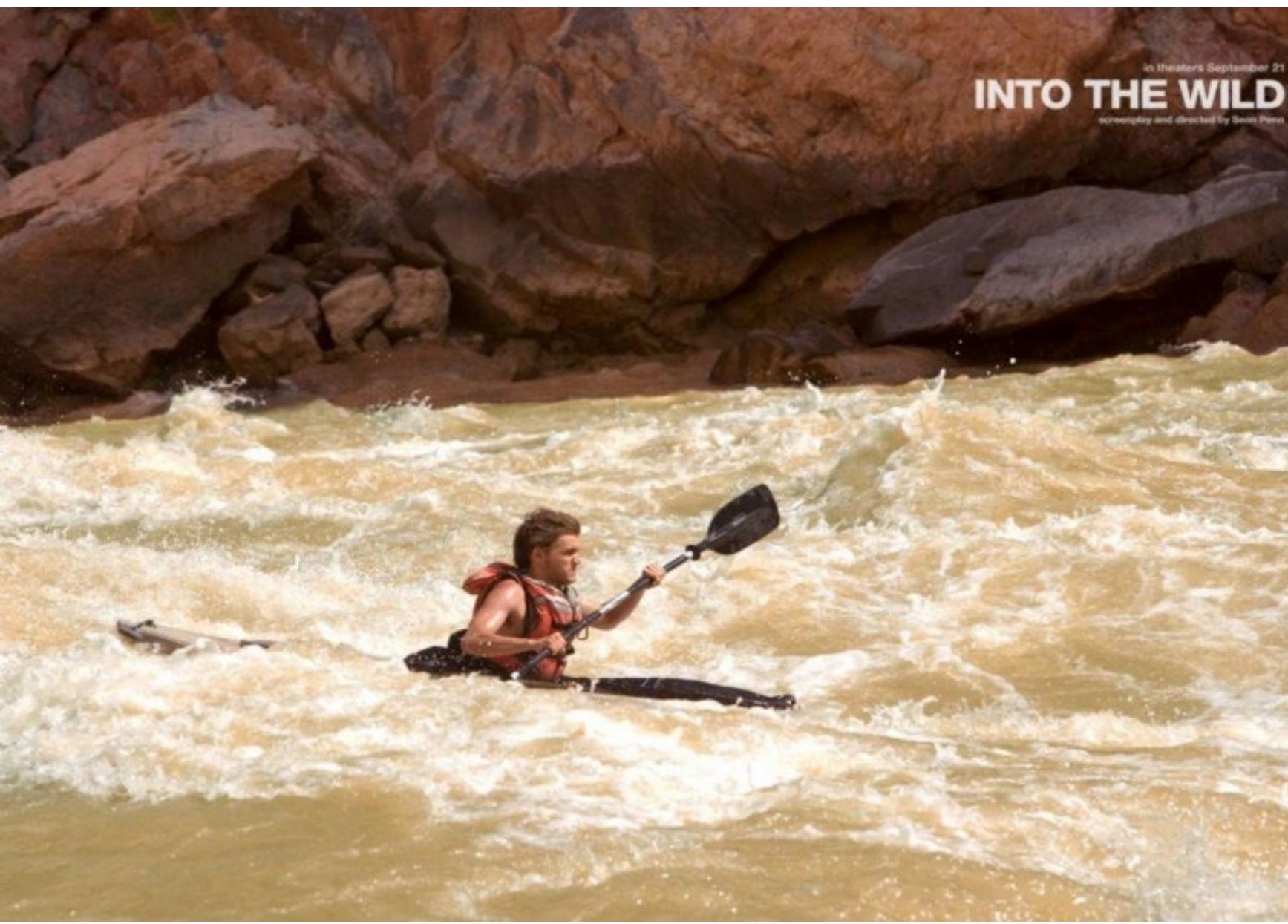
Types of Conflict





Person against Person

- War of the Roses



Person against Nature

- Into the Wild
- Call of the Wild



Person against Self

- Rocky
- It's a Wonderful Life



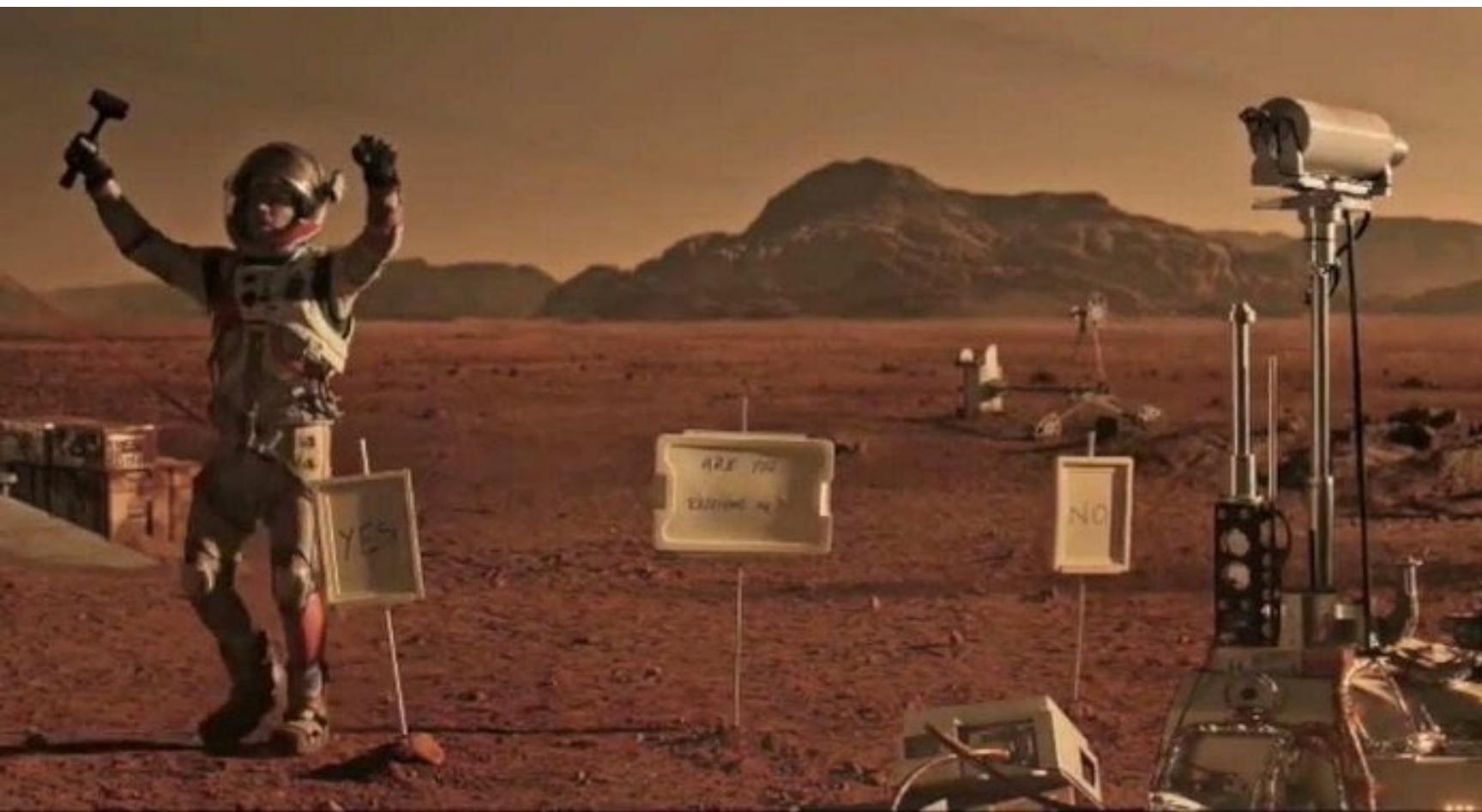
Person against Society

- Schindler's List
- 1984



Person against the Supernatural

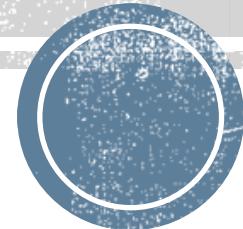
- Poltergeist



Person against Technology

- The Martian

Methods of Building and Developing Conflict



Methods of Building and Developing Conflict

- **Continual escalation:** Ramps up throughout the book to the dramatic resolution.
- **No way-out:** Back against the wall. Force a decision.
- **Endless, relentless pursuit:** Ultimately, it will come down to Kill or be Killed.
- **Ethical dilemma:** Make the character do something that would normally be ethically or morally repugnant to them.
- **Chapter/scene cliff hangers:** Every scene ends on a cliff-hanger.

Methods of Building and Developing Conflict

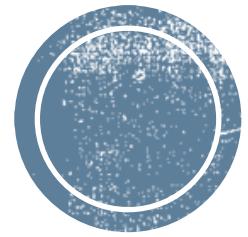
- **Take it up a Notch:** Whatever the conflict is, find a way to make the stakes slightly higher.
- **What could be worse:** Take it up like more notches. (Nod to Super-agent Donald Maass.)
- **It's only a matter of time:** Give the characters a deadline for achieving their goal.
- **Surprise! Surprise!** A planned or coincidental roadblock comes out of nowhere.
- **Philosophical choice:** Similar to an ethical one.

Methods of Building and Developing Conflict

- **Shifting goals:** A simple goal gets complicated by other factors.
- **Ten possibilities:** Both plotters and pantsters should consider other options.
- **Change things up:** Change the setting, mood, appearance or condition of the place.
- **Create a conflict crucial to your characters:** A Buddhist Monk might not care about The DaVinci Code.
- **Opposites attract:** Create engaging or empathetic characters with opposing goals.

Methods of Building and Developing Conflict

- **Increase the tension/friction between the characters:** Allow tension to ebb and flow
- **Make the characters continue to ask questions:** Why is this happening to me? Who did that? Why didn't he come home from work? Why is the world turning upside down?
- **Create secondary sources of tension:** Add more than one bad actor to the mix trying to get in on the taking home the prize.
- **Compress the timeline:** Make the story unfold in a shorter period of time.



INCREASING LEVELS OF EMOTIONAL/SENSUAL TENSION

(And what they mean)

Emotional/Sensual Tension

1. **A pat on the back.** A commendation, showing sympathy, an expression of pride, or an act of comfort.
2. **A hug.** A greeting, a request or precursor for intimacy, or a gesture that denotes comfort.
3. **Gripping the arm.** Fear of external forces, a request to stay put, or a way to acquire security and guidance.
4. **Rubbing the arm.** A signal for physical closeness, wanting to be warmer, showing sympathy, or a gesture that requires complacency from the receiver.

Emotional/Sensual Tension

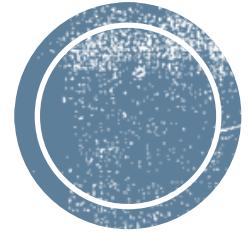
5. **Hitting.** Anger *duh*, surprise, fear, and panic.
6. **Squeezing hug.** Need for closeness, need for intimacy, fear, a request for protection, and comfort.
7. **Pushing.** Disgust.
8. **Arm over shoulder.** Protectiveness, affection, need for closeness.
9. **Arm around waist.** Protectiveness, affection, familiarity
10. **Both hands on shoulders.** Persistence and wanting to convince someone. With shaking, it alludes to anger.

Emotional/Sensual Tension

11. **Forehead against forehead.** Love, affection, a plea for closeness.
12. **Cheek to cheek.** A sign of closeness.
13. **Hands on face.** Wanting to convey love nonverbally.
14. **Rubbing noses.** Conveys tenderness, fondness, a request for further intimacies.
15. **Hands on neck.** Protectiveness, wanting to increase intimacy, and trying to express comfort.
16. **Rubbing your palm.** A way to comfort yourself, a way to get another's attention or arouse someone.

Emotional/Sensual Tension

- 17. Clasping their arm with yours.** Friendship, wanting security, or wanting guidance.
- 18. Touching your hair.** Expressing familiarity or a need to be closer.
- 19. Resting head or face on shoulders.** Expressing familiarity and comfort, wanting to be closer, and asking for affection.
- 20. Rubbing inner thigh.** Oh, you know what this means. A request for intimacy, sating of physical arousal, and a sign of comfort.
- 21. Holding hands.** A plea for closeness, guidance, a need for security, solidification of a friendship or pact, and reaching out to make a connection.



Linda Howard's 12 Stages of Physical Intimacy

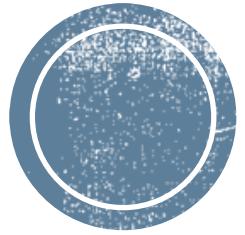
The entire point to these stages is to get the most from your characters' intimacy. Being deliberate in your steps will pay off big in your stories.

Linda Howard's 12 Stages of Physical Intimacy

1. **Eye to body** - the first glance, perceiving a specific detail or “overall first impression.”
2. **Eye to eye** - The first step of active interaction between characters.
3. **Voice to voice** - Who speaks first is as important as what they say.
4. **Hand to hand (or arm)** - An accidental or intentional first touch can create an interesting dynamic or an unexpected reaction.
5. **Arm to shoulder** - This is a classic level of intimacy because it puts the characters close enough to one another to enable a kiss or smell. A gateway move to more intimacy.
6. **Arm to waist, or back** - *The hand on the small of the back to guide a woman through the room.*

Linda Howard's 12 Stages of Physical Intimacy

7. **Mouth to mouth** - You've skipped though half the intimacy chart with this one move. Depending on how the kiss progresses, several
8. **Hand to head** - It's hot, hot, HOT because it's extraordinarily intimate to touch a person's head or face. more intimacy levels may be skipped.
9. **Hand to body** - This step moves the couple into foreplay.
10. **Mouth to breast** - This is seriously personal and indicates a certain level of intent that's more committed than the previous touches.
11. **Hand to genitals** - OK, we're pretty much at the point of no return at this stage. If somebody changes their mind, major conflict will ensue
12. **Genitals to genitals** - You're at the sex act, and your characters will commit violence if you interrupt now.



The Hero's Journey

by Joseph Campbell

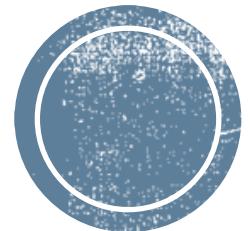
If you're a plotter and follow The Hero's Journey, you can plan where and how to increase both the conflict and your emotional journey through each of the steps

The Hero's Journey

1. Ordinary World
2. The Call of Adventure
3. Refusal of the Call
4. Meeting the Mentor
5. Crossing the Threshold
6. Tests, Allies, Enemies

The Hero's Journey

7. Approach to the Inmost Cave
8. The Ordeal
9. The Reward
10. The Road Back
11. The Resurrection
12. Return with the Elixir



Jacie Floyd

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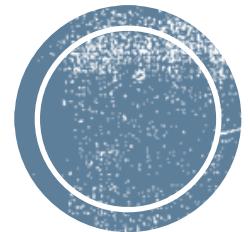
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