

Now that we have created a character and given him a purpose, we can see that if we've done our job right, he has layers. We need to start peeling it away and find out what's underneath all that **beautifully wrapped perfection.**

What creates the emotions felt by your Male? As with any character you create, if there's nothing wrong with his life or he's never been wronged, then he's probably not realistic in any way. No one's life is faultless or even-keeled all the time. That's not to say a happy male is a bad thing. It's a rather blessed thing! \*g\* But again, who reads about happy, perfect males? Anyone guess the answer?

So onward. How do we add emotion to our character? Through CONFLICT, both Internal and External.

Definitions:

**External Conflict:** An outside struggle between your character and another force

**Internal Conflict:** An inside struggle between your character and himself

The Internal Conflict will drive our Hero, the same way as any other character; but what is different will be his reaction. Is he having to prove himself to some unknown force? Possibly the **STANDARD** of which men before him lived, implanted in him by his father or other Great Men if he should look up to them?

What typically happens is that in the **Hero's Journey**, something bad happens to produce his internal conflict. **The Loss of Something Great** occurs and the Jaded hero chooses that moment to hold onto. This is necessary for the stages of grief, but because of the pressure put upon him by Society or Other Influences, The Hero becomes stuck. For whatever reason, he continues to live this way. Never prodded by anyone, but perhaps a mother or an occasional girlfriend, he accepts his fate as what it is. Something else happens to shock our Hero and **BAM**; his old way of being is no longer working.

This applies to all males in writing, as we're not writing the perfect hero. Let's take the computer tech turned hacker that I discussed briefly last lesson. Maybe his cute British friend was killed in an accident and our tech hero saw this and the image stuck with him, creating a new behavior – perhaps a riskier behavior, as he knows now how quickly life can be ended.

The reason our Hero becomes stuck is the same thing that motivates him to function the way he does. This applies to not just straight males but bisexual and gay ones as well. We all seek love and acceptance, regardless of sexual orientation.

**Fear of Loss of Something Great** is more powerful than trying to accept what has to be accepted.

Let's talk about Something Great for a moment. The ultimate resolution in any romance novel happens when both characters realize their strengths and weaknesses through actions of the other, rather than the world around them. You'll never hear a TV or

Movie hero say "Man, this change in economic policy has really made my life easier."

Why? A: that's never going to happen and B: people are pre-programmed to *react* to events, not *respond* to them...unless the thing that forces a response *matters*. As an author, I can write, regardless of who is president; but an argument at home is going to affect my work, at least short-term.

Being content means you'll settle, whereas being happy means you've realized what *matters*; and what you wind up with is *exactly* what you want, even if you didn't know it at the start.

Because of the internal/external conflicts mentioned above, our men aren't going to resolve to find happiness without love that means something. It's tangible in the hero's mind. The heroine's love is something he can feel, even when she's not around. He sees it, knows it's present, even if he hasn't seen her in a day.

The thought of happiness becomes a thing he can seek to find, once he knows he's lost it. Or never had it. After the first sexual encounter, he craves more. If we've taken Angela Knight's course on Writing Better Love Scenes, we've learned that through Angela Knight's courses, the heroine allows the first encounter to proceed by her body language, through visual cues and dialogue. She's showing our hero she trusts him not to hurt her.

Let's take a moment and explore that sexual relationship, shall we?

If we take a look at what sex IS, at the core, we have the masculine penetrating, or invading, the feminine. Granted, from a Goddess worship level it's a beautiful union; but that's exactly what the reality of it is. The heroine, regardless of sexual experience, *must* trust that the hero is going to treat her body and mind right, and on a deeper, more primal level, maybe even her heart.

That's partially to blame for the popularity of gay male romances. Because at the same time as a man is invading, and quite hostilely I might add, the woman's body, she is vulnerable to him. The recipient in gay anal sex is just as vulnerable and on some level, the feelings are the same.

What's going on in the man's head? Programmed for what feels good, and for procreation, are very primal reactions; but we've already discussed the fact that men aren't dinosaurs or cavemen, but thinking, feeling human beings. The language may differ depending on your hero's archetype, but hopefully he's thinking A: I want this release, B: I want this moment and C: I hope to HELL I don't hurt her so I can do it again.

Only when we dig deeper, and examine the relationship, are we going to realize from our writing and plotting that the first sexual encounter *starts* something in him.

The hero, believing he's just having sex, proceeds and has a reaction to her. Perhaps she's the perfect lover,

or the most responsive to his way of doing things. Yeah, he's still acting like he's in control, even if only to enjoy the farce. Because a romance novel is truly the HEROINE'S Journey, the stories usually focus on them, and their issues. But people aren't meant to be alone and if they are, that's not your concern, you're writing the next awesome romance!

So, we come back to his reaction to her. Something unique, perhaps unseen (probably unseen) by the hero makes him crave her more. It's sex, right? So, detachment ensues from the heart in an attempt to compartmentalize and carry on with the original goal of the hero. Except that's not what happens, is it?

Throughout the plot/character arc, the hero realizes he can't lose his heroine, as she makes him greater than he was. No, this isn't intentional ego stroking; it's the Hero finding balance.

This Hero, believing he can avoid fear of loss, settles into a regimen of control. He controls everything, his actions, his emotions, his friends to some extent, and

anything else he can control, in order to protect himself. His guard is always up. Even if he appears confident to his friends, his guard is still up. Appearances aren't everything, are they?

When the woman shows up and reveals his true Motivation, that's when things get messed up. In an effort to satisfy his Male Desires (sex drive) he may do typical male things, become controlling and show off his "power" to everyone around him. Even in the face of danger, as we see with Christine Feehan's Carpathian Men, they still appear controlling even when they are DEAD WRONG!! **Men Do NOT WANT to lose that Precious Gift given to them.**

The Hero, in his blindness, refuses to truly see the Heroine for what she is: a fully capable human being with strengths, and a journey of her own to fulfill. Once he can accept her for what she is, then he can let the walls internally crumble and healing can begin.

I'm not going to outlay the stages of either journey, mainly because there are many different opinions on

how many stages are in the Hero's Journey. I'm sure you can find what works for you by Googling it. If you are interested in the Heroine's Journey, I suggest you go to Morgan Hawke's site, [DarkErotica.blogspot.com](http://DarkErotica.blogspot.com).

When the Heroine acts on her own, trusting herself, and has proven to the Hero she is capable, *and* when he realizes what he truly needs (his motive), *then* he can let go of the **old pattern of Being** that's held him down and prevented his forward movement/growth.

But Sascha, how do we get him there?

Glad you asked!

Your plot with the Heroine's journey already worked in should help him. He must react (not respond) to her situation. Your typical action romance plot:

*Boy Meets Girl (Hey, you're hot!)*

*Boy and Girl are thrown together for a common purpose (Let's have sex, but afterwards, help me defeat this enemy)*

*Boy and Girl part for differences (You controlling jerk/you're stubborn and gonna get hurt!) (What he's really saying is "and if you get hurt I might lose you!")*

*Boy saves girl (or vice versa, which is happening more and more)*

*Common Enemy is defeated by both Boy and Girl, who have found new strengths, let go of old weaknesses. (Damn, we're good together now that our heads aren't up our asses)*

*HEA (Ding Dong, wedding bells maybe?)*

Somewhere in that mess I just wrote, you must figure out even if it's not told in the story directly, what the problem is that your Hero is going to have. His problems in reality are no different than Hers, the change comes in how he deals with them until his method of Being no longer works.

Let's take a moment and examine what emotions

really are. If we observe motivational guru Anthony Robbins and his material, then we know that emotions are signs that things are either going well and causing us **PLEASURE** in our lives, or that things are **BAD** and causing us **PAIN**. Those emotions indicate to us that things are either in need of change, or that we're behaving appropriately to get our desired results.

The key thing here that drives a man is oftentimes his emotional desire **NOT TO APPEAR WEAK**.

Weakness is **PAIN** to most men. Society is partially to blame, genetics is also at fault. There is a fear in that emotional desire that says, depending on the tape in his head, that if the male appears weak and fragile, shows emotion, then he **IS** weak, and others might try to take from him. It's rather prehistoric, but it serves a purpose for the time being. With our heroes, the purpose is to obtain that goal we talked about earlier.

When the beautiful heroine shows up, then his purpose changes, but he's unaware of it. His old way of being still works.

Or so he thinks until YOU, the author, start messing things up! His back story, life experiences, environment and those who surround him are all contributing factors to how he behaves. These things clue him into what's going on around him and how he "should" behave.

How do you figure out what's going on in his head? When you've filled out the wonderful CHARACTER OUTLINE! (At the end of this lesson.)

*Muhahaha!*

Before we wrap up this lesson on emotion, let's talk about Man's First Sexual Experience. The one that doesn't include self-discovery...

That first experience with a woman could be stunning, could be wonderful, could be awesome, to quote one of my loved ones, "epic even." Or it could be a triumph of catastrophe and embarrassment due to all the hormones racing through a teenager's body at the time. The hormones and lack of proper education can make for an early mess, and horror stories of first

times are all too common, due to the confusion swimming around in the minds of both male and female teens.

If he's been made to understand that sexuality is an experience (read: gift) shared by two (or more!) people, then he'll hopefully understand that with most women, sex comes with a price. It's about sharing and building a bond of sorts, even a light one.

Sexuality is: sharing of intense emotion between two human beings. A beautiful moment soaked in sweat, dirty sheets and silk, or a syrupy sweet moment that ended with breakfast and the beginning of a new relationship.

Why do some men have that desire to be the nice guy with buried feelings, while others can love'em and leave'em? Think about this in our romances. I see a lot of books where the hero is typically a stallion, and the one woman ropes him in even as he fights his heart. It's an overused plot IMO, but one that still works today.

Men also pay a price for even casual sex. In later years, in regret, men pay a price. Not all are smart enough to acknowledge the price paid for the casual lay, but many figure it out once they've settled down.

In our stories we see the concept of casual sex bandied about by both genders as a plot device. With everything we know about men from TV and outdated social models, it makes sense.

This does not include the fetish crowd, swingers, or any of that ilk. And we are ignoring male sexual dysfunction for the time being, as that's not a normal plot device and will require a special section I may decide to cover in future classes, because it's a lot deeper than just 'I can't keep it up' when it's not medical.

#### EXERCISE #4:

Tell me about the Hero from your story, what his internal conflict, external conflict is and what event(s)

made him who he is when we meet him.

**Character Description:**

**Designation:**

**Archetype:**

**Motive (Emotional need):**

**Goal (Physical need):**

**External Conflict (physical):**

**Internal Conflict (emotional):**

**Positive Trait:**

**Negative Trait:**

**Fatal Flaw:**

**Secret:**

**Epiphany** (what will they learn; how will they change?):

Definitions:

**Designation** – Emotion-Driven or Motive-Driven

**Motive** – What they REALLY need

**Goal** – what they THINK they need

**Fatal Flaw** – Achilles heel

**Secret** – The lie they tell themselves to get by

Using this simple character outline, the only thing I could think to add would be if your character has a back-story, maybe you'd like to jot it down. Just copy and paste this into a Word document, save as a template and you're ready to start making your heroes with more information. I use this information every time I create a new story. I have it integrated into my plot pad so I have all my information in one central document that I can transfer to my cell phone if I need to take it with me, or refer back to without having to look high and low all over a hard drive for it.

Remember, the pithier your answers are, the more concise you'll have an understanding of your heroes.

This seems pretty basic, doesn't it? Compared to the huge outlines some authors use, this is the one I use to make my characters come off the pages. Putting emotion into them is easy when you remember: the *internal conflict* is what drives him truly; but *external conflict* must be solved, as the Hero believes that by solving the External Conflict, they will achieve their goal.

Make sense?

I tend to believe that all the extras we give our characters only creates more work for us. We're too busy writing our stories to deal with what his or her favorite color is or why it matters unless those things have relevance to the story. The only time I believe we need to go overboard with details we won't use is when we're creating worlds. Everything in the story must be there for a reason. Remember that, it's key. Anything else is just un-needed, un-wanted bulk.

Let's talk about the less-common points from above. Most people get Goal and Motive, so we'll skip those and hit up the other three.

## **DESIGNATION**

What drives your Hero? Your Heroine? What makes them do what they do? Typically, your Heroine is going to be the one who is Emotionally driven. (The stereotypes are stereotypes for a reason.) Our Hero, Jaded or not, will be more Motive driven. In this instance we mean to look at the why of his actions.

His **Way of Being** will work, in conjunction with his desire, to achieve what he *thinks* he wants. But that's off balance, because he's generally acting on all the information while utilizing only half of his resources. Emotions make us stop and think, sometimes for too long, but sometimes just long enough. There has been proof that our emotions are linked to our thoughts, our instincts.

Most men, especially those in high stress situations, are taught to ignore their emotions. Research from author Malcolm Gladwell, in his book *Blink*, confirms this. Mistakes are made too often when the human mind tries to operate slower than it should. People die, wars are lost and won, a tide changes in favor of someone.

The mantra often preached (especially in the military) is that “Emotions will get you killed.” Probably true for many. The Male Mind is a powerful tool, just as is the Female Mind; yet the difference is in what’s processed, and what each gender *focuses* on. Again, the background of your character helps set this tone for his Being when we meet him.

A better mantra for our heroes is that “Emotion is Weakness.” This doesn’t mean our characters are stolid all the time, and lack depth; rather, it means we get to write them to be the bad boy, best friend, etc until a point is reached where they *must* change.

A lot of this sounds like typical writing class, doesn’t

it? It is. It's writer's common sense.

At the end of our romances, we want (traditionally) a HEA. Right? Or perhaps our Happily For Now, but we at least want all our loose ends tied up, with the exception of the one loose end that leads us into the next book, if we're writing a series. That would mean bringing the Hero around full circle. He starts with just instinct, distrust, action-driven by his Goal, and ends up with sharper instincts and a sense of trust toward the heroine, and a renewed, stronger focus toward getting what he really wants. (The Heroine in our stories is traditionally led by her emotions and is emotionally driven, even if she's in a high stress situation such as a military action. No amount of brainwashing can undo DNA wiring.)

## **FATAL FLAW**

The positive and negative traits in our Hero are no different than with our Heroine. Many Heroes are loyal to a fault, while others are, shall we say, crafty? Still others have negative traits, such as an insatiable lust for women. (Clouded judgment.)

The negative trait could be an extension of the Fatal Flaw, but why not make it something different as to give our hero more depth?

That Fatal Flaw is usually going to be the ONE THING designed in your story's plot to bring the Hero to a standstill *in his present way of being*.

When dealing with our character's epiphany, we need to figure out what the tape in our Hero's head is, and how our heroine is going to change it. The Fatal Flaw, in conjunction with the Heroine, will force him to grow.

The next lesson will be relatively short, but will deal with Feeling the Story from your Hero's POV. We've talked enough about his state of mind, emotional behavior and limiting beliefs by now that you should be familiar with how he thinks and how he would react, so that writing him is easier. But we're still not finished, if we have to write the entire novel in his POV.

