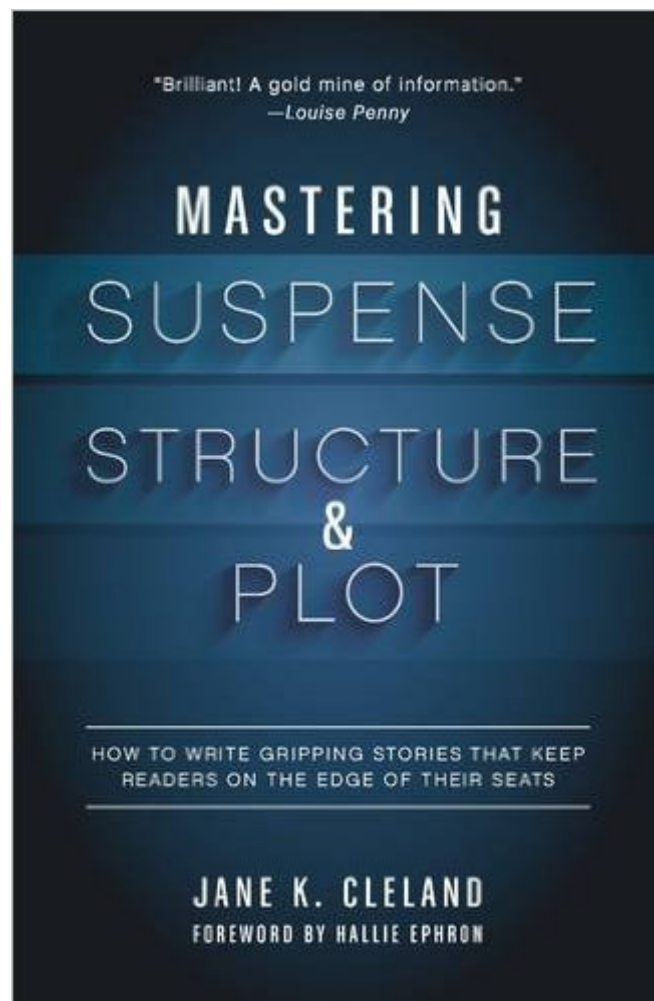


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# Mastering Suspense, Structure, And Plot: How To Write Gripping Stories That Keep Readers On The Edge Of Their Seats



## Synopsis

Enthrall Your Readers! Suspense is one of the most powerful tools a writer has for captivating readers--but it isn't just for thrillers. From mainstream fiction to memoir, suspense creates the emotional tension that keeps readers on the edge of their seats. *Mastering Suspense, Structure, & Plot* is your hands-on guide to weaving suspense into your narrative. Award-winning author Jane K. Cleland teaches you how to navigate genre conventions, write for your audience, and build gripping tension to craft an irresistible page-turner. Inside, Cleland will show you how to: Implement thirteen no-fail techniques to construct an effective plot and structure for your story Use Cleland's Plotting Road Map to add elements of suspense like twists, reversals, and moments of danger Write subplots with purpose Improve your descriptions, character development, sentence structure, and more Packed with case studies, exercises, and dozens of examples from best-selling authors, *Mastering Suspense, Structure, & Plot* is the key to writing suspenseful, engaging stories that leave your readers wanting more. ----- "Indispensable! For newbie authors and veterans alike, this terrific how-to is your new go-to. Don't write your book without it--it's a treasure." --Hank Phillippi Ryan, Agatha, Anthony, Macavity and Mary Higgins Clark award-winning author

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## Customer Reviews

Every time I think of Jane Cleland's book, *Mastering Suspense*, I envision the famous showdown between Darth Vader and Obi-Wan during Star Wars: A New Hope. It's a legendary scene of dark vs. light; student vs. teacher. Upon seeing Obi-Wan for the first time in decades, Vader says: "I've been waiting for you, Obi-Wan. We meet

again, at last. The circle is now complete. When I left you, I was but the learner; now I am the master. After reading this book, I feel a little bit like Darth Vader in that duel. Well-taught, empowered, and confident. But hopefully with a little less arrogance and a happier ending in store. I've had the pleasure of personally learning under Jane's mentorship at my MFA program, an experience I esteem highly and cherish greatly. This book is a bit like that: a personal mentorship. Here, Jane has divulged actionable methods for creating better works of writing. This isn't a book just for mystery writers. She wrote with a wide audience in mind. Whether you're a memoirist, a historian, or a novelist, you'll see suspense in a new light. Even better, Jane has provided a masterful process by which you can incorporate suspense into your writing. My favorite sections included exercises you can employ to deepen your knowledge (of characters), expand your settings (and use them to create suspense), and explore nuances regarding betrayal and confusion. Like Alfred Hitchcock once said, surprise is cheap "anyone can do it" but suspense? Suspense is what keeps readers on the edge of their seats.

I have read a lot of how to writing books and this one is in the top seven or eight. Well written, with the added bonus of deconstructed examples, she doesn't just tell you how to build suspense...she shows you. After reading, I applied her methods to the outline of a new novel. Not only was it easy to see where the plot might lag, it helped raise questions that needed answers. Well done.

In between books I write I try to read a book on writing. I saw this in a bookstore and rather than go online to buy a Kindle copy, I bought the paperback. I knew I'd want to make marginal notes. Cleland's book is an excellent presentation of key elements to building suspense and aligning the plot with rising tension. The author uses dozens of examples, including many where "suspense" has nothing to do with action or mysteries. I highly recommend this book.

This book is chock full of great advice on perfecting your writing. Each chapter is focused and succinct. The exercises are valuable and illustrative. I already had my novel written when I read this book. Now I have to revise it into the novel I thought I wrote, but didn't. Cleland's book will take me there.

This is the best writing book I've ever read, not just in 2016. Believe me, I have read most! A big thank you to Jane Cleland for her gift of showing other writers what they are missing. Thorough explanations, great examples, and interactive exercises. This goes beyond the basics and touches

on the core of great writing. Treat yourself to this book.

In deed the best book for inexperienced writers, or for the ones that have novel-ideas and can write, but have no clue how to captivate the readers with the appropriate pace of adding drama or certain moments in certain places of the book. I will for sure read it a second time, so I can summarize all the lessons. Thank you, Jane!

I was hoping for something like Story Engineering, by Larry Brooks or Trough of Hell by H.R D'Costa or Structuring Your Novel by K.M. Weiland, but it didn't quite get there. It was well written and well edited, but too much of the book read like an infomercial for the Author who used her own writings for many or most of the examples. It had some good information, but it often did not clearly explain what the Author was trying to get across.

Beginning writers should not lift a pen until they've finished Jane's wonderful class.

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