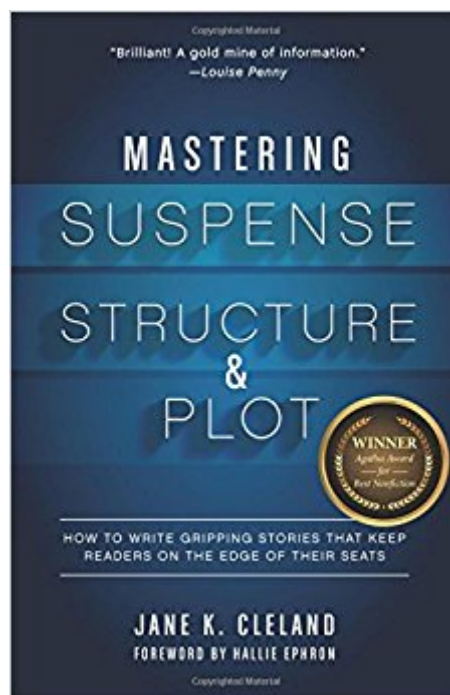




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Mastering Suspense, Structure, And Plot: How To Write Gripping Stories That Keep Readers On The Edge Of Their Seats



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

"Award-winning author Jane Cleland has crafted an insightful and entertaining page-turner about crafting page-turners. *Mastering Suspense, Structure, & Plot* belongs on every writer's shelf." --Wendy Corsi Staub, New York Times best-selling author "Unputdownably 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 "Masterful! I love this book. Oh, how I wish I'd had it when I was struggling with my first crime novel. This is a gold mine of information, of insight on how to structure and pace the novel. Brilliant. And even as I write my current book I find myself reflecting on her insights, and using them. This isn't about being formulaic. It's about first understanding the structure, and then making it your own. Mastering Suspense, Structure, & Plot is an absolutely extraordinary resource for anyone serious about writing not just a crime novel, but any book. --Louise Penny, #1 New York Times best-selling author "Jane Cleland had drawn a detailed road map for navigating the suspense-writing journey. In a well-thought-out and artfully constructed way, she concisely covers it all. I wish I had read Mastering Suspense, Structure, & Plot before I ever started writing mysteries, but I sure am glad to have this book now." --Mary Jane Clark, New York Times best-selling author "Leave it to Jane Cleland, the reigning queen of the traditional mystery, to reveal the secrets of suspense--and to take the sweat out of writing today's hottest genre!" --Paula Munier, senior literary agent at Talcott Notch Literary Agency and author of Plot Perfect

Jane K. Cleland writes the multiple award-winning Josie Prescott Antiques Mystery series (St. Martin's Minotaur). The ninth in the series, which is often reviewed as an Antiques Roadshow for mystery fans, BLOOD RUBIES, will be published in December 2014. Library Journal named the first in the series, CONSIGNED TO DEATH, a "core title" for librarians looking to build a cozy collection, one of only 22 titles listed, along with books by Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers. "Josie" stories have also appeared in Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine (AHMM). The novella, "Booked for Death," is slotted for publication in the January 2015 issue of AHMM. In addition, Jane has published four nonfiction books, most recently Business Writing for Results (originally published by McGraw Hill). Jane is well-established and well-respected in the global crime fiction writing community. She chairs the Black Orchid Novella Award, one of the Wolfe Pack's literary awards, granted in partnership with Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine. She is a past chapter president of the Mystery Writers of America, New York Chapter and served on the national board. Additionally, Jane is the host of the Writer's Room, a series of interviews with authors and industry professionals that appears on cable television and online (BronxNet). Jane has both an MFA (in professional and creative writing) and an MBA (in marketing and management). She's a member of the fulltime faculty of Lehman College, part of the City University of New York (CUNY) system, where she is also the Director of the Program for Professional Communications. She also mentors MFA students

in the Western Connecticut State University MFA in Creative and Professional Writing and facilitates writing workshops, including Aspiring Writer's Weekend and Memoir Writing, both sponsored by MIT/Endicott House. In addition, Jane is a frequent guest author at university writing programs, a featured presenter at major writing conferences, a much-loved facilitator at writing workshops, and a popular speaker at library and corporate events.

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.

Outstanding. Like taking a refresher course without leaving the comfort of your home. It is like several workshops condensed into one book. I highly recommend this book for any writer from fledgling novice to seasoned professional. like a breath of fresh air, it will clear out the cobwebs.

Jane Cleland's book uses lots of clear examples and has concrete suggestions for building a plot. While the book concentrates on plot and subplots (more on how to develop a subplot might have been good), she also offers helpful advice for revision and rewriting, especially with different points of view. Many of the excerpts she uses for illustration are quite contemporary, and they make her ideas crystal clear.

Truly an excellent writer's guide. Whether someone is just starting out or is a seasoned pro, Cleland's book offers numerous ideas and insights that will aid every writer in their efforts to complete their novel.

I'm in the process of writing a novel which will contain some suspense. The exercises in this book are perfect for finding areas that can be fixed, whether it's changing, "frightened" to "scared to death," or working on entire scenes with specific suggestions on how to build suspense. I know without a doubt that the final version of the novel I am writing will be light years ahead of where I would have been without these suggestions. Bob Kimball
robertkimball326@gmail.com
retired editor and publisher of two community newspapers.

Every time I think of Jane Cleland's book, I think "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.

A good overview and helpful to enhance your skills

This is a good book for writers. It contains much valuable information.

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