

Into the Fun Stuff Now

By Holly Lisle

Here's a little snippet from **How to Write Page-Turning Scenes**.

Here is an example of the simplest of all possible scenes. Omniscient narrator, no characters, no props, one change. (I have thrown in time, but could have done the scene without it and had the same result. I just happen to like light and dust motes.)

White wall, white ceiling, cold and stark and simple. And silence, nonbreathing silence, patient, without creaks or ticks or hums. Light, morning light came through that far window and cast squares of whiter white high up, and dust motes sparkled. And then a stain on the white ceiling, first pale, and then dark red like old roses, red that grew glossy, a little mar in the perfection. And then a drop. Red. Slid from the ceiling down the wall, a single jagged line that traced itself over textured paint, dancing, dancing, while the dust motes sparkled and the bright white squares of the morning sun tracked down the wall ahead of it.

It doesn't take a lot to build a compelling scene, to catch the attention, to make the reader shiver just a little and picture not just a corner of a wall with squares of light on it, but a body lying dead and still and punctured somewhere up above.

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