

Tiny Snippet of Page-Turning Scenes

written by Holly

April 14, 2008

By Holly Lisle

Got 3000 more words today. And I'm tossing in a bit I wrote on Internal Conflict for everyone to peek at. All the snippet copyright and no-quote rules apply.

Internal Conflict

Now we're showing more, hiding less. Internal conflict is the character's fight with himself over something he wants but can't have, has but doesn't want, or needs in spite of the fact that he cannot or will not or fears to get it. It can be done through description, internal or external dialogue, or action. The reader sees the moment of change, as well as the struggle leading up to it, and has some clue (as much as you care to share) about why it's important.

Showing internal conflict in a scene does not necessarily involve internal dialogue—that is, one character alone, sitting still, thinking about things. Internal dialogue is what many writers first think of when they think of internal conflict, though. Unfortunately, writing a character sitting still and thinking and making this interesting is one of the hardest things to do well when writing, so a lot of bad scenes happen when inexperienced writers collide with internal conflict.

- **CRITICAL POINT:** Remember that Internal Conflict and Internal Dialogue are NOT the same thing!

Contents © Holly Lisle. <https://hollylisle.com> All Rights Reserved