

Novella-ficious

**A TASTY
LITERARY TREAT**

Megan Mayfair

A little **ABOUT ME**

Megan Mayfair is a USA Today bestselling author of fiction with a dash of mystery, a sprinkling of humour and a spoonful of romance. Her books have won awards including the Romance Writers of Australia Romantic Book of the Year (RuBY), the Romance Writers of New Zealand Koru Award of Excellence and the Australian Romance Readers Association Award for favourite romantic suspense novel.



Megan Mayfair
Author

TODAY'S SESSION

- 01** WHERE ARE WE AT?
- 02** DEFINING THE NOVELLA
- 03** HOW TO USE NOVELLAS
- 04** STRUCTURING
- 05** LET'S GET PLOTTING
- 06** WRITING TIPS
- 07** EDITING TIPS
- 08** REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Novellas

CHECK IN

WHAT IS A NOVELLA?

From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance (1350 – 1600), Italian and French authors published collections of 70 to 100 tales and dubbed these individual stories novellas.

Author Henry James used the term novella for **a story that was longer and more complex than a short story, but shorter than a novel.**

Breakfast at Tiffany's
Truman Capote, 26k words

Albert Camus
The Stranger, 37k words

A Christmas Carol
Charles Dickens, 28k words

Animal Farm
George Orwell, 30k words

Considerations

- Length required for box sets or collaborations. Check requirements with coordinators.
- Word counts for competitions. Always confirm details before entry.
- Recognition amongst readers. May know what a novella is but not a novelette.
- Suitable length for the story **you want to tell.**



> 7K

Short story

7K-17.5K

Novelette

17.5-40K

Novella

40K +

Novel

HOW TO USE NOVELLAS

- Standalone story
- Collaborate on an anthology or box set
- Prequel to series
- Extended epilogue
- Bridge a gap in a series
- Venture into a new genre or style
- Lead magnet
- Enter competitions
- Reader bonus
- For ideas that don't fit a full length-novel
- Demanding side characters
- For pure fun
- For writer's block.

Novellas **WORK HARD**

Small books. Big return.

01

Work it

One book, many uses.

02

Publish it

Build a series, extend a world, gain publishing experience.

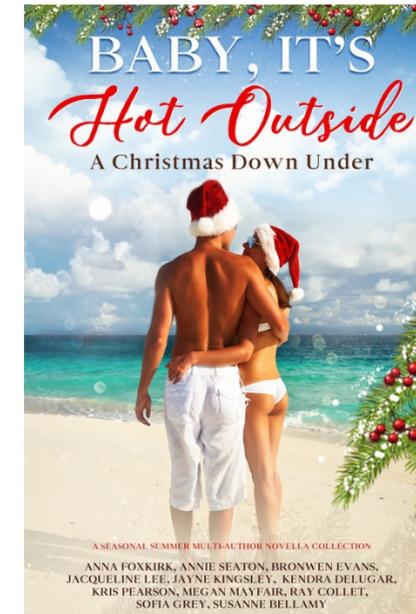
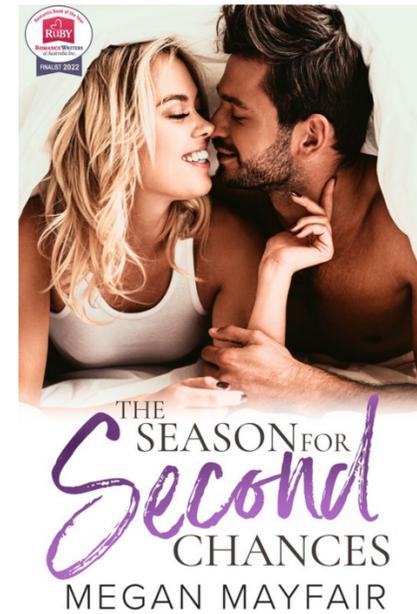
03

Market it

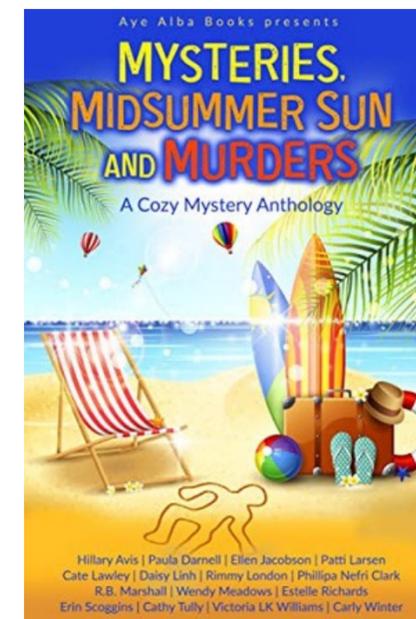
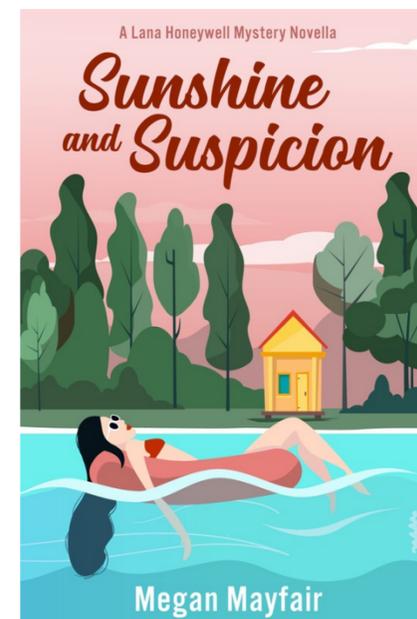
Use novellas to enhance your brand and marketing impact.

Work it

Write a novella? Make it work, baby.



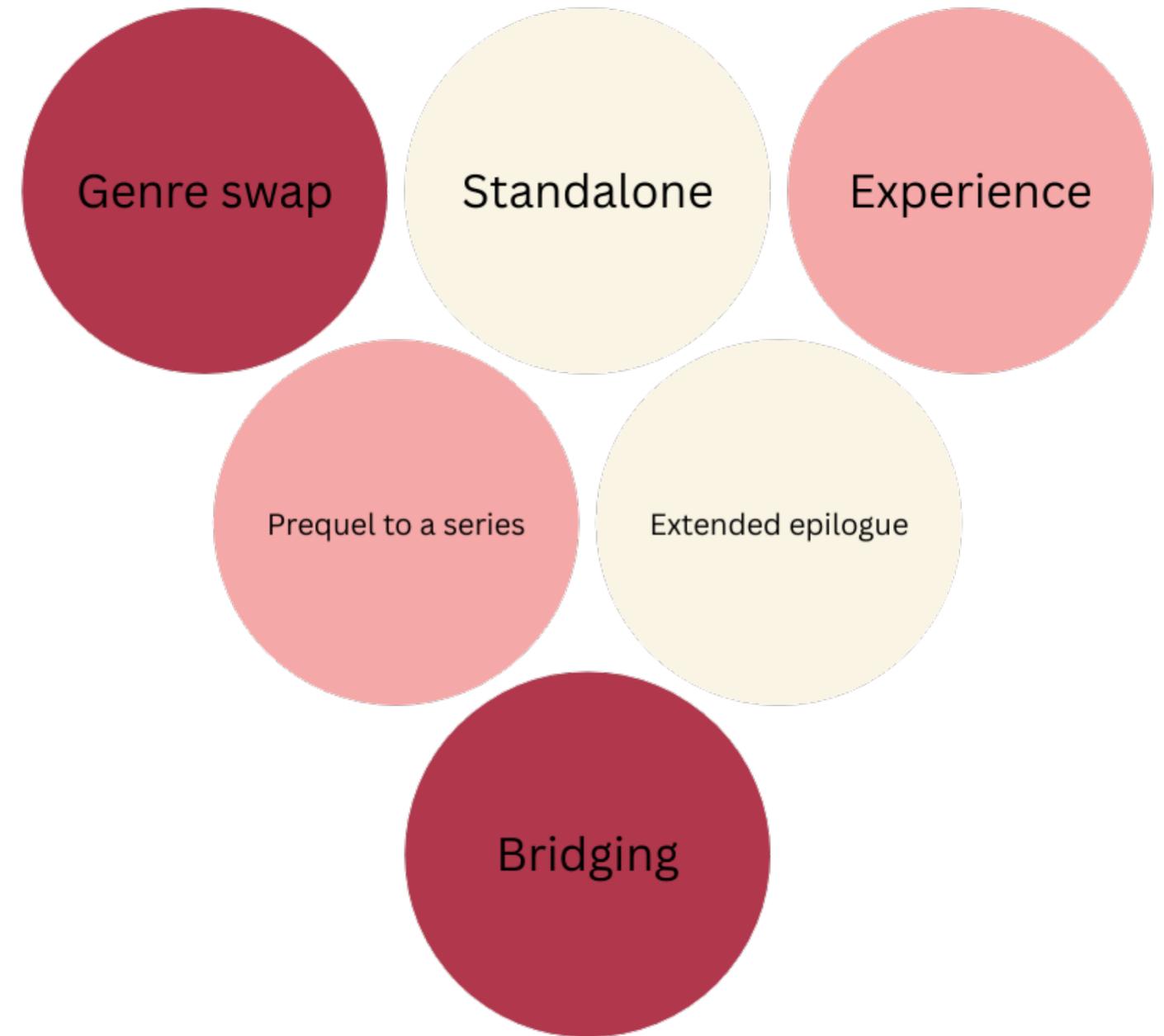
Collaboration + award finalist + bonus read



Collaboration + USA Today bestseller + free series starter

Publish it

Novellas can enhance your publishing schedule and be a win for you and your readers.



- Series starter
- Draw people into the series without committing to a series
- Bonus for readers who loved the book
- Great giveaway/freebie
- Fantastic lead magnet for newsletter sign ups
- Great for world building.

BOOK 0.5



Better Than Before

by Lynn Painter 

★★★★★ 4.19 • 5,771 Ratings • 1,051 Reviews • published 2023 • 1 edition

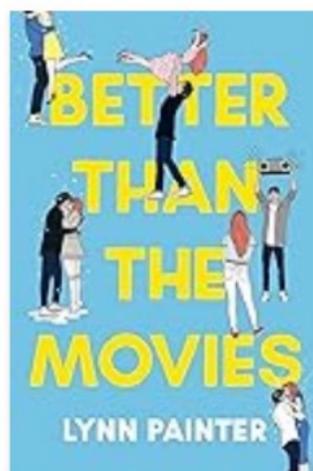
Lynn Painter's Better Than the Movies collides wit... [More](#)

Want to Read



Rate it: ★★★★★

BOOK 1



Better than the Movies

by Lynn Painter 

★★★★★ 4.29 • 442,013 Ratings • 73,665 Reviews • published 2021 • 49 editions

In this rom-com about rom-coms, in the spirit of K... [More](#)

Want to Read

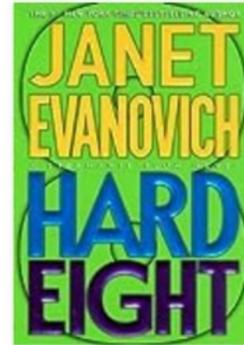


Rate it: ★★★★★



- Bonus for readers
- Works well with a theme (e.g Christmas)
- Great giveaway/freebie
- Excellent back matter
- Lead magnet.

BOOK 8



Hard Eight

by Janet Evanovich 

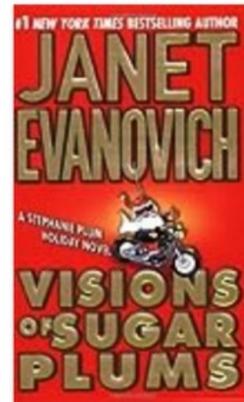
★★★★★ 4.17 • 126,860 Ratings • 2,620 Reviews • published 2002 • 73 editions

Fugitive Apprehension Agent Stephanie Plum has a b... [More](#)

Want to Read 

Rate it: ★★★★★

BOOK 8.5



Visions of Sugar Plums

by Janet Evanovich 

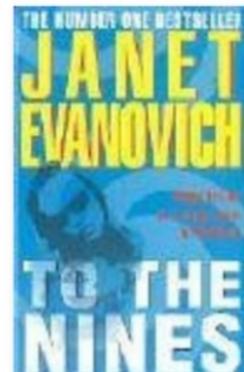
★★★★★ 3.72 • 81,469 Ratings • 2,209 Reviews • published 2002 • 3 editions

**A Stephanie Plum "In Between the Numbers" Christ... [More](#)

Want to Read 

Rate it: ★★★★★

BOOK 9



To the Nines

by Janet Evanovich 

★★★★★ 4.16 • 121,707 Ratings • 2,439 Reviews • published 2003 • 63 editions

Stephanie Plum's got rent to pay, people shooting ... [More](#)

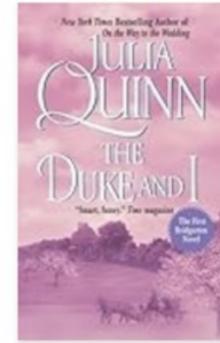
Want to Read 

Rate it: ★★★★★



- Bonus for readers
- Can respond to readers
- Can keep readers invested between novels
- Great promotional opportunity
- Effective back-matter
- Lead magnet.

BOOK 1



The Duke and I

by Julia Quinn

★★★★☆ 3.80 • 582,414 Ratings • 44,560 Reviews • published 2000 • 200 editions

Librarian note: See alternate cover editions [here ...](#) [More](#)

Want to Read

Rate it: ★★★★★

BOOK 1.5



The Duke and I: The 2nd Epilogue

by Julia Quinn

★★★★☆ 3.76 • 20,546 Ratings • 1,041 Reviews • published 2006 • 6 editions

This second epilogue shows Daphne and Simon at mid... [More](#)

Want to Read

Rate it: ★★★★★

BOOK 2



The Viscount Who Loved Me

by Julia Quinn

★★★★★ 4.00 • 413,084 Ratings • 32,607 Reviews • published 2000 • 200 editions

1814 promises to be another eventful season, but n... [More](#)

Want to Read

Rate it: ★★★★★

BOOK 2.5



The Viscount Who Loved Me: The 2nd Epilogue

by Julia Quinn

★★★★☆ 3.91 • 22,687 Ratings • 1,018 Reviews • published 2006 • 15 editions

Fifteen years have passed, but the Bridgertons are... [More](#)

Want to Read

Rate it: ★★★★★

Market it

Novellas can support marketing, promotion and collaboration.

Romance Writers of AUSTRALIA



Ruby Award NOVELLA

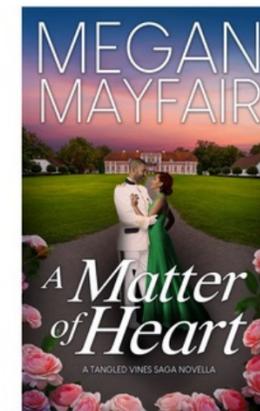
Ann Penny – Daisies and Desires
Catherine Bilson – The Bride Said No
Dani McLean – A Missing Connection
Stella Quinn – A Cattle Dog for Christmas



Megan Mayfair

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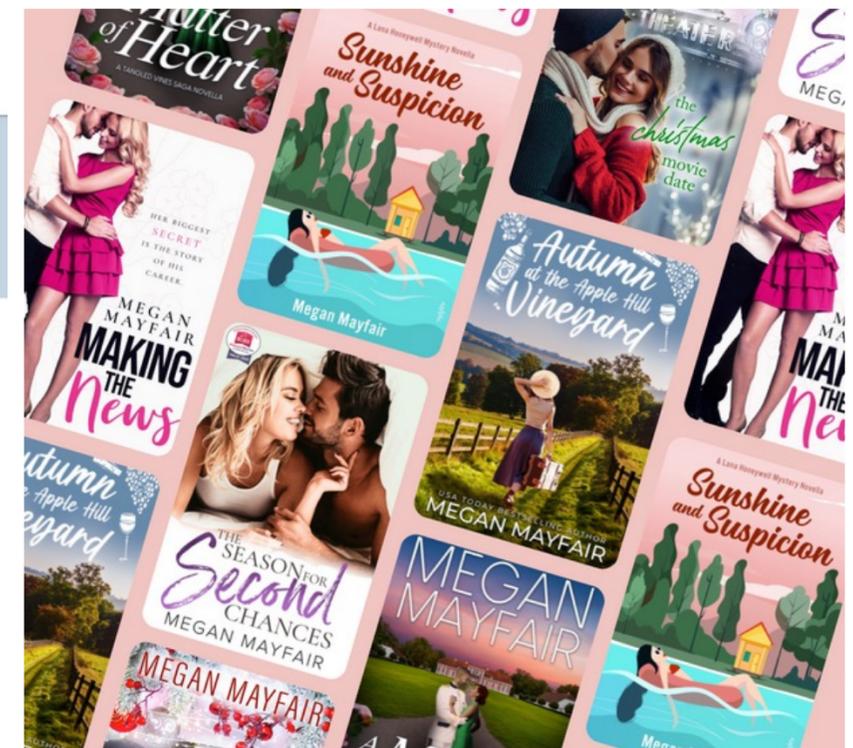


Jill McMahon is a successful novelist, who having been burned by matters of love in the past, is more than content with her own company.

Elliott Novak, a Commander in the Australian Navy, is married to his job. His passion for his military life has cost him dearly, but still, he wonders if a relationship is possible.

When Jill and Elliott meet on the eve of his posting overseas, sparks fly. As the months pass, can they manage to make things work, or will greater matters of the heart force them apart?

This novelette is part of the Tangled Vines series by award-winning author Megan Mayfair and can be read as a standalone romance, or before or after reading [Tangled Vines](#) (Tangled Vines Saga Book One) or [The Problem with Perfect](#) (Tangled Vines Saga Book Two) or [A Spoonful of Sugar](#) (Tangled Vines Saga Book Three).



Structuring A NOVELLA

A novella is a condensed book. Structuring is critical to keep the pace and focus on the plot.

01

Beat sheets

There are lots of places to look for ways to support your structure.

02

Mapping the action

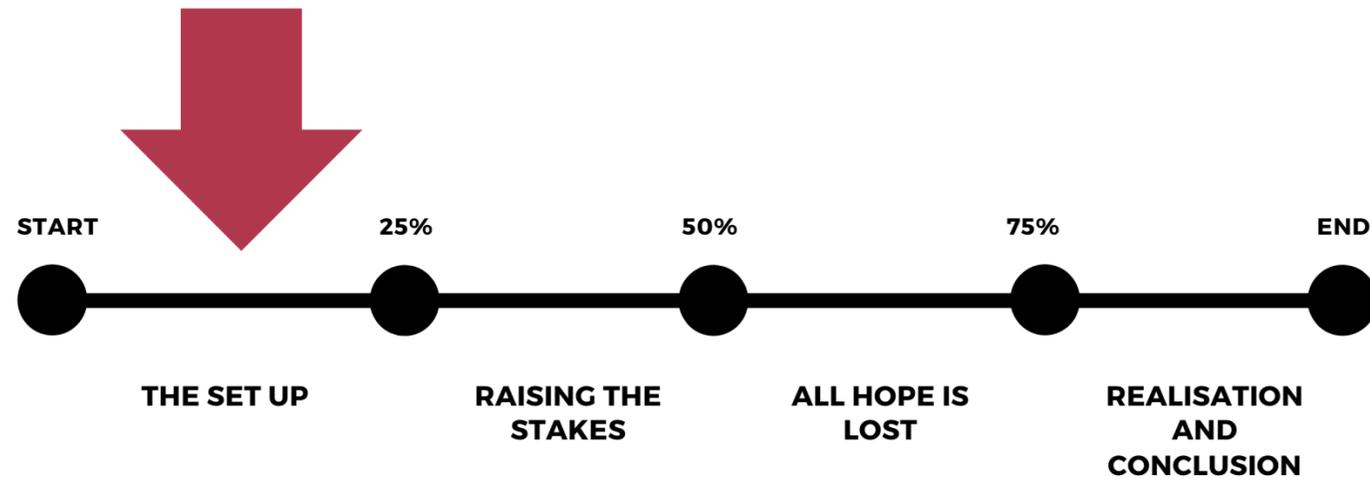
Let's look at a simple 4 act structure for a romance novella.

03

Break it down

Let's write an enemies-to-lovers rom com novella!

Quarter ONE



A simple 4 beats is a good place to start, but let's flesh it out further with romance in mind.

Let's start with the first 25% of the novella and introduce our characters and what internal and external motivators will mean that the reader **MUST** follow their story.

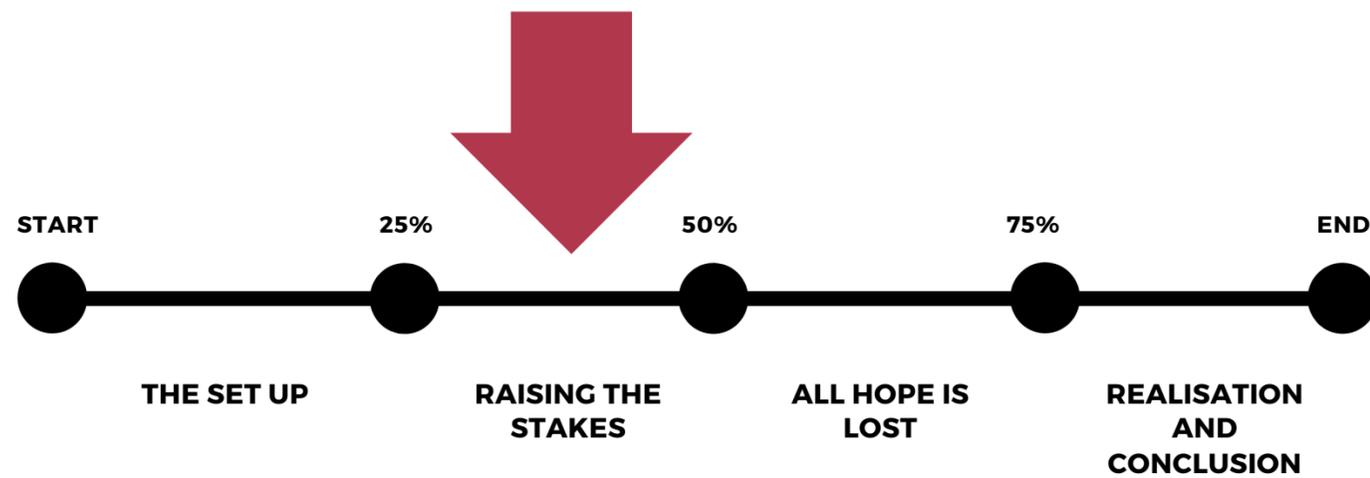


- Who are our characters?
- What motivates them?
- Where are they at when they meet each other?



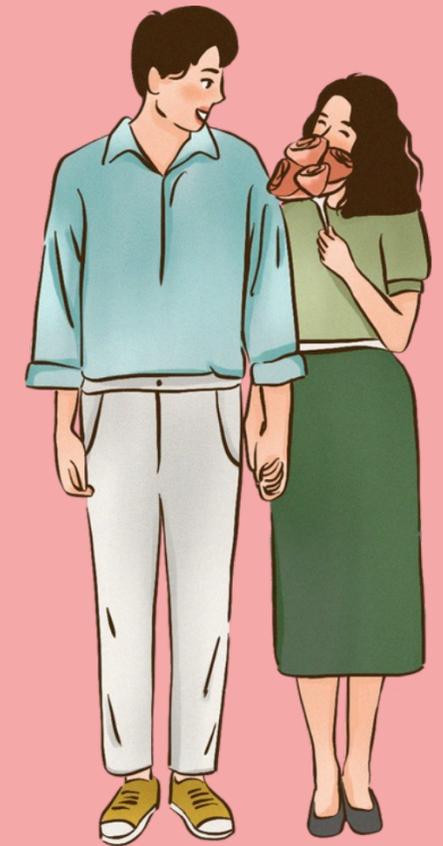
- What **external** factors might bring them together?
- What **internal** factors might mean they are attracted or repelled from each other?
- Why do they continue to interact?

Quarter TWO



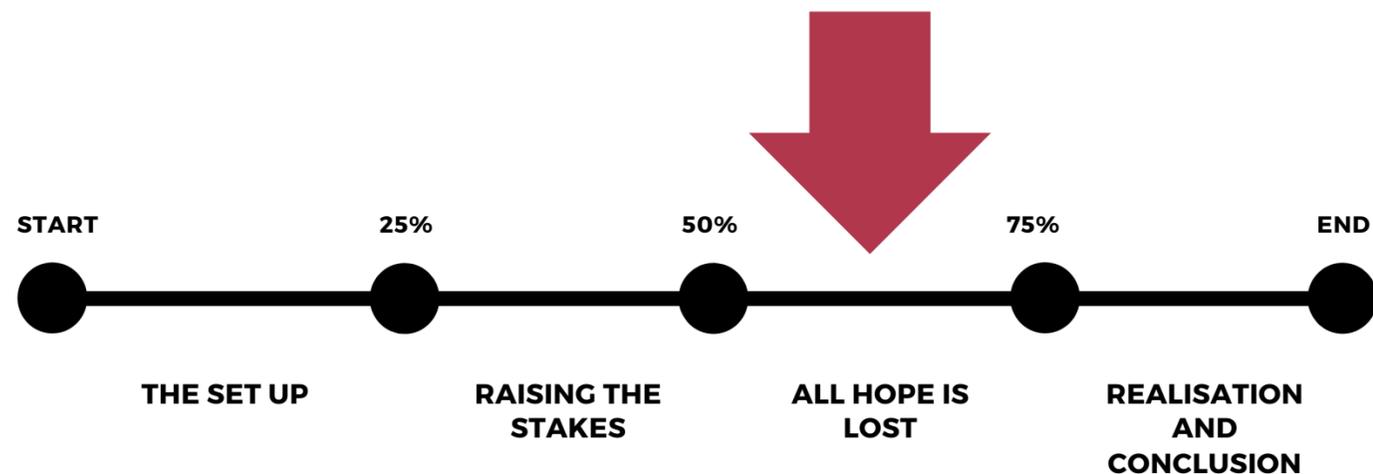
Now, let's move towards the 50% mark. This is where we are going to raise the stakes! Despite their intentions, they are falling in love.

- What is the problem here? Why can't they be together?
- Despite the problem, they are finding reasons to wonder if this can work in same way.



- Things are clicking.
- Relationship might move forward here - emotionally and/or physically.

Quarter THREE



We've reached the point of no return, the stakes are high and external and internal conflicts emerge to throw us to the point where all hope is lost.

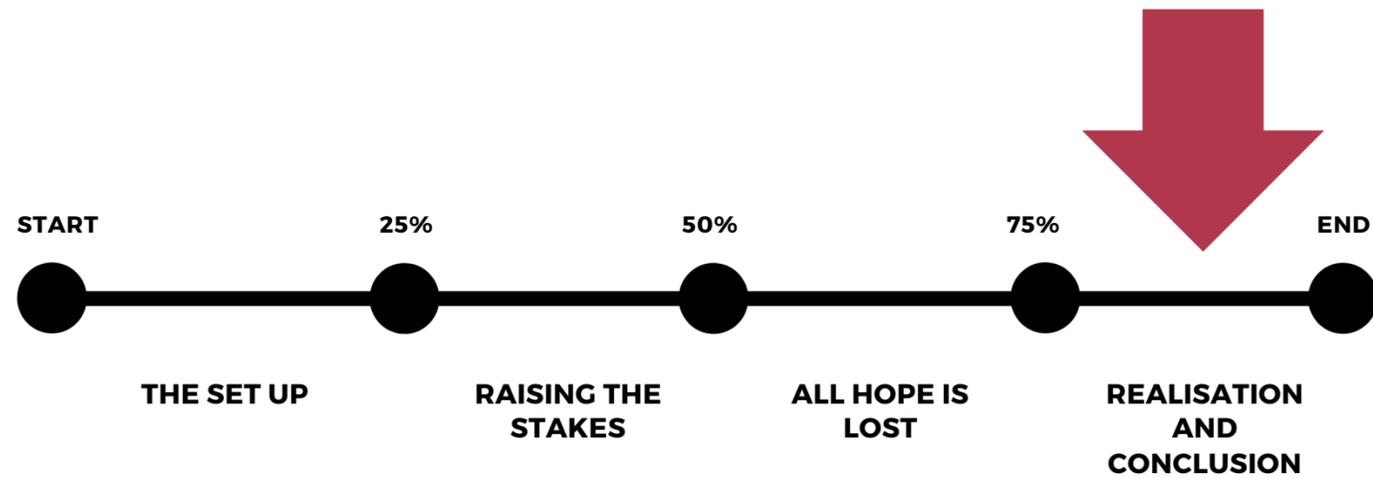


- External factors intensify.
- Internal factors come to the surface.

- Everything falls apart.
- Worst fears are realised.
- Retreating back to thoughts we saw at the start of the story.



Quarter FOUR



We're in a bleak place but as we move towards 100%, we overcome our hurdles and build our happily ever after (or happy for now!).

- Rock bottom.
- Dark night of the soul
- What needs to change?
Are they willing to take a risk or a chance?

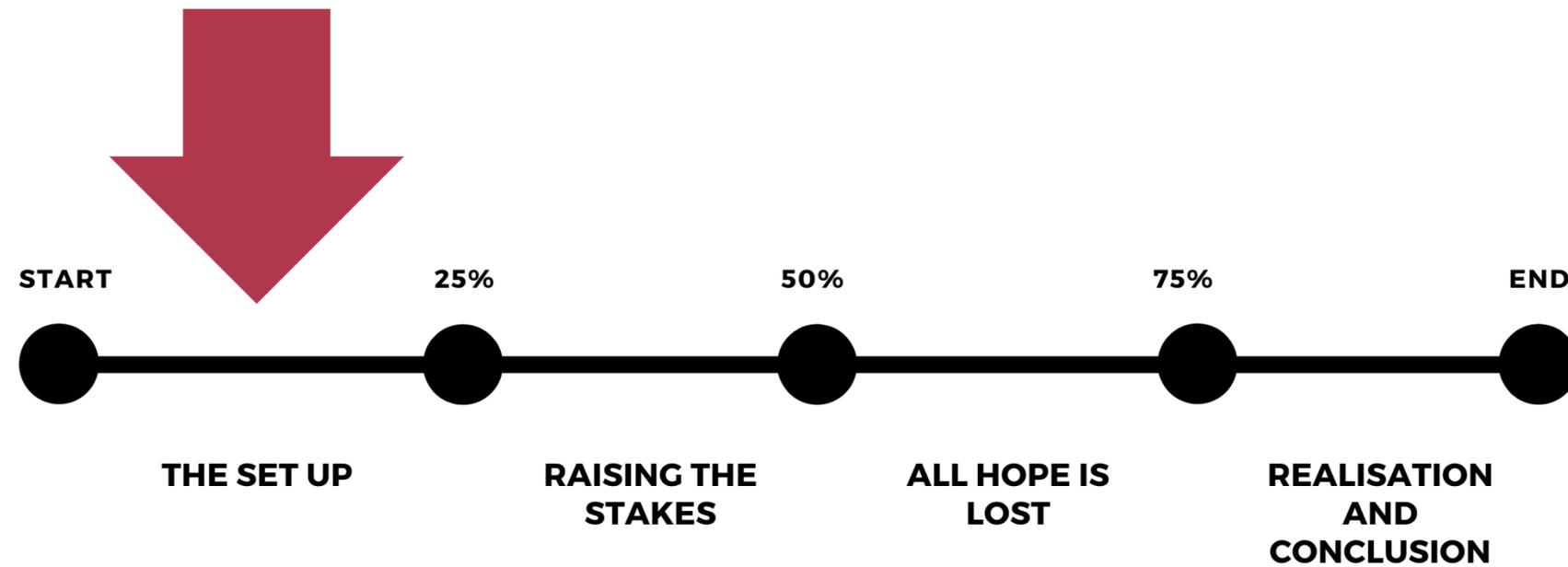


- Grand gesture.
- Happy ever after or happy for now.

LET'S PLOT!

Let's use this structure to plot out an enemies-to-lovers rom com novella.





Who are these characters?

Simone is a real estate agent, hoping for a big promotion at the agency she has worked for years. She's prioritised work since the love of her life dumped her.

Glen has just been hired at Simone's agency and is an industry 'rising star' with a reputation for big sales. He's been assured of a future at his new agency. He's always trying to prove himself to his successful parents.

What external factors will bring them together (meet cute) and then what internal factors will cause tension?

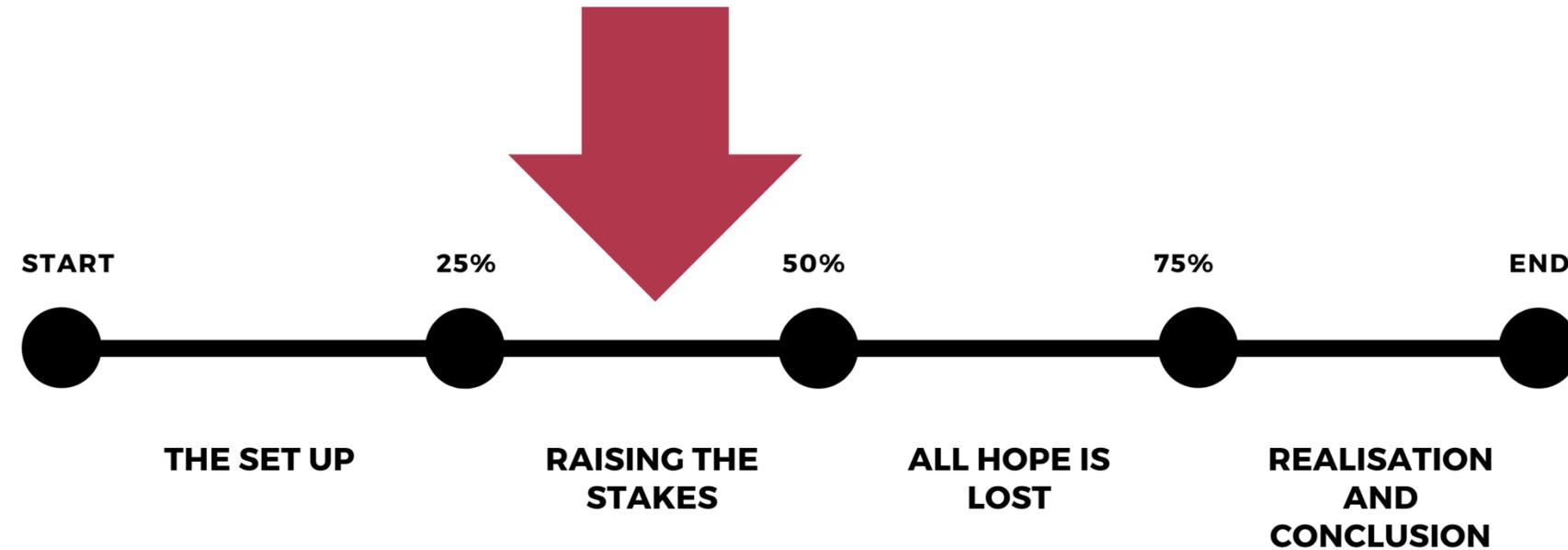
A mix-up in the office means Glen and Simone arrive at the same home for an evaluation and to secure the listing. It's a multimillion-dollar home owned by an eccentric television star and both want the account.

Loving their chemistry and energy, the television star wants them on the account to sell the house together. Each believes getting the sale will win them the promotion so they agree but both start to formulate how to bring in the winning bidder.

MEET GLEN AND SIMONE...

Netflix, take note!





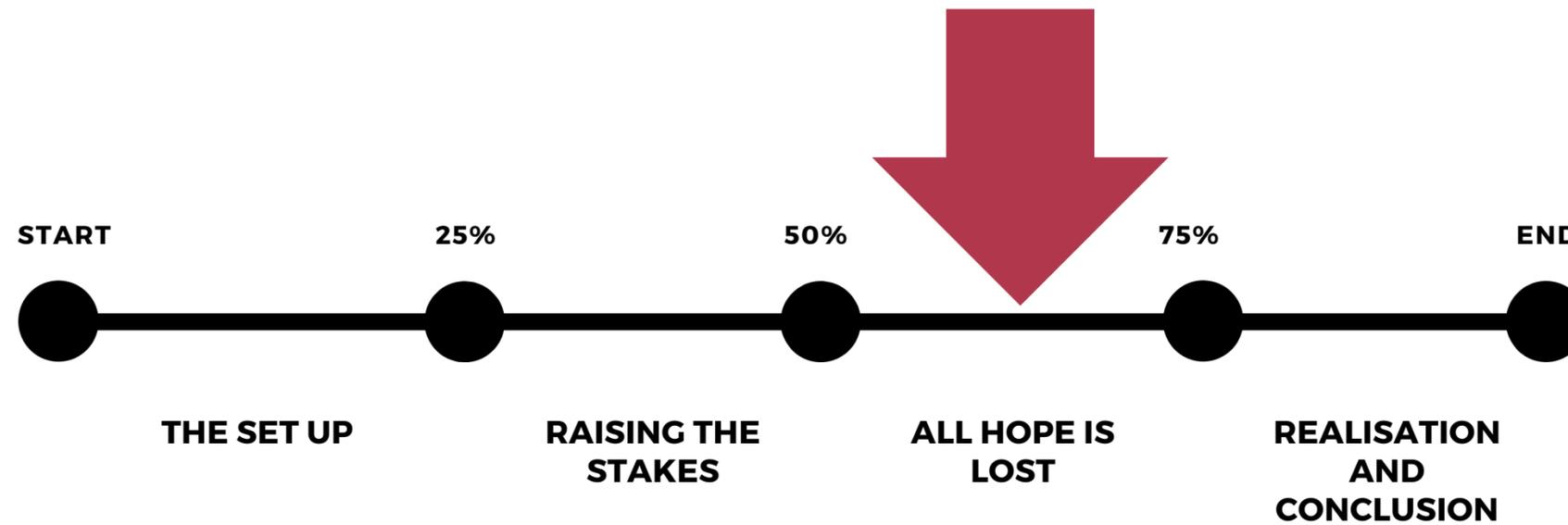
They get to know each other. Maybe there is something here...

Glen and Simone annoy the heck of each other. Simone doesn't like the way Glen operates and he dislikes the fact she thinks the promotion is all hers. The eccentric star entrusts them with his much-loved dog during an open inspection, but when the dog goes missing on their watch, they must work together to find it. Glen dives into the pool to rescue the dog, and Simone can't help but find Glen attractive.

Okay, we're falling.

The star hosts a lavish party at the house. Both are invited to attend and do so in the hope of it being an opportunity to connect with potential buyers.

But they get stuck together on the roof when trying to get a video of the view of the fireworks, missing the party but as they talk, they realise they have more in common than they thought. There is an emotional and physical connection.



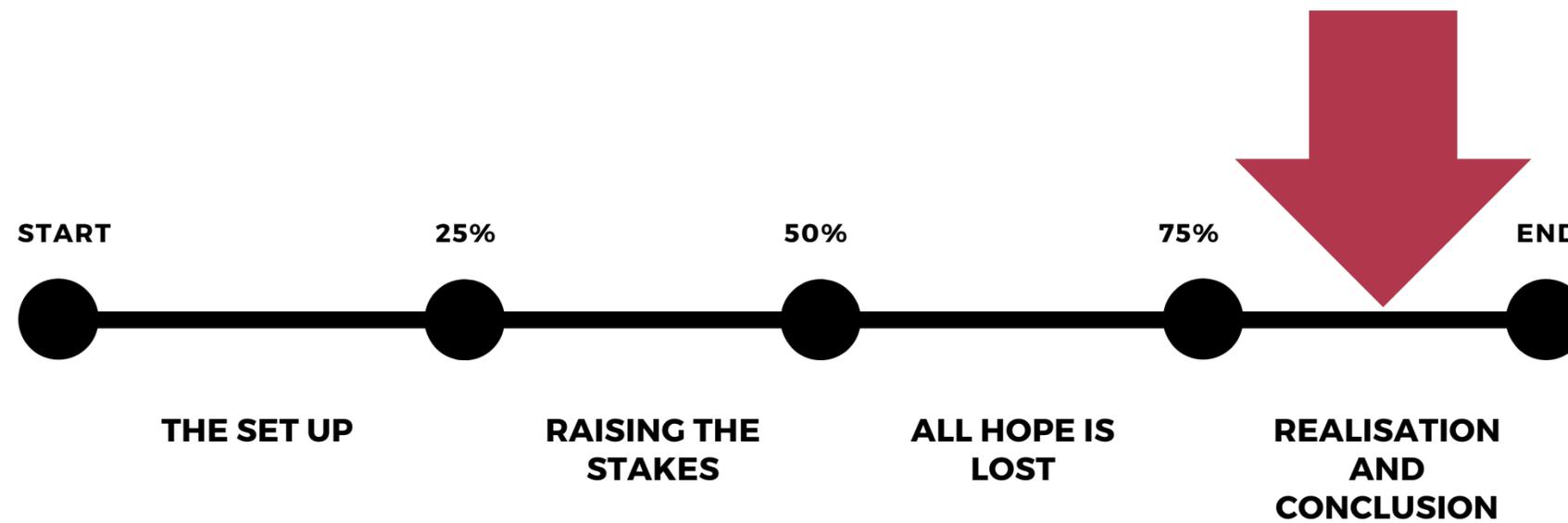
Internal and external pressures increase

They are falling in love, but pressures are increasing. As a favour to his parents, Glen asks the television star about a beach property he is selling. Simone thinks he is trying to get an account behind her back. Simone had sworn off love for a reason. She let her guard down and trusted Glen. She pulls away from Glen.

Fight or flight

The house is sold for a record price, and it was Simone's buyer who came through. Glen is happy for Simone but down that he couldn't close the deal and failed to live up to expectations like he has all his life.

Despite this, Glen is offered the promotion.



There's some thinking to do

Simone resigns and is lost. She worked hard to fill a gap in her life caused by her break up but it didn't work. She's had her heart broken all over again. How will she pick up the pieces?

Glen has won the promotion and his family's praise but it's a hollow victory. He's lost Simone. How can he make this right?

Happy ever after (or for now)

Glen turns down the promotion and resigns. He convinces the television star to invite her for a drink to celebrate the sale and give him the listing for the beach house. He approaches Simone and makes things right but given their teamwork, suggests they start an agency together with the beach house being their first sale and she takes the lead as she is the better salesperson. They declare their true feelings! Yay!

Writing TIPS

We have our structure, let's get writing but what should we keep in mind!



Pick up the pace!



Try to stay in the same time and place (think like a sitcom writer, limit locations)



Keep the number and role of side characters under control



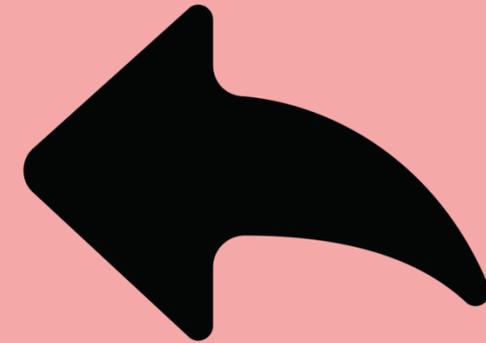
Limited subplots: aim for a single line of conflict

Editing TIPS

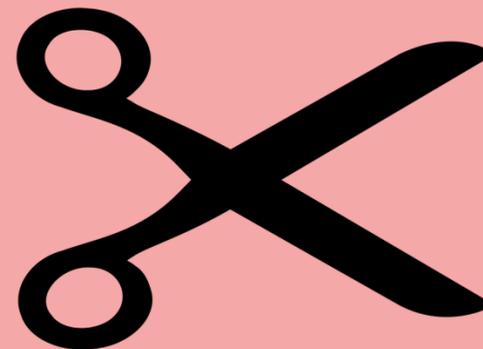
Keep this in mind when editing your novella.



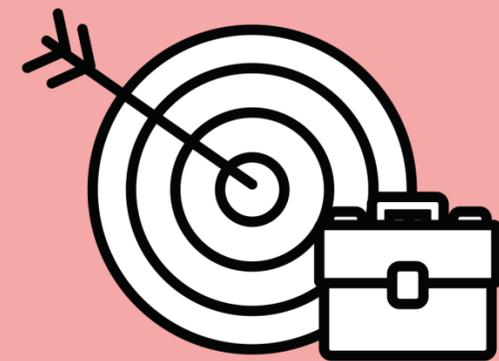
Don't cut corners. Make the rounds!



Reverse plotting



Sharpen, trim and streamline



Get professional advice

Further READING

There are lots of great resources to help write an excellent novella. Here are a few I've borrowed from to develop my structure.

Romancing the Beat

STORY STRUCTURE
FOR ROMANCE NOVELS



Gwen Hayes
★ HOW TO WRITE KISSING BOOKS ★

How To Write *Short Romance*



Nell Alexander

SAVE THE CAT!

The Last Book On Screenwriting That You'll Ever Need



BLAKE SNYDER

Thank you for the suggestion!

Thank you!



meganmayfair.com



[instagram.com/meganmayfairwrites](https://www.instagram.com/meganmayfairwrites)

Slides will be available at
meganmayfair.com/RWA24