



5 Editors Tackle the 12 Fatal Flaws of Fiction Writing (The Writer's Toolbox Series)

C. S. Lakin, Linda S. Clare, Christy Distler, Robin Patchen, Rachel Starr Thomson

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Don't fall victim to the 12 fatal flaws of fiction writing

Fiction writers often struggle to improve their craft

And the biggest challenge comes from the inability to see what isn't working. The prose feels off. The scene isn't gelling. The dialogue sounds stilted or clunky. But they don't know why or how to fix it.

This book lays it all out

5 Editors Tackle the Twelve Fatal Flaws of Fiction Writing demonstrates the deadly dozen pitfalls on the road to a strong story, along with revisions that show writers exactly how to avoid novel failure.

No other writing craft book offers such detailed instruction in how to spot and remedy the major flaws of fiction writing.

What makes this book an important addition to a writer's bookshelf?

- **More than 60 Before and After passages** showcase each of the twelve fatal flaws, which are then picked apart and examined to help writers spot these flaws in their own writing and fix them.
- **Five editors with extensive background** in both editing fiction and writing novels bring a wealth of insights, examples, and solutions to these flaws, using various genre styles and POVs.
- Each chapter ends with a **checklist** to help writers seek and destroy these fatal flaws in their manuscript, followed by **bonus Before and After passages** to help them test what they've learned.

This in-depth guide to self-editing is an invaluable resource for any writer of any genre. It *shows, not just tells*, how to write better fiction. Using it, you'll be armed with the tools and skills you need to conquer the twelve fatal flaws of fiction writing.

Here are some of the 12 fatal flaws:

- *Overwriting*—the most egregious and common flaw in fiction writing.
- *Nothin' Happenin'*—Too many stories take too long to get going. Learn what it means to start *in medias res*.
- *Weak Construction*—It sneaks in at the level of words and sentences, and rears up in up in the form of passive voice, *ing* verbs, and misplaced modifiers.
- *Too Much Backstory*—the bane of many manuscripts. Backstory has its place, but too often it serves as an

info dump and bogs down pacing.

- *POV Violations*—Head hopping, characters knowing things they can't know, and foreshadowing are just some of the many POV violations explored.
- *Telling instead of Showing*—Writers have heard this admonition, but there's a lot to understanding how and when to show instead of tell.
- *Lack of Pacing and Tension*—Many factors affect pacing and tension: clunky passages, mundane dialogue, unimportant information, and so much more.
- *Flawed Dialogue Construction*—Writers need to learn to balance speech and narrative tags and avoid “on the nose” speech.
- “*Underwriting*”—just as fatal as overwriting. Too often scenes are lacking the necessary actions, descriptions, and details needed to bring them to life.
- *Description Deficiencies and Excesses*—Learning how to balance description is challenging, and writers need to choose wisely just what to describe and in what way.

Don't be left in the dark. Learn what causes these flaws and apply the fixes in your own stories.

No one need suffer novel failure. You don't have to be brilliant or talented to write strong fiction. You just need to be forewarned and forearmed to be able to tackle these culprits. And this book will give you all the weapons and knowledge you need.

“*This book should be on every writer's bookshelf.*” —Cheryl Kaye Tardif, international best-selling author

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