

While you're planning the structure, the plot, and creating the characters and moving them along the rough path of a first draft, my strong suggestion is that you *feel* your way through it. Don't write it all from your head. Write it from your emotions. Your emotions count very high in this. They're the gold.

You're building your protagonists by this and that choice. You choose their flaws and strengths until you think they're ready to move through your story, helping you make the scenes happen as you see them. But first check the feelings, the depth of feelings.

If I have a scene where a wife is telling a husband she's met someone else, and she's leaving him, it's not just a question of dialogue and description. I could manage that on the surface, but I want to go deeper. I want to live it, so that the reader lives it, and that's what I do.

I *become* the wife and *feel* what she's feeling as she tells her husband she's in love with

another man, and then I do it again and go deeper. Try it now. Be a woman handing her husband that shattering news. Go ahead. Close your eyes and *be* her. Sink into the feelings, and when you're there, tell the man, say the words, and imagine it all, for real. Now close your eyes and be the husband hearing the news. Feel this as he hears the words. Feel what he feels. *Be* him, and go deep.

If a woman is being chased down a dark street by a man who means to harm her, go deep inside her and feel what she's feeling, experience it as truly as you can, and then *be* the man in pursuit, and go deep into the feelings of the pursuer. Go deeper. Take your time. And then write the scene from what you feel.

If you can write a moment from the inside, then you're much better armed to bring the reader inside with you, feeling what you feel, sharing the story with you on a deeper level, and entering into your dream.