

# Dramatic Writing Assignment 3: **Rising Conflict**

*Goal: Write a scene in which a conflict escalates gently.*

## Rules:

- there must be at least 2 characters in the scene
- the scene must start before the conflict
- by the end of the scene, the characters should be having an intense disagreement
- if it can be resolved in a way that makes sense, do so
- avoid jumping conflict: illogical leaps in intensity or anger that might be confusing
- avoid static conflict: discussion that doesn't move the conflict along
- the antagonists should be evenly matched psychologically
- each line should steadily raise the level of conflict between the characters

## ***A word about transition:***

*There is a large gap between life and death, with many transitions between. It's the same with friendship and murder. If you want to write a play about friends who end up on opposite sides of the law, it's important to show the transitions between.*

### **LIFE:**

birth → childhood  
childhood → adolescence  
adolescence → youth  
youth → adulthood  
adulthood → middle age  
middle age → old age  
old age → death

### **FRIENDSHIP:**

friendship → disappointment  
disappointment → annoyance  
annoyance → irritation  
irritation → anger  
anger → assault  
assault → threat  
threat → premeditation  
premeditation → murder

*from The Art of Dramatic Writing, p 203*

**“Action is not more important than the contributing factors which give rise to it.” - p132**

## **OPPOSITES THAT MIGHT INSPIRE CONFLICT:**

*(pp137-138)*

frugal — spendthrift  
moral — immoral  
dirty — immaculate  
optimistic — pessimistic  
gentle — ruthless  
faithful — fickle  
clever — stupid  
calm — violent  
cheerful — morbid  
healthy — hypochondriac  
humorous — humorless  
sensitive — insensitive  
dainty — vulgar  
naïve — worldly  
brave — cowardly

