

Dramatic Tensions

(There are 4 main ways to create dramatic tension)

1. Tension of Task – Characters are prevented from reaching their goal by a series of obstacles that build dramatic tension. In movies like "Cliff Hanger", "Speed", "Lord of the Rings" and the ship sinking scene in "Titanic" the tension is resolved when characters reach their goal or give up.

2. Tension of Relationships – The way characters' relate to each other creates dramatic tension in different ways.

- a) **Tension of Misunderstanding** – misunderstanding between characters creates tension which has to be resolved by the misunderstanding being cleared up or the relationship ending.
- b) **Tension of Intimacy** – occurs when we watch a scene that is so intimate that we feel like intruders in a special moment shared by two people.
- c) **Tension of Ceremonies** – ceremonies in themselves are dramatic events. Eg. weddings, funerals, the crowning of a king/queen.
- d) **Tension of Dilemmas** – tension is created when a character or characters has/have to make a difficult decision.
- e) **Tension of Personal Conflict** – arguments or disagreements between characters create dramatic tensions.

3. The Tension of Surprise

- 1) **The Shock of the Unexpected.** eg. a group of people visiting an old castle are shocked to see a ghost.
- 2) **The Shock of the Expected** eg. another victim of a serial killer is killed.

4. Tension of Mystery – when the cause of something is unknown it creates dramatic tension. Eg. The movies: "Signs", "The Village", "Unbreakable".