



Romance writing top tips from Corvus (part of Atlantic Books) and Lovereading.co.uk – with the help of some favourite screen romances!

1. **CONFLICT:**

If your hero and heroine are so perfect together, why aren't they ripping their clothes off on page 2? We should know that they're heading for a Happy Ever After, but that something major needs to change before that can happen.

Watch Fred Astaire burst into the 'No Strings' dance in the movie *Top Hat*.

2. **SHOW ME, DON'T TELL ME:**

Please don't explain the conflict to me. I should see it in dialogue, in body language, in what happens next. If you need to spell out that your hero can't fall in love with the heroine because he is a vampire and she isn't, then you're not doing your job properly.

Watch Cordelia and Wes pretend to be Angel and Buffy

3. **CHARACTER:**

If you don't love your hero or heroine, who's going to? You know them best, so make sure that, even at their worst, we like them! Even though Elizabeth doesn't like Mr Darcy, we're kind of intrigued and want to get to know him...

Watch Mr Darcy's first appearance in *Pride and Prejudice*

4. **SEXY TIMES:**

Don't have meaningless sex. As a general life rule, perhaps, but also in terms of conflict/character and plot. A kiss can sometimes tell the reader much more about your characters than dialogue – make sure that, if your characters are getting busy, your plot's moving forward.

Watch THE kiss in *Casablanca*

5. **CLICHE:**

Avoid them like the plague. You'll need to go back to the drawing board if you want to bring home the bacon... Actually, clichés are often clichés for a good reason: it's sometimes easier to relate if your hero and heroine do something natural, like meet in the office, even if things then take an unusual turn...

Watch the trailer for the hilarious film, *The Proposal*