**THE WHAT NEXT**

1. **FIND THE TURNING POINTS**

Your goal is to zero in on three turning point scenes that will yield the most story-specific info, the most potent grist for the mill, so that you can, indeed, begin your novel in medias res. You may come up with more than three, some of which you’ll dismiss out of hand, and others that you may decide to explore in addition to the three you’ll pick. That’s fine. Just remember the goal is to have at least three scenes so you can begin to see the escalating arc of your story. Sketch them out, being as specific as possible. Remember, the more specific you are, the more the scene comes into focus. Specifics play forward; generalities don’t.

1. **WRITING THE SCENES**

Start with the first of your three turning points, and write each scene in chronological order. Take a minute and reread your origin scene. Put yourself in your protagonist’s brain, see the world through their eyes. Now, turn those eyes toward the scenes you’re about to write. Aim for fully fleshed-out scenes. This might take a while, so have patience with yourself, and give yourself permission to take as long as you need to bring each scene to life. The good news is that the scenes do not have to be polished, or “beautifully” written. They just have to capture these escalating turning points in your protagonist’s life. Nailing them down is well worth it, because when you’re finished, you’ll be ready to ask the question that uninformed novelists often start with, much to their peril: Where does my novel begin?