

This article first appeared in the August 2013 edition of *Shorelines*, newsletter of the Long Island Romance Writers. This article may not be copied or reproduced without permission from the author.

## **Let's Get Intimate – The Middle Four Stages of Intimacy**

By Debora Dennis

Sexual tension and physical intimacy are two things that heat up the pages of a good romance novel. Whether you're writing a sweet inspirational or a book with no closed doors allowed...the trick is to know how to do it in a way that leaves the reader satisfied. And it's not as easy as a few kisses and then putting your characters in bed!

Last month we got your characters started with the first four stages. They noticed each other with eye to body, moved on to eye to eye, then voice to voice and finally we had contact with hand to hand!

Now it's time to get them closer!

Of course, the length of your story, the heat level you're writing and your characters will all dictate how fast or slow any of the stages last - the idea here is to know them and use them wisely to get the biggest emotional impact.

**Arm to Shoulder** - Remember being a teenager on a date at the movies and the arm sliding around your shoulders in one suave and casual move? Remember the tingle of excitement at the intimacy, or the boldness, of that move? This is the moment one character has taken the opportunity to move closer...we're invading personal space. Oh la la!

**Arm to Waist** - For me, this is NOT one to skimp on. This is a big moment. When the hero guides the heroine from a room, into a restaurant, through a crowd and possessively places his hand on the small of her back - yup, this is a MOMENT for me as the reader. This is all about what this implies, this is a physical move and one we can probably all go "aw" to when we see it. We all recognize this as an intimate act. Arm around the waist drawing him/her closer. Now we're turning up the heat!

**Mouth to Mouth** - Whether tentative or bold, daring and passionate, your characters are about to connect on a new level! Everything about the kiss is sensual. It's all about exploring, about claiming, about FEELING. This is a stage that we continually revisit, in fact, the kiss itself can go through stages of its own...from the simple peck to adding tongue to the moment your character is consumed by soul stirring emotions. THIS is the reason we spend so much time here, why there isn't just one kiss scene. Bring it!

**Hand to Head** - Usually found with Mouth to Mouth, this is the hand behind the head move. The fingers running down the hero's jawline, the hero brushing the hair from her face to gaze deeply into her eyes before he kisses her again, I think you get it!

All these things together add a layer of physical intimacy for your characters and their story. Now it's up to you to put them together in a way that works. Linger on one stage, rush through another...it's all a part of building the intimate connection between two people. Make the reader feel the connection and the tingle of heat and you're on your way.

Now go explore and have fun!

And that wraps up the second four stages, join me next month when we continue the journey of intimacy...now I'm off to get lost in a first kiss!

...

Debora Dennis writes sexy time travels because she believes in second chances and that it's always the right time to fall in love. You can find her at [www.deboradennis.com](http://www.deboradennis.com), blogging several times a week, procrastinating on Twitter or chatting away on Facebook—all in the name of researching her next book.