

# ThrillerChat Transcript for March 8, 2010

All times are Pacific Time

March 8, 2010

- [1:01 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: Welcome to another [#thrillerchat](#). Tonights topic is Thrill 'Em from the Opening Hook [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:03 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: Openings that grab the reader are important in any story, but are they even more important in thrillers? [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:06 am](#) **[AllInky](#)**: Traditionally, thrillers have "started with a bang," though I think that can be taken too far. [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:06 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: I believe thrillers should start with a bang. What do others think? [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:07 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: Nice to see you again, [@AllInky](#). I think your right, they can be taken too far. [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:08 am](#) **[thebookjournal](#)**: [@Selorian](#) def. with a bang [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:09 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: [@thebookjournal](#) Hey, you made it! Nice to see you! [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:10 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: Has it become such a mainstay that people tend to go straight to overkill in some instances? [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:10 am](#) **[thebookjournal](#)**: [@Selorian](#) yeah i know. i keep missing it.... [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:10 am](#) **[portiaalex](#)**: I like an exciting beginning, as long as there's enough character stuff to make me care [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:11 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: [@thebookjournal](#) Well, it's nice to have you tonight. [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:11 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: Nice to see you, [@portiaalex](#). Good point. [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:12 am](#) **[thebookjournal](#)**: [@portiaalex](#) yeah in thriller we MUST care about the characters..either hate or love, but we must care when they are in trouble [#thrillerchat](#)
- [1:14 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: At the beginning, it's awful hard to do either from the opening line. How many pages in do you think an author has to do it? [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:14 am](#) **[portiaalex](#)**: It's a tall order for a starting scene, but when it's done well it's magic [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:15 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: [@portiaalex](#) I totally agree. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:15 am](#) **[AllInky](#)**: Thinking of the beginning of Casino Royale... 20 minute action scene, for what? Actually bored me. No character story. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:15 am](#) **[thebookjournal](#)**: [@Selorian](#) I give the authors one chapter to make me care - i do that for all genres [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:16 am](#) **[graywave](#)**: I get hooked if the protagonist is up to their neck in trouble but scared, reluctant, bungling it, or whatever. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:16 am](#) **[graywave](#)**: Bond types don't do it for me. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:16 am](#) **[portiaalex](#)**: I'd guess I'd stop reading at three pages ... and that might be generous. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:17 am](#) **[portiaalex](#)**: [@AllInky](#) I agree--I felt the same way watching that opening scene [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:18 am](#) **[AllInky](#)**: The book was better - much more character can be slipped in among the action. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:18 am](#) **[portiaalex](#)**: [@graywave](#) Yes, vulnerability is very appealing to me--very relatable [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:18 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: [.@graywave](#) Hey Graham! Nice to have you! [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:18 am](#) **[graywave](#)**: [@portiaalex](#) Standing in a bookshop, browsing, the author gets about two paragraphs, not even three pages. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:19 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: I'm likely to give them a scene to make me care. And I've never been a fan of the Bond types either. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:19 am](#) **[graywave](#)**: [@Selorian](#) Hi Cliff. Just had to join in. The hook is such a big deal in this genre. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:20 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: [@portiaalex](#) Vulnerability can be a big draw for a reader. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:21 am](#) **[thebookjournal](#)**: [@graywave](#) i agree, if i am at bookstore i give each book about 1 minute to hook me. however, cover is first thing [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:21 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: [@graywave](#) I know, it really is. I think more so than in many other genres. Of course, that's only my opinion. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:22](#) **[AllInky](#)**: Year of the Jackal had a good hook, imho. Filmwise, I like the way

[am](#) Munich rolls out. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:27 am](#) [Selorian](#): What do you like to see in the very first line? [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:27 am](#) [Selorian](#): Join me for a [#thrillerchat](#) TweetChat at: <http://tweetchat.com/room/thrillerchat> [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:28 am](#) [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) i like to be shocked in the first line... [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:29 am](#) [portiaalex](#): I like a surprise. I know that sounds oddly vague ... [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:30 am](#) [AllInky](#): I like a question, even an implied question, in that first line. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:30 am](#) [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) no matter what genre - i need that statement that makes me say "what happened to her that she would feel that way?" [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:30 am](#) [Selorian](#): @[thebookjournal](#) Shocked is good for me too. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:30 am](#) [Debberzz](#): I don't want to be shocked, but I want to be jolted and pulled into some kind of character conflict right away. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:30 am](#) [Selorian](#): @[portiaalex](#) Maybe vague, but I know what you mean. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:31 am](#) [thebookjournal](#): @[Debberzz](#) jolted is a good work [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:31 am](#) [thebookjournal](#): @[Debberzz](#) word i meant [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:33 am](#) [Selorian](#): I think whether surprised, shocked, jolted, or whatever, it all comes down to something that makes the reader ask a question.. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:33 am](#) [Selorian](#): ...and desire to discover the answer. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:33 am](#) [AllInky](#): I'm not so intrigued by the "reluctant hero" or heroine, but, I like an interesting person in an interesting situation. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:34 am](#) [egtalbot](#): @[Selorian](#) I like to see mystery at the beginning (e.g. historical prologue)- 4 me suspense/action/character secondary to that [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:37 am](#) [Selorian](#): Nice to see you, @[egtalbot](#). Prologues are good too. They seem more acceptable in thrillers as a way to set the stage. [#thrillerchat](#)

[1:38](#) [Debberzz](#): Fellow writers, @[Selorian](#) is leading the discussion at [#thrillerchat](#)

[am](#) right now.

[1:38 am](#) [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) i do not like prologues. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:38 am](#) [AllInky](#): Prologues lose me every time. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:41 am](#) [Selorian](#): Really, in every circumstance? James Rollins uses prologues quite often. I thought it worked well in The Judas Strain. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:42 am](#) [Selorian](#): I guess I can agree that it could have been added in later, but I actually liked it the way it was done. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:42 am](#) [AllInky](#): Thrilles come in so many varieties, some big and international, some close and claustrophobic, it's hard to compare openings. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:44 am](#) [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) it's a turn off for me that i have to read something BEFORE i get to read the book. like a pre-requisite. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:44 am](#) [thebookjournal](#): @[Selorian](#) just tell me the story already.... #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:44 am](#) [Selorian](#): @[AllInky](#) They do come in a large variety, but openings still have to achieve the same thing. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:46 am](#) [egtalbot](#): @[Selorian](#) yep, I don't agree with those who say fit it in later. Cussler, Rollins, Berry have it right #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:46 am](#) [AllInky](#): As a reader, I like thrillers to start on page one and roll to the end - with any backstory woven in along the way. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:47 am](#) [Selorian](#): @[thebookjournal](#) True too. But in some instances, it would be mere info dump if not added as a prologue from an earlier time. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:48 am](#) [Selorian](#): It could be done with flashbacks, but I hate sloppy flashbacks even more than a bad prologue. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:48 am](#) [thebookjournal](#): @[AllInky](#) i also don't enjoy movies that do 30 minutes of backstory before getting into the actual story #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:49 am](#) [egtalbot](#): The prologue concept is obviously a matter of taste and triggers strong feelings both ways :) #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:50 am](#) [Selorian](#): Anyone that follows my #[storystarters](#) may notice I like trying to start with a big hook of some kind. Sometimes I get it right #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:50 am](#) [portiaalex](#): Yes, I agree. Flashbacks should come with a caution sign. Otherwise it's as goofy as a montage in a movie #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:51 am](#) [thebookjournal](#): @[egtalbot](#) very true - you either hate or love prologues #[thrillerchat](#)

[am](#)

[1:51 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: @[egtalbot](#) Agree wholeheartedly with that statement. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:51 am](#) **[thebookjournal](#)**: @[egtalbot](#) which brings the question - for those that dont' read them, do it mean they are missing part of the story? #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:52 am](#) **[thebookjournal](#)**: @[egtalbot](#) if they are missing part of the story, whose fault is it? the reader for not reading it, or the author for... #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:52 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: @[portiaalex](#) Lol, yes they should. Done right, they can be good, but so often they aren't. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:52 am](#) **[thebookjournal](#)**: @[Selorian](#) not taking that into account #[storystarters](#) #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:53 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: Join me for a #[thrillerchat](#) TweetChat at: <http://tweetchat.com/room/thrillerchat> #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:54 am](#) **[egtalbot](#)**: @[thebookjournal](#) well, if u choose to skip a part of the book, u do so at ur own risk I would think ;) #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:54 am](#) **[egtalbot](#)**: @[thebookjournal](#) there are so many good books, I'd say if u don't like prologues, don't read books that have em #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:55 am](#) **[thebookjournal](#)**: @[egtalbot](#) okay - that's a good chapter. but should authors take that risk when they know a lot dont' read them #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:56 am](#) **[thebookjournal](#)**: @[egtalbot](#) i meant that's a good answer....sorry watching tv at the same time #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:58 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: I think authors should write a prologue if they want. If the editor feels it needs cut & makes a good case, then cut it then. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:58 am](#) **[Debberzz](#)**: Most prologues seem long. If the author can't keep it really short I'd be concerned that their tale wouldn't stand on its own. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:58 am](#) **[egtalbot](#)**: @[thebookjournal](#) Should authors take risk? I don't know. Case-by-case/author-by-author I'd say. #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:59 am](#) **[thebookjournal](#)**: @[egtalbot](#) i must say while i disagree with you, you back up your point. well done #[thrillerchat](#)

[1:59 am](#) **[Selorian](#)**: Got to run dog out, be back in a bit. #[thrillerchat](#)

[2:00 am](#) **[thebookjournal](#)**: @[Debberzz](#) yes! i agree with you. I think that is part of the reason i stopped reading them #[thrillerchat](#)

[2:00 am](#) **[egtalbot](#)**: @[thebookjournal](#) thanks 4 kind words - it's all really judgment call. I could name things I don't like I'm sure many do #[thrillerchat](#)

2:04  
am            **egtalbot:** @[thebookjournal](#) @[Debberzz](#) hey, common ground! I agree that usually shorter is better. #[thrillerchat](#)

2:04  
am            **thebookjournal:** I am out too. have a long day ahead of me for tomorrow. it was great chatting with all at #[thrillerchat](#)

2:04  
am            **thebookjournal:** @[Selorian](#) nicely done....yet again :) #[thrillerchat](#)

2:05  
am            **egtalbot:** thanks everyone for the #[thrillerchat](#) !

2:07  
am            **Debberzz:** I have dinner to attend to, but thank you all for letting me join in. I hope to participate again soon. #[thrillerchat](#)

2:07  
am            **Selorian:** @[thebookjournal](#) Thank you. Have a great night. #[thrillerchat](#)

2:08  
am            **Selorian:** Thanks to everyone for joining in the chat. Sorry had to run out at the end. #[thrillerchat](#)

2:09  
am            **Selorian:** Great discussion. Hope to see everyone next week. We'll be starting an hour later next week. #[thrillerchat](#)

2:11  
am            **Selorian:** I'll post a pdf transcript of the chat tomorrow on my website. Watch for the link. #[thrillerchat](#)