ROMANCE ARC TRACKER



Track how the relationship actually develops throughout the story.

A romance shouldn't jump from "they met" to "they're in love." The relationship needs its own progression: attraction, trust, tension, vulnerability, conflict, choice, and change.

Use this tracker to make sure the romance develops alongside the main story.

QUICK START

If you're planning your romance in a few minutes, answer these first:

Character A: _____

Character B: _____

What initially attracts them to each other?

_____

What keeps them apart?

_____

What do they misunderstand about each other?

_____

What makes them start trusting each other?

_____

What could destroy the relationship?

Why do they ultimately choose each other?

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01. THE TWO CHARACTERS

Character A

What do they want?

What do they need emotionally?

What are they afraid of in relationships?

What do they believe about love?

What would make them fall for someone?

Character B

What do they want?

What do they need emotionally?

What are they afraid of in relationships?

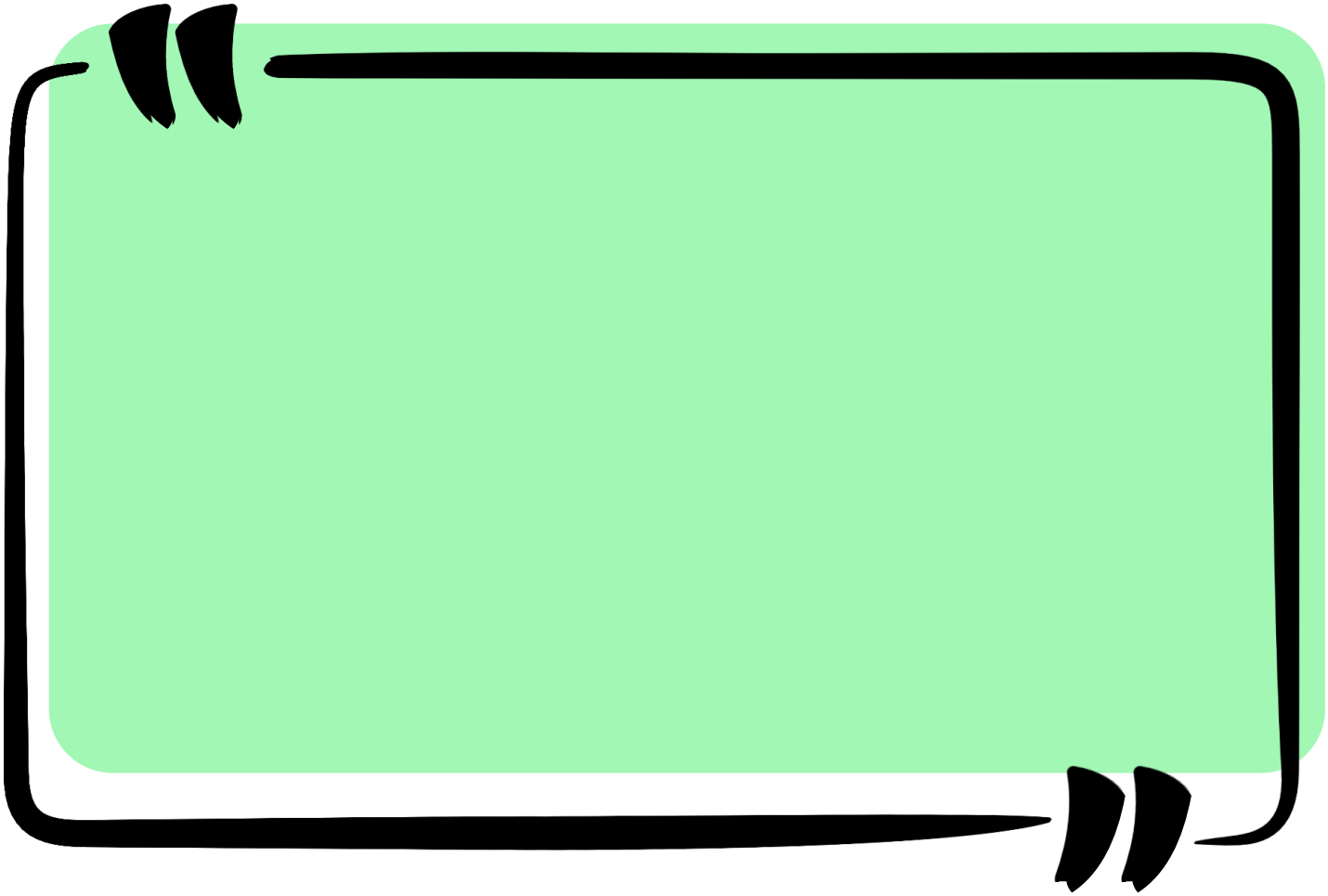
What do they believe about love?

What would make them fall for someone?

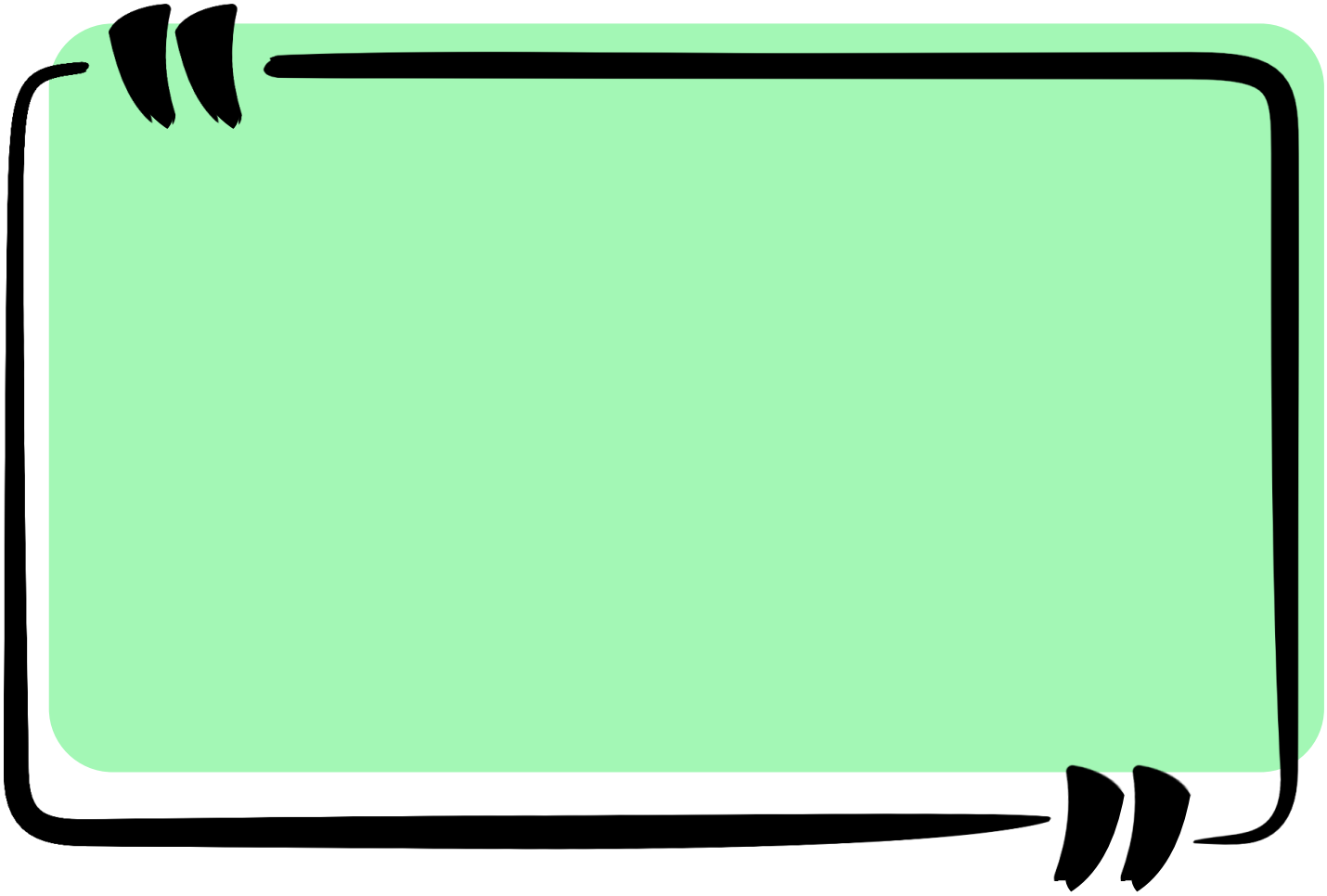
02. THE ROMANCE ENGINE

A strong romance has both attraction and resistance.

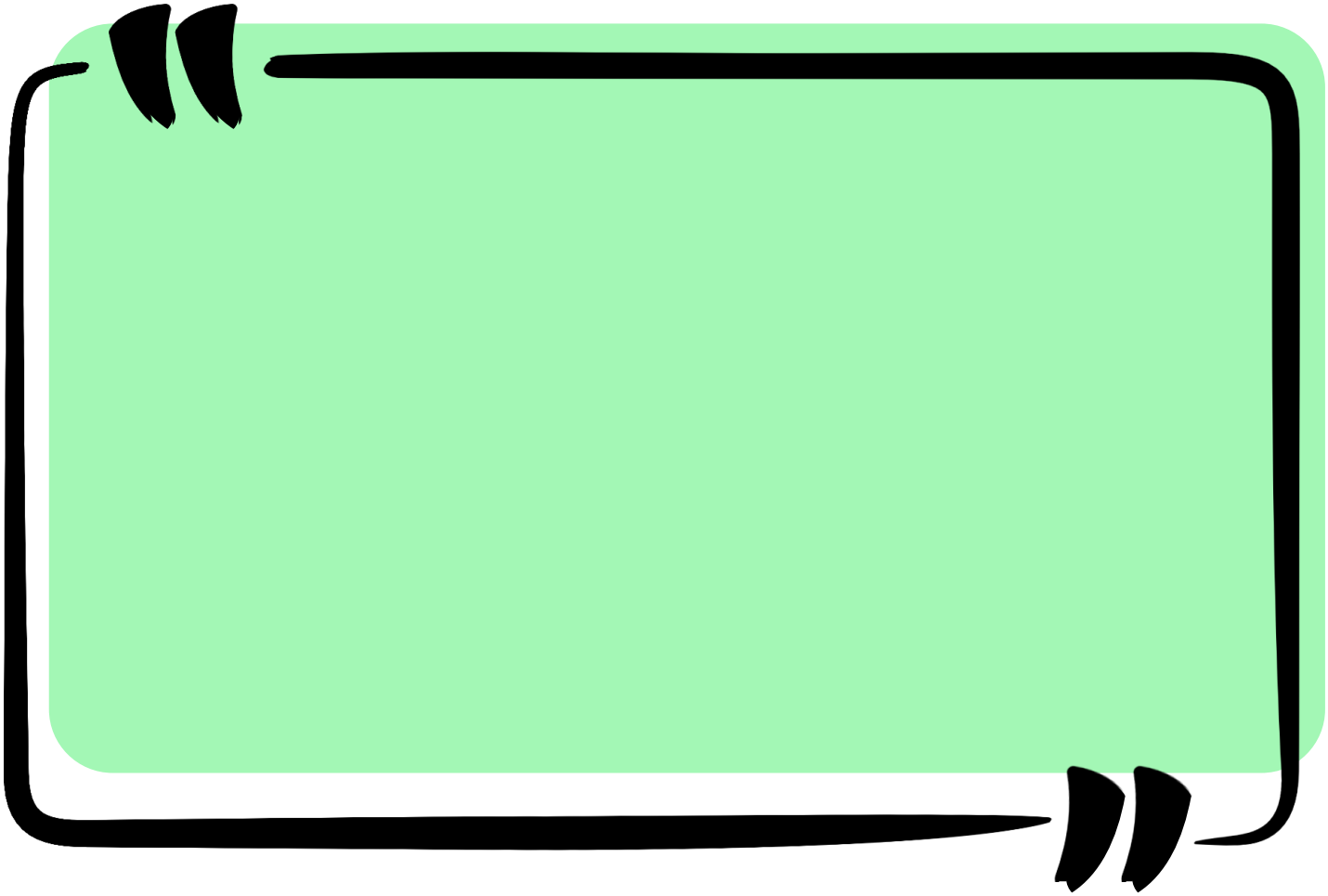
Why are they drawn to each other?



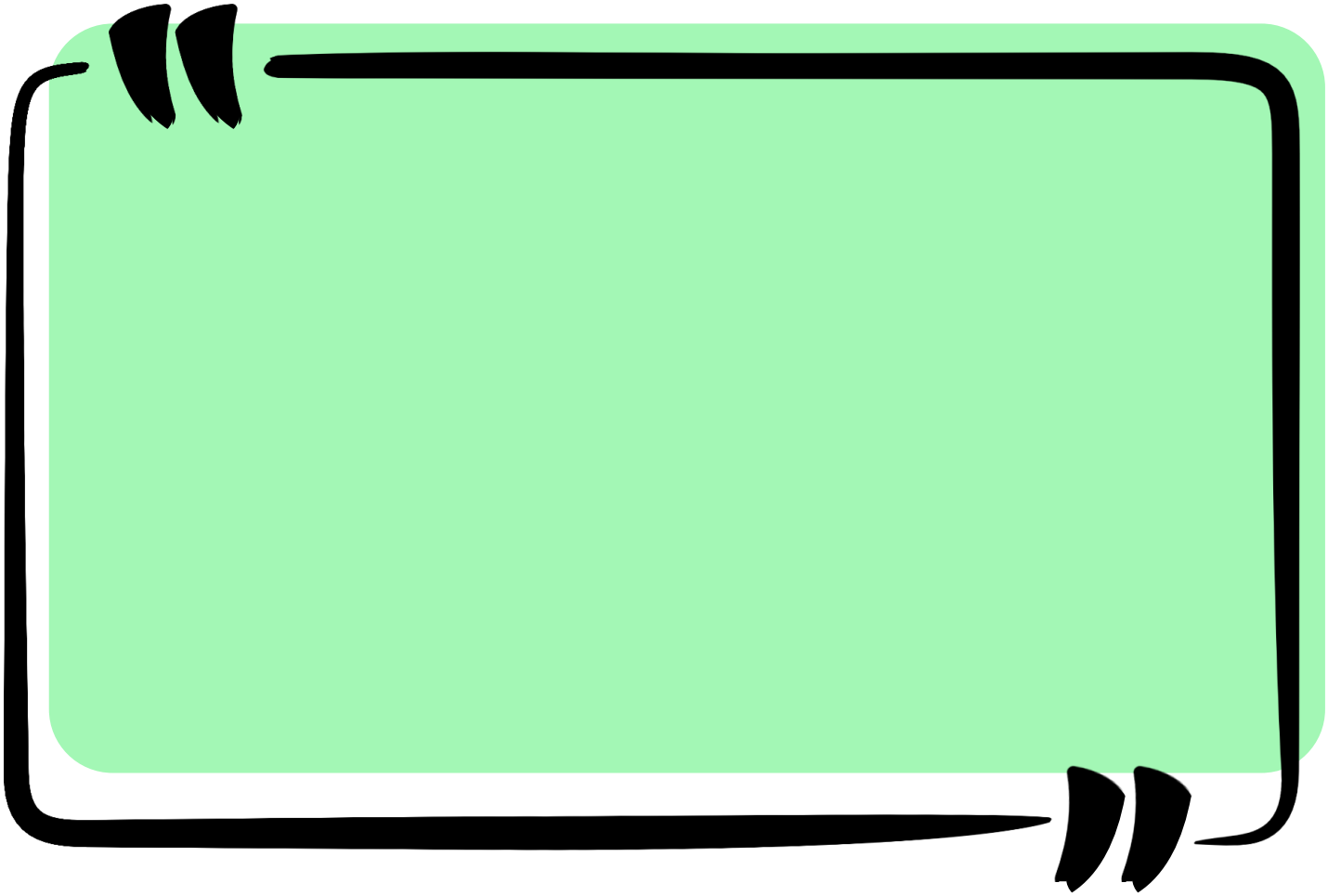
Why shouldn't they be together?



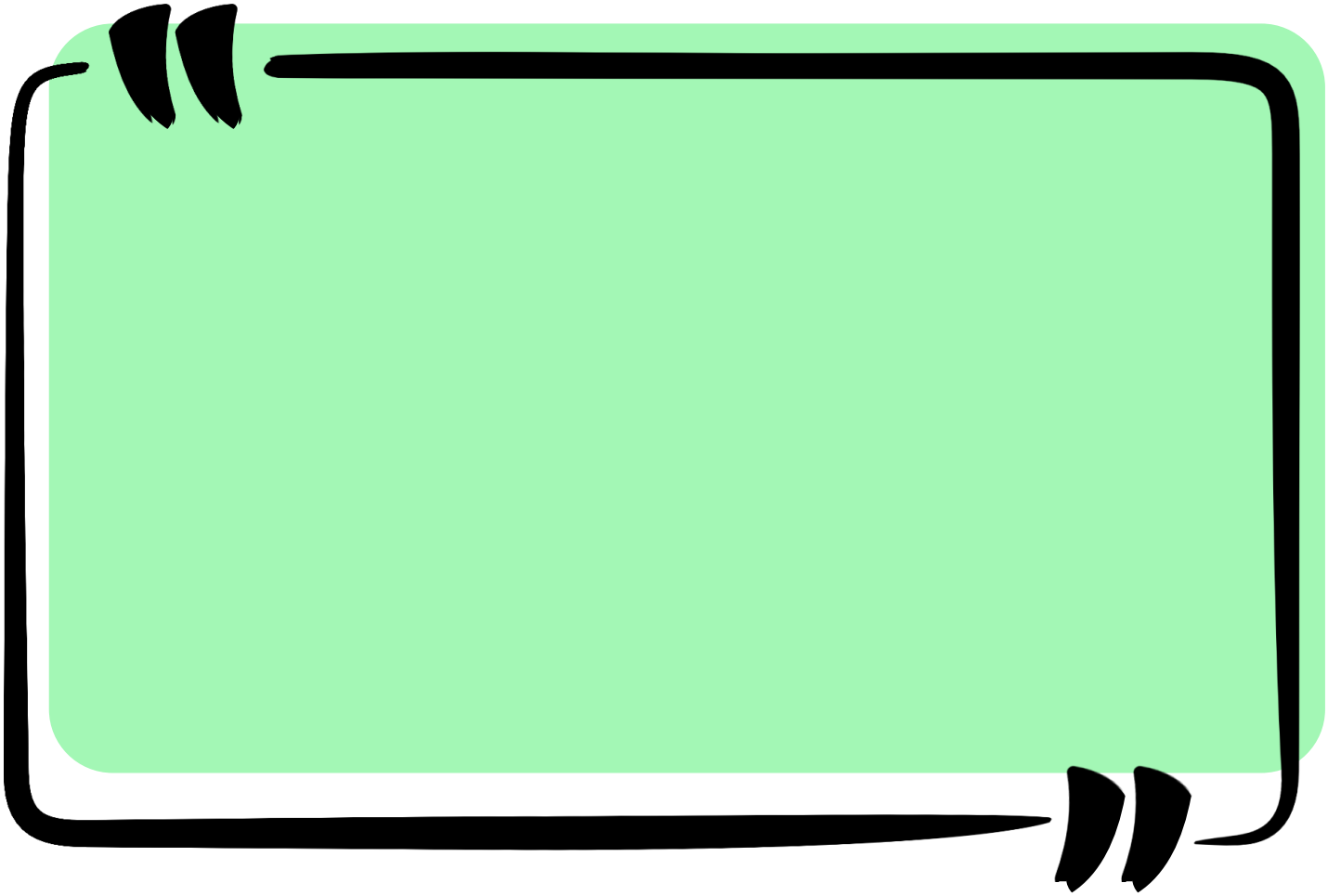
What do they bring out in each other?



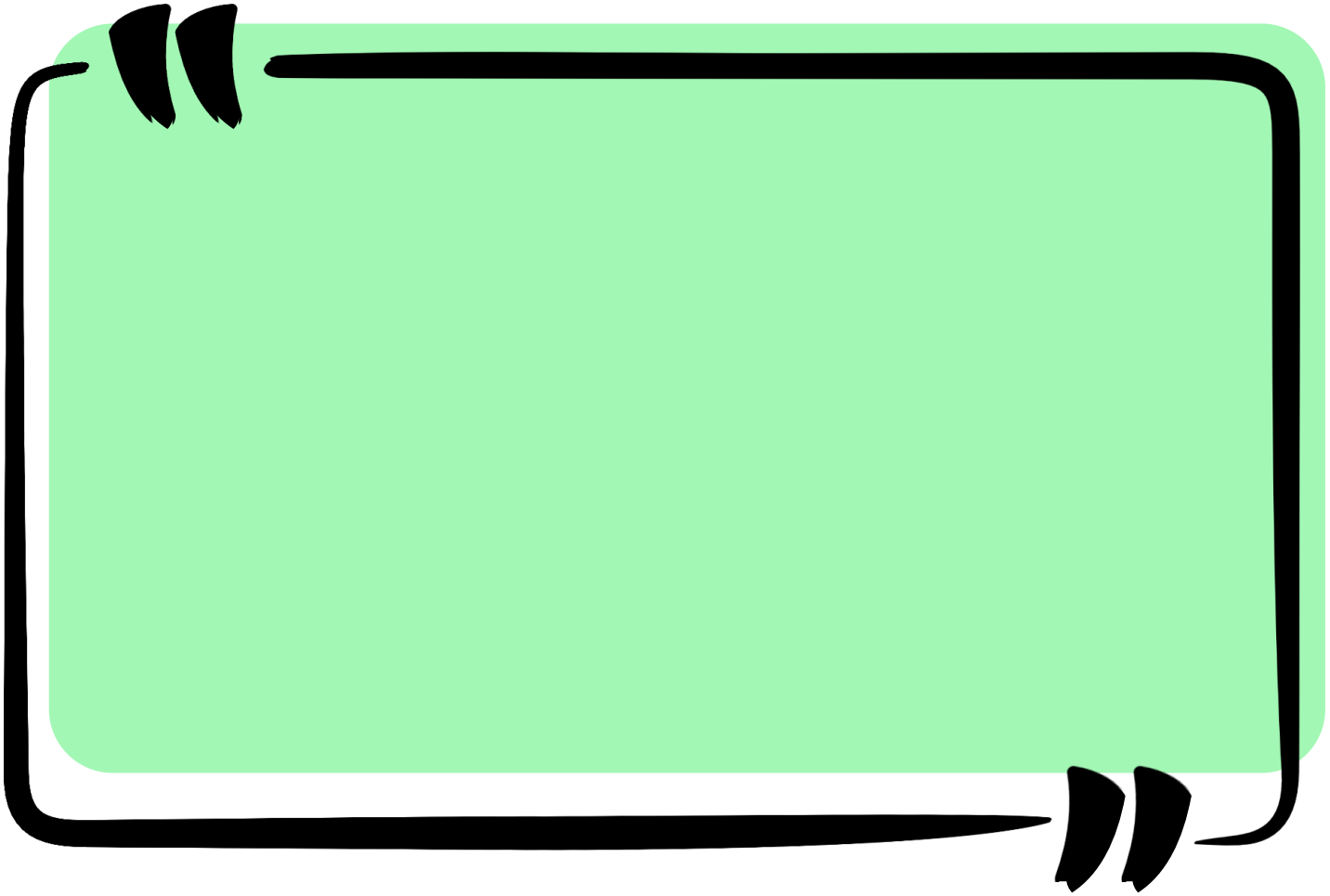
What does one understand about the other that nobody else does?



What makes them uniquely compatible?



What makes them uniquely difficult for each other?



03. ATTRACTION

Attraction doesn't have to mean instant love.

What does Character A notice first about B?

What does Character B notice first about A?

What makes them curious about each other?

What moment first creates genuine attraction?

What are they trying not to admit?

04. THE RELATIONSHIP PROGRESSION

Track the relationship across the story.

Stage

• First Meeting

Chapter / Scene

What Happens?

What Changes?

• First Connection

Chapter / Scene

What Happens?

What Changes?

• First Attraction

Chapter / Scene

What Happens?

What Changes?

• Growing Trust

Chapter / Scene

What Happens?

What Changes?

• First Vulnerability

Chapter / Scene

What Happens?

What Changes?

• Romantic Turning Point

Chapter / Scene

What Happens?

What Changes?

• Major Conflict

Chapter / Scene

What Happens?

What Changes?

• Separation / Distance

Chapter / Scene

What Happens?

What Changes?

• Realisation

Chapter / Scene

What Happens?

What Changes?

• Final Choice

Chapter / Scene

What Happens?

What Changes?

You don't need every stage, but the relationship should feel like it is moving.

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05. THE TRUST TRACKER

Love usually becomes believable when trust develops gradually.

Rate their trust at different points:

Beginning:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Midpoint:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

After major conflict:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Ending:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What causes trust to increase?

What causes trust to break?

06. VULNERABILITY

What is the first personal thing they reveal to each other?

Who opens up first?

What makes the other person feel safe enough to respond?

What is the deepest truth one character eventually shares?

What would they never tell anyone else?

07. THE ROMANTIC TENSION

Give them reasons to want each other and reasons to hold back.

What makes them want to get closer?

What makes them pull away?

What keeps them from saying what they feel?

What situation forces them to confront those feelings?

What is the moment when pretending becomes impossible?

08. THE BREAKING POINT

Every romance needs a moment that tests whether the relationship can survive.

What causes the major conflict?

1.

Who feels betrayed, hurt, or misunderstood?

1.

What does each character believe happened?

1.

What is actually true?

1.

What would it take to repair the relationship?

1.

09. THE REALISATION

At some point, the characters understand what they mean to each other.

Who realises their feelings first?

What triggers the realisation?

What do they finally understand?

What are they afraid will happen if they admit it?

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10. THE FINAL CHOICE

Love should involve a choice, not just a feeling.

What does Character A have to risk?

What does Character B have to risk?

What choice proves they are willing to be together?

What do they choose over their fear?

11. ROMANCE + MAIN PLOT

The romance should interact with the main story rather than feeling like a separate storyline.

How does the main plot bring them together?

How does the main plot keep them apart?

What problem does their relationship create?

What problem does their relationship help solve?

What does one character risk because of the other?

How does the romance change the outcome of the main story?

12. RELATIONSHIP CHECKPOINTS

For each major romance scene, ask:

□ Does something change between them?

□ Do they learn something new about each other?

□ Does trust increase or decrease?

□ Is there a new source of tension?

□ Does one character become more vulnerable?

□ Does the scene affect the larger plot?

□ Is this moment different from their previous interactions?

THE ROMANCE ARC IN 8 LINES

They meet when:

They are drawn to each other because:

They can't be together because:

They begin to trust each other when:

They realise they have feelings when:

Their relationship breaks when:

They choose each other when:

By the end, their relationship has changed because:

THE FINAL TEST

Complete this sentence:

They don't just fall in love because they are attracted to each other. They fall in love because _____.

REMEMBER

The romance isn't just about whether they end up together. It's about who they become because they met each other.