

# DEVELOPMENTAL EDIT ROUND I:

["Title: Subtitle"]

By [Author]



**Manuscript Summary:** A realistic fiction story of commercial fishing in Alaska

**Themes:** Redemption and forgiveness, loss and death, survival and guilt

**Intended Format:** Book, Ebook

**Word Count (rounded):** 100,000

**Categories:** Literary Fiction, Action-Adventure, Commercial Fishing

**First Target Country of Printing:** USA

**Original & Current Language:** US English

**Audience:** Adults and teens 14+, all genders, single and married, all education and income levels, ethnic backgrounds. This manuscript is of particular value to those interested in Alaska, commercial fishing, and morally gray characters.

**Triggers and Warnings:** Contains physical violence, light sexuality, swearing, death.  
Recommend ages 14+ only.

**Time Period:** Present Day

STYLE

**Narrative Style:** Third-person Narrator

**Voice:** Currently varies. Tendency towards mixed grandiose, mystical, and rough fisherman conversational

**Tone:** Varies from comedic to ominous to frank

**Formality:** Casual

DOCUMENT

**Current Status of Manuscript:** Main text is complete. No front or back matter. No book map or style sheet. Needs developmental editing.

**Previous Edits:** None

**Original Document Form:** Author has provided a Microsoft Word document.

**Book Map:** None

**Style Sheet:** None

**Style Guide & Dictionary:** *The Chicago Manual of Style, 18th ed., Merriam-Webster.com*

**Overall Impression:**



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[Title] is an exciting story with plenty of depth and interesting characters. Some places the flow feels off and things feel out of sequence, but nothing that can't be solved with some rearranging. Most of the characters are morally gray, which draws the reader in. The themes (redemption and forgiveness, loss and death, survival and guilt) are fitting for the story and invest the reader in the outcome. Besides a brief mention of X selling his soul to the devil, which is too much for this storyline, the characters are all engaging and consistent. The ending is an issue, which I'll discuss more below.

**Project Strengths:**

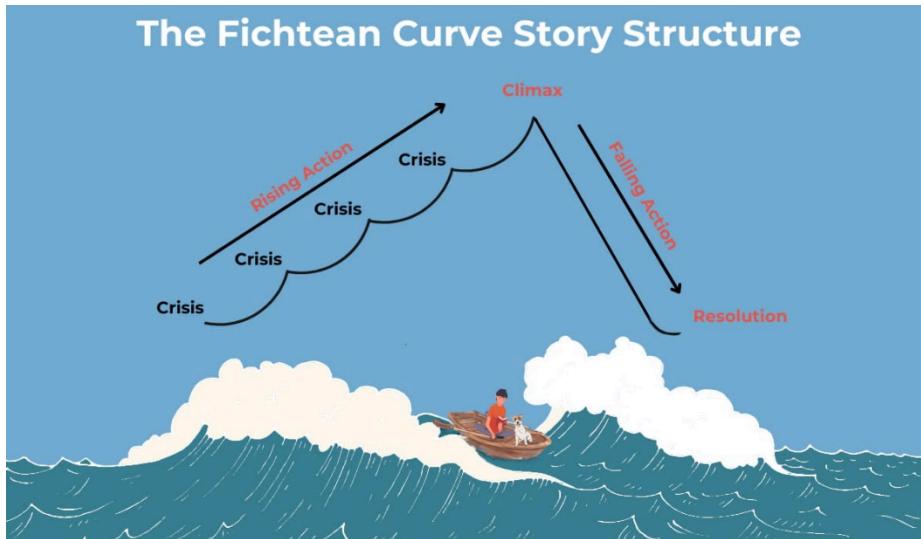
The storyline has several unexpected twists, keeping it exciting. The writing style is wonderfully descriptive and mostly engaging, only wavering a bit with consistency in the very beginning and very end, where it's more lofty and grandiose. The locations, boats, fishing tech, etc., are very authentic and realistic. The characters are mostly consistent, engaging, and morally gray, which is the most popular type of character currently. The Alaska setting is exotic for most readers and adds to the adventure and thrill.

**Manuscript Issues:**

The storyline doesn't flow in a few places, and some things feel very out of place. Currently, the story arc is mostly flat overall rather than building to X's redemption:



This is what's called (fittingly, for this fishing story) a **Fichtean Curve** story arc. However, ideally it should look more like the following:



We want the story to build up to X's redemption when he saves the "enemy" boat that was attacking him and would have surely not helped him. Currently, elements in the story that are out of place, as well as some problems with pacing and voice consistency, are flattening the arc and preventing tension build-up and higher character development.

Here is some more info on structuring this type of story arc:

<https://blog.reedsy.com/guide/story-structure/fichtean-curve/>

Here is some more info about story arcs in general:

<https://blog.reedsy.com/guide/story-structure/>

Here are the three largest issues currently in the manuscript:

1. Priest Encounter:  
It feels like this should happen before X saves Y's boat. He should first let go of his baggage, then he will be able to later put his ego aside and have mercy on his "enemy." The character development feels off. Saying he sold his soul to the devil is also just way too much. That's too heavy a subject to casually dump on a reader with just a few sentences. X is very relatable and dark enough as it is. Readers don't want things complicated near the end of the book. As a reader, I also got very upset when X gave the priest his father's coin. X should keep that.
2. Ship Stories:  
I've made some notes on these in the manuscript. Overall, at first I got excited when I saw them, but then it felt like the book was ending, and I also felt frustrated I didn't get to learn about the characters sooner. I would have preferred these to be distributed around earlier in the book so I could get more invested in the characters. That would also help the story arc to develop more and not be so flat near the end.
3. Ending:  
There are going to be two very different reader reactions to the ending. Some are going to love it and



think it's worthy of some obscure book award (I'm one of these), however, the majority of readers are going to hate it. I would estimate perhaps 20% of readers, who prefer more artistic literature, will love it, and the other 80% will be extremely put off and toss the book on the floor in annoyance. Looking at your goals, since you're going for bestseller and possibly a movie, I'd suggest changing the ending so it's more satisfying, and everyone doesn't die at the end. **I have a couple ideas for modifying the ending that we can discuss that keep some of the current ending while also satisfying readers:**  
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**Editing Recommendations:**

I recommend we fix the above top 3 issues first, after which we can move on to other issues that exist with this manuscript such as too much voice variation and pacing disruptions, which are also interfering with building a strong, exciting story arc. Some portions go on too long while others need extending for tension building. I can help you with placing the ship stories in more appropriate places so they help build characters and interest, as well as prevent them from flattening the arc in their current location. I can also help you with relocating the priest interaction and revise it to remove the selling his soul to the devil portions and the coin giveaway, if you agree. We will go through a couple revisions, starting with the largest issues and moving to smaller ones until the manuscript is in good shape at the chapter level and is ready to move on to substantive editing, which checks the manuscript at the paragraph level.

I estimate that this manuscript will need two more rounds of developmental editing after this one before being ready for substantive editing. This refines the manuscript on the global scale first and moves down to the chapter level. I can also work with you to develop a plan for the book map in the later stages, which decides on the front and back matter for the book, such as possibly including a map showing the ship's voyage.

**Editing Resources:**

Attached are the following documents with notes to help with the editing process; please check that the information gathered here matches your intentions for the project:

- Notes on Framing, Themes, and Time Period
- Character List
- Locations List

**To-Do:**

1. Revise to fix the top 3 issues. Feel free to reach out if I can be of assistance!
2. When revisions are complete, please send me the revised manuscript and we'll move on to round 2.