

Think of all the problems that will result from your idea that you can; don't stop with the first one that comes to mind. Thinking of problems will inevitably suggest people who have them—and they will become your characters. When you know them well enough, you will begin to understand how they will react to their problems, and how those reactions create other problems, including conflicts with other characters. At each key point in the story, ask yourself what is the best thing *each* character can do—from *his own point of view*. Then let him do it. All you have to do is write it down.

—STANLEY SCHMIDT, *Good Writing Is Not Enough*
(Writing Science Fiction and Fantasy)