The Antagonist - AKA the Bad Guy
Iron sharpens iron.
What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.
Think of all the sayings, idiomatic expressions, family stories you know about how the challenges, and the people who present them, must be overcome.

As people we naturally loves stories. My aunt says we’re drawn to them because we love witnessing the experiences of others and how they defeat the bad guy and win. We need examples of how we can do it too. Plus, no matter what our challenge is someone always seems to have something going on that’s worse to deal with.

The antagonist, also known as the ol’ ol’ ol’ school foe, or the supernatural, ol’ school Goliath takes us through it, sometimes even tries to take us out, but, turns out, in the end, we’re better for it. We learn what we’re truly made of by facing whatever scares us.

It’s human nature to have fears. Check out all of these Brainy Quotes by famous people about them. TV shows are loaded with folks talking about and overcoming their fears. Can anyone say, “Oprah?”

For new in-your-face-fear-fighters, try Red Table Talks and The Bucket List with the Smith Family.
The whole family is brave enough to put their fears, failures and triumphs out in the open.
So the bad guy experience is really the best thing that can happen to/for your character*.

If you haven’t done it yet, answer your character questions for your antagonist.
Then try these activities to really give your character someone/something to face.
What makes a great villain? Use the checklist by Jerry Jenkins. It’s awesome and really helpful.

We’re going to get to the point that the protagonist is going to go up against each antagonist(s).
While you’re developing your characters, it’s a good idea to start thinking about how they will clash and challenge each other.

Read this blog to start understanding more about how character development leads to plot development.

Moves and Counter Moves: Letting Your Antagonist Drive the Plot

While you’re getting to know and creating your protagonist, create ideas about how the antagonist presents your characters worst fears. Start to imagine scenes where their “battle” gradually comes to life, and even imagine how you/your audience will get to the experience the ultimate conflict between them.

*Another little secret... putting the antagonist up against the s/hero creates the plot and the suspense for the whole story. We’ll talk about how in the lessons coming up – like character arc, plot, raising the stakes, and building suspense.