

Editing with Track Changes

(And why we don't use them)

This feature forces the editor to take a narrow view of the work, focusing on low-level details. A paragraph without misspellings or typos can still be ambiguous, misplaced, or unnecessary. With Track Changes, it's easier and faster (and tempting) for an editor to do the small things and ignore the big ones.

Revision markup is a tangle of confusing changes and comments. Who wants to review 400 pages of this? But if you auto-accept all the changes, you have no clear overview of what the editor did.

Worst of all, you don't learn anything from the process: common errors you make, errors you didn't know were errors, and how to avoid making those errors again.

<p>muscles bunching, contracting across his back, his thick blond hair tumbling loose to his shoulders.¶</p> <p>A proud warrior, her Chris. So different from her.¶</p> <p>"Just to get a drink of {water}", she said.¶</p> <p>"Coming right back?"¶</p> <p>"Yes." She leaned over the bed, kissed his cheek. "Go back to sleep."¶</p> <p>He reached out to catch her hand, his fingers tenderly lacing with hers. "Were you having that bad dream again?" She had told him about her sleeplessness last week, but he had seemed preoccupied and she wasn't sure he had been listening. He was so wrapped up in his own problems she shouldn't have bothered him.¶</p> <p>"No. Just thirsty, baby. Go back to sleep." She'd been having the dreams again. Dreams of David crashing and dying. Dreams of him calling for her.¶</p> <p>But in the sleek, modern, sophisticated kitchen of Chris's condo, Lauren stared blindly out of the window with its panoramic view of the Bay Bridge and the water and the city beyond, her heart still pounding, skin clammy and cold.¶</p> <p>Ever since she'd visited Grandma's house on Father's Day, when the priest was giving her last rites, ever since she'd gone into David's room.¶</p> <p>It was too much.¶</p> <p>She shouldn't have gone inside. Shouldn't have opened the door to his room. It had opened up her memories, and the past, and the grief had sucked her right back in.¶</p> <p>Lauren filled her glass with chilled water, drank it slowly, trying to slow her racing pulse.¶</p> <p>She hated the dreams. They were never exactly the same. In some, the accident happened at night. In others, it was sunny, just like it had been the day Chad, David's best friend, pulled a stupid teenage move, passing a slower car on the twisting country road, and discovered there was nowhere to go, killing three of the four kids in the car.¶</p>	<p>Comment [O1]: Unnecessary adjective¶</p> <p>Deleted: fierce</p> <p>Comment [O2]: close quotes¶</p> <p>Comment [O3]: too many adverbs¶</p> <p>Deleted: lovingly and gently</p> <p>Comment [O4]: This is such a cliché¶</p> <p>Deleted: He tucked a lock of her long auburn hair behind her ear</p> <p>Deleted: .</p> <p>Deleted: seemed</p> <p>Deleted: .</p> <p>Moved (insertion) [1] <input type="button" value="Go"/></p> <p>Comment [O5]: Doesn't this work better here?¶</p> <p>Comment [O6]: Why is it necessary to describe his kitchen?¶</p> <p>Comment [O7]: On adjective is enough¶</p> <p>Comment [O8]: Didn't you say earlier his condo faced east? How could she see the Bay Bridge?¶</p> <p>Deleted: incredible, insane</p> <p>Comment [O9]: What does Father's Day have to do with anything?¶</p> <p>Comment [O10]: last rites¶</p> <p>Deleted: rights</p> <p>Comment [O11]: Unrelated clauses¶</p> <p>Moved up [1]: she'd been having the dreams again. Dreams of David crashing and dying. Dreams of him calling for her. <input type="button" value="Go"/></p> <p>Comment [O12]: apostrophe¶</p> <p>Comment [O13]: Isn't that obvious?¶</p> <p>Comment [O14]: Just said it was sunny.¶</p> <p>Deleted: the sun shining.</p>
---	--