Writers, I Want You.

By Holly Lisle

After the fix is in, and the store is reopened, I will be announcing a plan for inviting writers to help maintain, build and operate the systems Holly uses to write and teach, including her websites, databases, servers, and writing tools on her personal computer. Specific jobs need doing on a regular basis, such as making sure backups are running and work when called they are needed.

Volunteer Sign-up Link

I am developing all the training necessary for all the jobs. Prior experience in IT and related disciplines can be helpful, but not required. In fact, lack of experience is just as helpful.

I am looking for writers who are interested in helping and receiving training. I am confident that Holly will help make sure the training doesn't suck.

Holly and I are determined to do everything possible to keep these systems or their successors running for seventy five (75) years. Neither Holly nor I will be here in 2090, but there is a chance her systems will. That tells you right there, we are going to need people making this happen, besides us.

No one can do much work for free. The training provided here is the same training provided to interns and apprentices at my company. One of the goals we all share is making what I'd call "a lot" of money working on systems. In other words, the technology and work experience her at Holly Lisle's Online Writing School is a potential path to professional work with

the pay that comes with it. We are not only teaching how to run the machines, but we are teaching how to make money and have a good life as a result of working on the machines.

If not enough writers get involved, then I will be recruiting volunteers who are not writers to work here, because there is to much for me to do alone. The reason I am reaching out to writers first is writers will do the best job. Not just on writing systems either.

Trudging your road to the Happy Destiny of professional writing might cause you to lose sight of something I can see, and I know every writer must have seen at some time or other. There is not a single thing in the universe that is like writing. Only humans do it. Not all humans do it the same.

If we had to make a list of the most important things humans have done, it easier to imagine an argument over which books to include, not WHETHER books, writing should be included. Most of the writers I have worked with professionally were journalists or marketing people. I have spent my share of time around lawyers, because my family is filled with them. Lawyers take special note of their writing. All writers, of all kinds, plug into the world in a different way than the rest of us. You all know, your writing talents have no end of potential uses. What you might not know is writing skill possibly is the absolute best background for people coming into the field of professional computing.

Think I am just making this up? When I worked for Andersen Consulting, (now Accenture), their preferred hire for their programming staff was English majors. Not just any. They looked for motivated, intelligent people, but no background in our main work, programming, was needed. They would train everyone. They built a company with more than 300,000 employees and $30b in annual revenue. I am not looking for $30b in annual revenue. Not even one billion. I am looking for people to start a chain of people that will operate without

stopping for 75 years. If we have people doing that, there will be a chance that some of what we make in this system today will still be operating and useful in 75 years.

I am looking for people who either just want to help out, or maybe people who see a higher purpose served by Holly Lisle's Online Writing School, who can see that work needs to be done to keep this purpose alive. Well, it is an online school, so systems are part of what this school is, and Holly, for reasons I really do not understand, has vested in me major responsibility for the systems used by this school.

I love this work. I work harder on it than any work I have ever done. With all my time and effort, I cannot come anywhere near doing all that is needed. So, what I am doing is building a perpetually growing team. Except for some writers, everyone on the team will be doing this work primarily for support of their career development.

Instead of paying a school or college to walk them through impractical unrealistic classes on programming, they will get training on the practical requirements of keeping a working system alive and building replacements. Do any among us think Holly is going to stop innovating and redefining the systems she needs? There always will be a mountain of development work here. This work is the basic purpose of the business and eduction program I am building.

Why this school as my focus? Well, what better purpose could there be? This school brings writers and writing into the world. Seriously, name one thing that more worthwhile that. I'll tell you what I told Holly. When my day comes to chat with my buddy, Peter, Up at The Pearly Gates, if he's going to tell me an area I fell short in was picking support of Holly Lisle's Online Writing School as the best thing I could to culminate my career, my conscience will be clear that I gave my all to something I really thought was such a good thing, I didn't see any reason to look for something better. It is not

just my feeling I am talking about. I have heard from a a few people around here. There is something here that comes from another dimension of human existence. It a dimensions that thumbs its nose at science. Science cannot detect it, but that does not make it unreal. The Human race is here. And here, people take what they are doing very seriously. What could be better to support than this, in the real world?

And as you can see, one of the things I am going to need help with is explaining this to people. For that, and many other reasons, Holly Lisle's Online Writing School needs writers working on its systems.

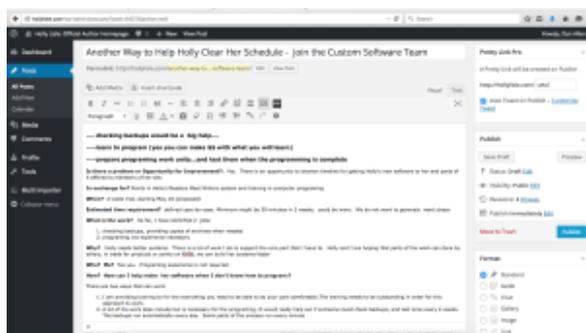# Helping to Clear Holly's Schedule — Work on Her Systems

By Holly Lisle

I wanted to let people who read Holly's blog know I took a hard look at asking if people here are interested in helping with the work of putting together the systems she needs. With so many people showing such a willingness to help, I thought there must be way to put that energy to work on the systems.
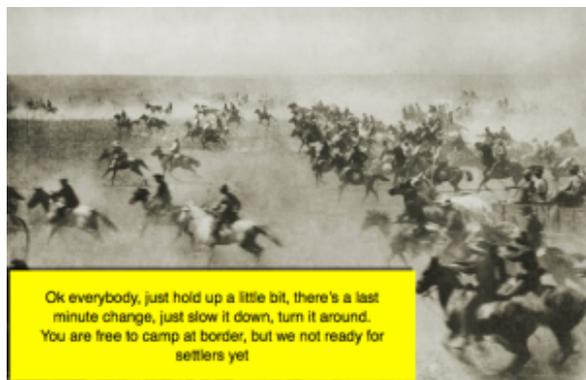
ABOUT A WEEK AGO

About a week ago I kept seeing the race into the Oklahoma Territory, only it was writers racing to the aid of Holly's

systems. Then just as I was ready to open the gates to anyone who wanted to volunteer, I got a horrible feeling. Here is what I almost published:

I was seconds away from publishing this. Click for a full-sized view.

The problem was, I could not see how this was going to work.

Reining-in enthusiasm. Sometimes, slowing down accelerates a result. (image is in the public domain).

Writing a Guide

It's taken a few days to work this through, but basically, I have to prepare for making something like this work. With the help of a writer, I am making a guide for the work that goes into making Holly's systems. Once the guide is usable, it

will spell out the preparations needed to train and support people who would like to help with Holly's systems. I wish I could do more immediately.

Can't we just go buy a guide? We can go buy a guide.

Or download a free guide from the internet? Yes, we can do that too.

I mean, can't we just go buy a good guide? No, that is not possible.

Are you saying there is not a single good guide we can use instead of writing our own? What I am saying is, we need a guide that is tailored to our situation.

OneStep Writing System — Web-Based?

By Holly Lisle

Dear Writers.

Right now, I am working as fast as I can to build for Holly a system to consolidate the work of writing and publishing. When Holly's system is done, or at least done enough, she and I are going to offer some form of that system to other writers.

TOO IMPORTANT TO GUESS

I could guess, Holly's system would be helpful to others. This is one of those things that is too important to guess. No guessing is needed to say, some form of system for consolidating writers' work would be helpful. No guessing is needed for some of the requirements, because some requirements are stated repeatedly in the comments on Holly's blog article. Overall, I am going to need writers telling me what is needed. Then I need to verify my understanding of what I am told. This type of communication excites me, because the chances of making good system go way up when there is good understanding of validated requirements.

The biggest question I have right now: will this system work if it runs through web browsers? The alternatives would be to run it as a program installed in Windows or on a Mac.

Running it through a browser does not mean that connecting to the internet is required for running the system. Some features require connecting to the internet, but stories can be worked on through a browser not connected to the internet. There are a lot of reasons why I want to make this a browser-based system, but my reasons don't matter, if the product is not going to do what writers need if it is running in a browser.

What worries me is I don't see any problems with running OneStep as a browser-based app. I know others will see problems, but I don't know what they are. That is not good. I need to know, what are the problems with OneStep being browser-based?

WHEN WILL OneStep BECOME AVAILABLE?
While I won't try guessing at requirements and platform, I will hazard a guess that people who have shown interest in OneStep want to know when they can get it. Answer: I don't know. This work is happening at the same time Holly and I are rebuilding her online writing school. I am not sure how much work we can do on OneStep while construction of the online

writing school is happening. I will just have to update you on that as I know more.

If you have questions or comments about the OneStep system, please do not hesitate to ask.

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