

Today it was the Joy of Words

written by Holly

June 13, 2023

By Holly Lisle

I love writing in my fantasy small-town Ohio world.

Because while part of it is absolutely deep fantasy with really good magic, part of it is my house, and my street, and my little town right here...

And I love my house, and my street, and my little town, and the folks who live here.

I love the sounds of the place, and the smells. I love the wildflowers (AKA weeds to those in town who are – unlike me – obsessed with Utterly Perfect Lawns).

I came to loathe Utterly Perfect Lawns in South Florida.

I reserve the right to love my wild violets and my dandelions and all the other weedy little flowers in my soft green grass that give the bees something to make honey with.

And I love being – at long last – home, where it isn't ninety degrees with ninety percent humidity, but a cool and breezy fifty-eight. In June.

And I love writing my crazy magical version of my little town in Ohio, with its hills, and its river, and its wonderful four seasons.

I got the words.

I'm happy.

And now I'm going off to do the other work of the day.

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Another slow, struggle-y day today working through Chapter 6

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The story has taken a (planned) dark turn. **MEANWHILE...** I'm struggling a bit to show the conflict without going darker than I want.

And I have to be very, very careful right now NOT to let the magic run amok.

It'll do that, you know – magic will. Run AMOK... AMOK... all over the damn place.

It will start turning pumpkins into carriages and rabbits into Deadly Vorpall Bunnies, and I don't want to have anything to do with nightmares like that.

So... when I come in tomorrow, I'm going to spend my first writing hour just building out a dialogue for myself on what I want the rest of this book to do.

I have the outline already. I'm following it.

But my tone feels like it's shifted, and I'm not sure I like the direction in which it's slipped. So tomorrow might be another 'small wordcount' day, but if I can guarantee myself that I'm writing in the right direction, I'll be just fine

with that.

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The Mystery Deepens... Ohio 4 and Important People Lying

written by Holly

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Some days, writing is like flying – it's effortless, and exciting, and maybe a bit scary and windy, especially when the ground seems a long, long way down.

But these are the days when you have to pull yourself away from the words when all you want to do is keep going.

I managed to make myself stop, because... Real Life.

I now have 9420 words total on Ohio 4 (VERSION 2) – every one brand new, and fresh, and right at the moment, running right between funny and scary.

But I cannot WAIT to get back into this tomorrow.

God, I love this job!

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So... TODAY was epic...

written by Holly

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By Holly Lisle

Still working from my line-for-scene outline, today the scene i started yesterday just took off.

I now have 9245 words done on the first draft. I got 1432 words today, AND discovered the thing I needed to see, and it was completely different than I'd been imagining... but I love it so much.

Some days writing fiction can take a lot out of you.

Some days, though – like today – it gives you energy, and excitement, and surprises – and on days like this, you just fly.

I love this job.

FICTION WRITERS! Sign up for Holly's Thursday Writing Tips

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Good writing day. Not epic, but...

written by Holly
June 13, 2023
By Holly Lisle

Not every day CAN be epic.

I had to do something hard thinking, and some outlining, and some worldbuilding, and none of that stuff counts as words.

But it's all essential.

However, the part I got, I love.

So now I have to go out into the world and DO STUFF.

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'Twas a fine day in writing land... with vengeance...

written by Holly

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By Holly Lisle

You know how you have heroes who you watch take a beating from the world, and get trampled by minions who've taken over something they've created? And you watch the over-throwing bastards who trample them ruin all the good stuff they made, and make a complete mess of this wonderful thing they put into the world that you loved?

No?

Well... for me, that's a thing. And today I told a bit of that kind of story in Chapter 2 of Ohio 4 – and while I got angry all over again that stupid arrogance of that sort is endemic in businesses, and that anyone who dares to take a company public and put it into the hands of a board of directors is ASKING for disaster, and begging to see whatever he or she made wonderful turned into absolute crap...

It does happen.

And I figure the world has a place for cautionary tales, too, doesn't it?

So while today's little episode is just a tiny, minor, couple-of-scenes side story in the novel, I was very happy to write it.

And I am very happy to give this secondary character guy of mine a second chance, fueled by the knowledge that the people who didn't build the company (those boards of directors) couldn't give a shit about the company they were put in charge of. And he loves what he did, and will love it again.

To this fictional board of directors, that company is just stock options, and cutting costs, and raking in their own profits at the expense of employees and customers.

Meanwhile, my secondary-character guy has love, and passion, and crazy-wide knowledge, and brilliant skills, and drive.

And now, he has a good friend in LOW places. (Little in joke. It will make senses when the books come out.)

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A very good Ohio Wednesday... and a disturbing twist

written by Holly

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By Holly Lisle

I got 1319 words today, nicely over my 1200-word objective. And I like what I got.

Yesterday's stuff was funny, but today's words got serious as my main character and a friend of hers started investigating a project they want to take on – and my MC pointed out that there are some significant dangers involved in this project BEYOND the ones her friend has considered.

So as soon as I post this, I'm going to write out my to-do list for tomorrow, and then call it a day.

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Done outlining Ohio 4 – Progress and Planned Evil

written by Holly

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Oh... BOY!

I knew going in today that I was going to have to beat the crap out of my main character in the plotting.

I did NOT know quite how badly, or how I was going to do that WHILE preventing myself from ending Ohio 4 on a cliffhanger.

(Because we do not end novels on cliffhangers, we do not end novels on cliffhangers, we do not... You get the drift.)

But... I GOT IT DONE!!!

I now have all of my story Sentences written, and I managed to bring the thing to a VERY good conclusion (in outline form, of course), and I LOVE the ending, and at the same time, my MC is going to have a whole helluva lot of work to do in Book Five...

Because while WE (the good guys) know better, right at the moment, the whole planet thinks the BAD GUYS just won game, set, and match.

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The Other Shoe Dropped – Ohio 4 and the Friday “Say WHAT?!”

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In the first version of these novels, I had one main character who I was having do a lot of chasing around because my main character was being stubbornly stupid about an activity that was bad for her – except she refused to see it.

I made her smarter.

And because she stopped doing stubbornly stupid things in Book 2, my VERY important character disappeared from the Book 2.

And then, because she stayed smarter, from Book 3.

He's still massively important to the story.

And this morning, I was outlining him into the next scene, and realized it had been a while since I'd written him...

So I searched back through the first three novels.

And. Yeah. He was well-represented in one. Then gone completely in two and three.

TWO whole books.

So while I'm resting and relaxing over the weekend, I'm also going to be brainstorming how to make him relevant to her my MC's more intelligent current activities, so I can put him back to work.

He's crucial for the series. So I need to get this right. His being in those earlier two books HAS TO MATTER, because in this book, he has EPIC work to do.

So this can't just be folks bumping into him at WalMart, or the equivalent.

I'm so annoyed at myself.

But... it's FRIDAY. So having discovered my oversight, I'm now heading off to relax for a bit.

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And... YEP... Still outlining on Ohio Four

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And there's really not a lot you can say about that. It's one 30-word sentence per scene that has to encompass the essence of the chapter while moving the whole story forward, and it is a pretty fast, efficient way to give yourself a migraine.

It works. It's essential to my process of getting books done, and when I don't do it, bad things happen. So I do it.

It just isn't fun.

I'll note, however, that today I discovered in the existing Ohio Four first draft one of the best scenes I've ever written, which I re-read today while making myself cry again... and that is DEFINITELY coming with me.

Now, however, on to very very much other stuff that must be done.

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