

The Write Stuff 2022 Story Bundle... and me!

written by Holly

April 20, 2022

By Holly Lisle

This year I was invited for into a StoryBundle for the first time... and I accepted the invitation because the bundle includes not just a bunch of really good writers of both fiction and nonfiction, but two of my genuine writing heroes – Lawrence Block, whose *Telling Lies for Fun and Profit* helped me teach myself how to build a fiction career back when I was a registered nurse working ER...

...And Kristine Kathryn Rusch, whose work I loved, and from whom (in her other job as editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* back then), I received a number of my better rejections.

There are also folks whose names I knew, and two who are brand new to me.

And I liked the cause: AbleGamers. While I'm primarily a solitary gamer, I've played with other folks on occasion – and you can build meaningful relationships through shared gaming peak experiences.

So...

Find the story bundle here: <https://storybundle.com/writing>



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Why I shut down my Patreon fundraiser

written by Holly
 April 20, 2022
 By Holly Lisle

I'd intended to send a *Questions & Answers* email to my *How to Write a Novel* launch list, but that's going to have to wait. Instead, I did THIS.

Closed my "Move out of Florida while writing fiction" fundraiser.

Here's why – it's this clause in the Patreon Legal Agreement

<https://www.patreon.com/legal>

By posting content to Patreon you grant us a royalty-free, perpetual, irrevocable, non-exclusive, sublicensable, worldwide license to use, reproduce, distribute, perform, publicly display or prepare derivative works of your content.

Understand that I read that clause and all the rest of them before signing up.

BUT... I'm not a lawyer, and I understood that clause to mean that Patreon was claiming the right to use my Patreon-created content (in other words, my POSTS) to promote the site.

I DID NOT think that they were claiming the right to use and abuse the content I was giving my patrons. In this case, three monthly chapters of the raw first draft of one of my current novels in progress, Dead Man's Party.

A friend emailed me with a link to this post, however:

<https://www.thepassivevoice.com/the-beginning-of-the-end-for-patreon/>

Turns out, I was wrong. Patreon is claiming rights to my novel.

So I'm out. I sent the first copy of this email to my patrons using a private Patreon post, and then I shut down my Patreon fundraiser, and am now trying to figure out how to actually close my account.

I'm not letting this kill my dream of moving us out of Florida...

...(hopefully before the next hurricane, if not the start of the hurricane season).

How you can help, if you want to –

IF YOU'RE HERE AS A WRITER:

I have created original classes ranging from under ten dollars to way over a hundred. If one of the classes I offer could help you, then you buying it would help me.

MY COMPREHENSIVE CAREER-LEVEL CLASSES (in recommended order)

***** How to Write a Novel *****

<http://hollyswritingclasses.com/class/how-to-write-a-novel.html>

(IN LAUNCH: On sale ONLY through Tuesday APRIL 8 – Final Discount Launch)

How to Revise Your Novel:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/how-to-revise-your-novel.html>

How to Write a Series:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/how-to-write-a-series.html>

How to Think Sideways: Career Survival School for Writers:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/how-to-think-sideways.html>

WRITING CRAFT SERIES (Each class is under \$10)

Create a Character Clinic:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/characterclinic.html>

Create A Plot Clinic:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/plotclinic.html>

How to Write Page-Turning Scenes:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/pageturningscenes.html>

WORLDBUILDING SERIES (Each class is under \$10)

Create A Language Clinic:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/languageclinic.html>

Create a Culture Clinic:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/cultureclinic.html>

Create a World Clinic:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/worldclinic.html>

WORKSHOPS & MID-SIZED CLASSES (PRICES VARY)

How to Write Short Stories:

<http://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/how-to-write-short-stories-class.html>

How to Write Villains:

<http://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/how-to-write-villains.html>

How to Write Dialogue with Subtext:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/dialogue-subtext.html>

Title Cover Copy Marketing Basics:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/titlecovercopy.html>

How to Find Your Writing Discipline:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/writingdiscipline.html>

How to Find Your Writing Voice:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/writing-voice.html>

How to Motivate Yourself:

<http://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/motivate-yourself.html>

Beat Writer's Block:

<https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/beatwritersblock.html>

FREE, INCLUDED WITH (also Free) SITE MEMBERSHIP

How to Write Flash Fiction That Doesn't Suck

[https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/free-flash-fiction-class.h
tml](https://hollyswritingclasses.com/go/free-flash-fiction-class.html)

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IF YOU'RE HERE AS A READER:

You can help out by buying some of my indie-published fiction.

SHORT STUFF, CURRENTLY AMAZON ONLY:

Light Through Fog:

[https://www.amazon.com/Light-Through-Holly-Lisle-Singles-ebook
/dp/B0096F4HY0/](https://www.amazon.com/Light-Through-Holly-Lisle-Singles-ebook/dp/B0096F4HY0/)

Rewind:

[https://www.amazon.com/Rewind-Holly-Lisle-Singles-Book-ebook/d
p/B00AY10HAE/](https://www.amazon.com/Rewind-Holly-Lisle-Singles-Book-ebook/dp/B00AY10HAE/)

Strange Arrivals:

[https://www.amazon.com/Strange-Arrivals-Twisty-Fantasy-Tales-e
book/dp/B00E0WMYRW/](https://www.amazon.com/Strange-Arrivals-Twisty-Fantasy-Tales-ebook/dp/B00E0WMYRW/)

FANTASY — ARHEL TRILOGY

Fire in the Mist:

<https://books2read.com/FireInTheMist>

Bones of the Past:

<https://books2read.com/BonesOfThePast>

Mind of the Magic:

<https://books2read.com/MindOfTheMagic>

DARK SCIENCE FICTION-ISH

SETTLED SPACE

Both of the Cadence Drake novels – *Hunting the Corrigan's Blood* and *Warpaint*, are off sale while I come up with new titles and new cover art for them, and new key words, descriptions, and other marketing that allows me to correctly put them in front of the audience that likes a few vampires and a bit of horror with its spaceships.

The Longview Chronicles (complete Series) is in the same universe – still dark, but without the vampires:

<https://books2read.com/longview-chronicles>

Or you can get the individual stories:

Born from Fire:

<https://books2read.com/born-from-fire>

Suzee Delight:

<https://books2read.com/the-selling-of-suzee-delight>

Philosopher Gambit:

<https://books2read.com/the-philosopher-gambit>

Gunslinger Moon:

<https://books2read.com/gunslinger-moon>

Vipers' Nest:

<https://books2read.com/vipers-nest>

The Owner's Tale:

<https://books2read.com/the-owners-tale>

STANDALONE URBAN FANTASY

Minerva Wakes:

<https://books2read.com/minerva-wakes>

PARANORMAL SUSPENSE

Author Page:

<https://books2read.com/ap/xbzgyx/Kate-Aeon>

Midnight Rain:

<https://books2read.com/midnight-rain>

Last Girl Dancing:

<https://books2read.com/last-girl-dancing>

I See You:

<https://books2read.com/i-see-you>

I have much more fiction that's commercially published, or which is out of print and has reverted to me, but which I have not yet republished.

I'm not linking to ANY of that fiction, because your purchase

of used books or books where publishers haven't paid royalties in years will not help me.

So there we are.

I want to thank all my patrons again, and I am so sorry that I had to do this, but there is no way I can permit this:

Excerpted from Patreon Legal Terms

You keep full ownership of all content that you post on Patreon, but to operate we need licenses from you.

By posting content to Patreon you grant us a royalty-free, perpetual, irrevocable, non-exclusive, sublicensable, worldwide license to use, reproduce, distribute, perform, publicly display or prepare derivative works of your content.

**No. Just NO.
Holly**

P.S. I have had one of my Patreon patrons already ask me how she could continue to support me on a monthly basis.

Here's the answer I gave her:

"I'll look into what's available. Right now, I'm crushed to discover the rights Patreon actually claimed, and worried about getting involved with any other site. So I'm in limbo. You'll find my blog at HollyLisle.com. I'll be keeping my folks there up to date on how I deal with this. It sucks.

Hugs, and thank you for asking."

Why is EVERYBODY on my blog, my mailing

list, and in my forums getting this?

Because if you know me, you're probably either a reader or a writer. If you're a writer, you may be considering using Patreon, and you need to know. If you're a reader considering funding someone on Patreon, THEY need to know.

And this is the ugliest, broadest rights-grab I have personally ever seen. Or sadly, been caught up in.

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The Pointy Marketing End of Writing Fiction: Old Dog, New Trick

written by Holly

April 20, 2022

By Holly Lisle

No big secret that I'm working hard on making my fiction a full-time paying gig again – my objective is to earn 50% of my income from fiction, with the other 50% coming from my writing classes.

Fiction has been shoved over in a corner for years, because, well – writing good nonfiction is about a million times easier than writing good fiction, and in general it pays a lot better for significantly less work. And at the point where my writing site broke, it was getting the nonfiction up and running again that kept us from ending up living under a bridge.

And, honestly, after being taken in by that con artist John Locke, I had any hope of making a living writing fiction crushed out of me for a long time – everything that including both “indie publishing” and “earn a living doing it” looked like a scam.

But writing fiction is the dream job I love – sitting by myself in a room talking to invisible people on a page, watching them do things I don’t expect, finding better conflicts, bigger stories – and writing about what matters to me in THIS world that translates into *my* worlds.

I did it for free every spare minute I got for seven years before I sold anything. Did it as a commercial novelist working fiction as my full-time paying job for seventeen years. Throwing in all the years when I’ve been an indie doing fiction at least part time, I’m now over thirty years in on this – and it is STILL work I love.

When you find **WORK. You. LOVE...** you do not ignore that. It’s rare. It’s astonishing.

I’m writing hard again. Fiction is what bounces me out of bed every morning. Knowing that I’m writing the stories I love, and that they will not be destroyed by bad editors or cancelled by ordering-to-the-net publishing idiocy matters to me.

Knowing that if I can get my work in front of a broader readership, what I’m writing has a chance to matter more – to me because it will help pay the bills, but to MY perfect readers, who can find something in fiction that they love, that matters to them as well – that’s what **MAKES** this the dream job.

I know how to write fiction. I’m good at it, and a good number of my students are making REAL money writing fiction after taking my classes.

They learned the “write good fiction” part from me.

Learning how to bring in serious money as indies? No.

That’s the part I’m learning from them.

And here are the books and here is the software they have pointed me to that I am fighting with and fighting through in order to make fiction a business, while STILL keeping it MY fiction. Good fiction.

1. Mastering Amazon Descriptions: An Author’s Guide: Copywriting for Authors
2. Mastering Amazon Ads: An Author’s Guide
3. Rapid Release: How to Write & Publish Fast For Profit
4. How to Write a Sizzling Synopsis: A Step-by-Step System for Enticing New Readers, Selling More Fiction, and Making Your Books Sound Good
5. Become a Successful Indie Author: Work Toward Your Writing Dream
6. KDP Rocket

None of these are affiliate links. They’re just links to books I’m reading and software I’m using.

I do NOT yet have numbers to prove any of this will work for me. I can prove (using KDP Rocket) that my folks are earning what they say they are. That the writers of the books above (and the maker of the software), are earning what they say they are.

So this time, I can see that there is a path that leads from where I am to where I’m going. I am going to find my way down that path.

You’re going to be seeing more split tests on this site. NOT just cover art. Sometimes cover copy. Sometimes blurbs.

If you’ll help me out by participating in the split testing (just click whatever you like best), I’ll be grateful.

The only data I'm gathering is clicks. Nothing personal, nothing identifiable, nothing that will track you across the web and show you damned advertising.

I'm simply learning the split-testing process to figure out how to write better cover copy and blurbs, and how to build better covers.

Whether you're a reader or a writer, thank you for reading this, and thank you for your help in clicking to let me know what you like.

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Answers on the Self-Pub Business Setup course

written by Holly

April 20, 2022

By Holly Lisle

I found myself being asked a number of questions I'd already answered, so I'm going to post abbreviated versions of the questions, and my answers, here so people can find them.

The questions have helped me get a much clearer vision of what the course has to be—as well as allowing me to understand the limitations I will have to impose in order to create it.

- **Will the course be free?**

No.

- **I don't see a segment on copyright and obtaining an ISBN and library of Congress number for your book.**

In the US, you already own copyright the instant you create your work. You can choose to buy ISBNs, (and I've done so), but if you use CreateSpace, you can get a free ISBN for your print book, and the only site that requires you to use them for ebooks is Apple, which I no longer am using or recommend (at least not if your time has value to you).

You get legitimate ISBNs at Bowkers: Here's the link.
<https://www.myidentifiers.com/>

But what you need to know on ISBNs, Library of Congress numbers, and considerably more you can find out here:
<http://www.thomsonshore.com/support-guidelines/publisher-resources/isbn-library-of-congress>

▪ **Will you be covering promotion?**

Yes. It appears to be the biggest item on the course wish list.

▪ **Is this material covered in (HTTS, HTRYN, HTWAS...)?**

No. *Nor will it be.* My writing courses are designed to be universal—they are built around foundational principles of writing that apply to ALL genres, to ALL forms of fiction, and are designed to be useful to every sort of writer, from massive planners to pure pantsers.

The Business Setup course will not be universal.

This course will require that you use specific software—most free, a couple of items purchased. Everything I use will work for both Windows and Mac users, and I will take you through step-by-step walkthroughs in which you will first learn how to, and then actually DO, the following:

PROVISIONAL Course Objectives (Subject to addition if I come across things within the scope of the course that I forgot to mention).

1. USE Scrivener (\$45 if you don't already own it) to create an ebook template, format your book, create separate versions for print, Mobi, epub, and PDF for your own store AND for Amazon, Kobo, B&N (if available to you) and your own eStore.
2. CREATE a professional-quality book, and include site-appropriate self-promotional materials IN your books to help sell your future books as well as existing ones.
3. LOCATE and PURCHASE an appropriate royalty-free image for your cover art. (under \$5)
4. CREATE a quality cover in both e-book (for ALL ebook versions) and wrap-around print format (designed to work on CreateSpace), install the cover art into each version of your ebook, using GIMP (free) as your image editor.

This is the ONE place where the course diverges from what I actually use. I use Adobe Fireworks, but that's \$300 all by itself, and my objective is to keep your one-time business setup expenses right at \$100 for everything.

5. PURCHASE a website and domain name if you don't already have one. You may choose your own host, but I will recommend mine because of its excellent security and customer service. My host also includes your chosen domain name for free when you sign up. The domain is unentailed (YOU own it, not the host), so that you may take it with you if you later transfer to a different host. HOWEVER, a website is NOT a one-time purchase, but an ongoing

expense. It is the ONLY mandatory recurring expense you will incur in setting up your business.

It is NOT the only RECOMMENDED one (more on that in the self-promotion bits).

6. INSTALL WordPress (free) on your own website if you don't already have it, and learn how to use its basic features.
7. SET UP a free, highly configurable WordPress theme that allows you to configure your website to include a blog, pages for teaser chapters and other reader goodies, and your shop.
8. SET UP necessary Privacy Policy, Terms of Service, Legal Page, Affiliate Legal Page, and other required pages (**DISCLAIMER:** I can show you how to set up your pages, and where to find information on what you need, but you are wholly responsible for making sure you have the correct pages for your business and location.)
9. INSTALL your estore plugin INTO your WordPress theme and build a working shop from which you can sell products and receive Payment through PayPal. (Other payment options are also available.
10. CREATE a sidebar shopping cart, a bookstore front page, an individual product page, your download, and at least one neat freebie—a free “sample chapters” PDF with links back to your site and shop.
11. SETUP and LINK your CREATESPACE book to your website to allow readers to purchase the print version.
12. CREATE discount coupons for both the ebooks and print version of your work that you sell from your site.
13. **OPTIONAL:** Purchase and install software for an affiliate program. (This purchase is ABOVE the

\$100 setup cost for required software.)

14. SETUP pages for and run your affiliate program, including creating Affiliate Links
15. WRITE quality self-promotion content for your weblog and site pages.
16. ACQUIRE MAILING LIST and AUTORESPONDER service, and insert working signup forms on your site.

Aside from natural traffic from search engines to your site, a mailing list is the core self-promotional part of your business. Better than Facebook, better than Twitter (this I know absolutely), probably better than Goodreads.

If you hope to have a viable business, rather than operating on luck alone, you're going to have to have one. BUT in this instance, I'm going to simply teach principle of mailing list and autoresponder creation and management. Why?

Because I use Aweber, which is superb. But Aweber is neither free, nor cheap. The minimum monthly outlay is \$20. So I'll show you what to do, and explain what to look for in an email provider, and give you a raw list of providers, for which I can offer no data beyond links.

17. WRITE quality self-promotion content for your mailing list and autoresponder.
18. LEARN what I've found out about Twitter and Facebook, and determine how or if you want to use them.
19. I have no data yet on Goodreads. I just joined a few weeks ago, I found the time to do some minimal setup on my account, but I have not yet reviewed or recommended any books. This is one area of the course that will be modified once I have something to go on.

- **If I decide to pursue commercial publishing, but later want to self-publish, what rights should I keep?**

This one's a freebie. **Hang on like hell on steroids to e-rights.** If the bastards have e-rights, having the ebooks up on one site means your book is still in print, and nothing will ever revert to you again, nor will you see another dime from that work

Voice of pissed-off experience here, remembering contracts from ages ago where editors and agents were all saying, "Oh, e-rights aren't important," and idiot me believing them.

- **When will this be available?**

I'm in the brainstorming process.

If I can get a small group of folks together to spend every day for a week with me as we actually build their sites, I could probably offer the open-enrollment version pretty soon.

I'd have to do the prep checklists and probably the initial workshop in my evening "off" hours, because I have existing commitments to finishing **Create A World Clinic**, the **How To Write A Series Extension**, and the **HTTS Walkthrough**.

But now that Margaret's completed drip and we have it working, I'll be able to start doing a few live projects like this one, then adding them to the shop.

I don't know when yet, though. First I need to be able to clearly see WHAT. ☐

- **I want to do this, but why can't I use (insert free weblog service here)?**

The issue here is simple. You can't set up a store on Blogger. In general, terms of service on the free blogging sites forbid you using them for commercial

purposes, which ALSO means you'd be in violation for promoting your books with sales links from those sites.

If you're going to have a business, it's going to take some money to start. Not a lot. But some.

Bare minimum, you're going to have to own your own website. That's \$7.95 a month or thereabouts, depending on where you go. Most places, you get a significant discount if you prepay by the year. Figure \$80-ish dollars. Wordpress is free.

The estore software I use is a one-time purchase of \$50, free upgrades for life, EXCELLENT customer service and support), and set up correctly, it's easy for customers to use.

Scrivener (writing, editing, formatting AND publishing software) is \$45. One-time purchase, most upgrades are free, EXCELLENT customer service and support.

Kindle charges, but only when you sell.

B&N charges, but only when you sell.

Kobo charges, but only when you sell.

And PayPal charges, but only when you sell. If you pass a certain monetary threshold, you have to upgrade your account and pay a monthly fee—but if that happens, you're making enough money through them that the \$20 bucks or so is worth it.

I know there are a lot of by-the-month rent-a-shops you can hook into, but the way I build, you OWN everything with no monthly outlay but the website. Writing is NOT a business where you want to speculate on whether you'll make enough every month to pay credit card merchant fees, monthly paid cart service fees, and other things.

When you are living on your fiction OWNING rather than RENTING will **save you** during lean months. Your business with MY set up will keep your monthly expenses for the ENTIRE business to **under \$8/month without an email provider, and under \$28/month with Aweber.**

- **Would you share the name of your estore software provider? I would appreciate the opportunity to check them out.**

Tips & Tricks eStore

- **Why aren't you including (X SOFTWARE) in your course?**

I wouldn't be able to teach this, because I don't USE (X SOFTWARE)

I use exactly what I'm teaching you to use (with the image editor and mailing list/autoresponder service already noted out).

I use what I use **because** it is is a on-time expense (and a small one at that) and because after testing numerous other alternatives, from free to >\$1000 price tags, the solutions I offer are the ones I have found that work best for a writer sustaining herself on a self-publishing writing income, cause the fewest headaches, offer the smoothest workflow, and produce the desired results.

I'm not going to be teaching what's possible. **I'm going to be teaching what I know works.** The difference is immense.

The purpose of this course is not going to be to teach writers how to theoretically build a business at some time in their futures.

The purpose of this course is for writers to HAVE their own complete, working business on graduation day.

Holly

P.S. For others who might consider doing so, please understand that posting your affiliate link for a product you recommend on a site you don't owe is both ungodly rude and a form of spam.

ANY site owner decides the content of his own site, and I removed and marked as spam the post from the person who did it in my previous post. – HOLLY

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Possible “Writing Business” course, and World Clinic progress #wabwm

written by Holly
April 20, 2022
By Holly Lisle

The new course concept

I mentioned this yesterday on the Write A Book With Me forum, in response to a writer's question about publishing.

I **had** done some initial brainstorming on setting up a short-story to self-pub workshop. In my initial concept, it would have been 11 weeks from basic 10,000 word story start to fully functional writing business. (Scrivener formatting, Ebook self-pub, Kindle, Nook, PDF, CreateSpace, and WordPress estore

setup, INCLUDING product setup, covered)
Story planning. Live brainstorming session.

Here was my initial thumbnail sketch:

- Story start. 3500-word assignment, and how to get it written.
- Story middle. 3500-word assignment, and how to get it written. My crit on your story start.
- Story ending. 3500-word assignment, and how to get it written. My crit on your story middle.
- My crit on your story ending and overall. How to revise.
- Story revision, titles, final crits.
- Formatting your print book. Live practice.
- Formatting your ebook versions. Live practice.
- Creating your cover art. Live practice.
- Setting up your products in CreateSpace, Amazon, B&N, and your own shop.
- Reviewing, self-promo, ongoing process of building your writing business.

HOWEVER, one of the comments related to my thumbnail description made me realize that's unnecessarily complicating what I think would be a straightforward course: **How To Set Up Your Writing Business**

Which would be THIS part, which I could do (and the student could keep up with, in six [gruelling] lessons:

- Formatting your print book. Live practice.
- Formatting your ebook versions. Live practice.
- Creating your cover art. Live practice.
- Installing and setting up your own WordPress-based bookstore
- Setting up your products in CreateSpace, Amazon, B&N, and your own shop.
- Reviewing, self-promo, ongoing process of building your writing business.

Again, I'd have to do the first run-through live, which would mean a TINY class size and a pretty high price tag for the first few students, with whom I'd be doing live-online instruction. The students would finish with a book or short story live on their own sites and the big sites (as well as any others they decided to pursue independently), and the process for putting the rest of their work into print.

But I'd be able to record the class and set it up as a *lessons / worksheets / demo videos / forum discussion* class that as many people as wanted to could take.

The sole prerequisite for this would be that the student had a finished, revised manuscript on hand.

My question is this: Is this something enough people want to do that it would be worth my time to pursue? Do you have any questions about building your own writing business (EXCLUDING TAX STUFF) that I haven't included?

Yesterday's progress

1746 words on World Clinic.

Since I've only had three hours sleep, and have a migraine, I'm not anticipating anything like that today.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON SPAMMING:

If you post affiliate links uninvited to someone else's site, YOU ARE SPAMMING. I have deleted the post in this topic where this was done, and will delete any future posts containing affiliate links.

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