

My Own Moonlight Sonata

By Holly Lisle

There was this guy in a music store once. I was about nineteen. Dude was about halfway to seven feet tall, shaved head, black-coffee complexion. I was trying out guitars, and he came in, pulled a five string electric bass off the wall, plugged it into an amp, sat down and began to play the Moonlight Sonata.

The world stopped. I leaned on the guitar I was trying out and just watched this guy, and listened. His hands were liquid, boneless, the notes perfect, the whole piece played out into the stillness like the magical gateway to another universe.

When the last notes shivered into silence and I realized there weren't going to be any more, I asked him the name of the piece (I'd never heard it before).

I've remembered his version of it forever. I've never heard a better rendition than his, and I've listened to a lot of them.

Tonight, that guy and his guitar and Moonlight Sonata found his way to a street corner in New York City, where he enchanted Aleksa, before he passed on a message she needed to hear.

I've been hanging on to that moment the majority of my life.

It was something sacred then. It came out something sacred tonight.

413 words.

You?

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Creaking Knees

By Holly Lisle

It was a tiny detail for which I had no plans. I simply noted that the man in my bit of scene tonight had knees that creaked when he walked.

I've heard knees creak, heard the sound bone makes on bone when weighed down by muscle, skin, sinew, and fluid. It's a distinctive sound—nothing else compares.

So that detail slipped in as I was writing, and then the question followed:

What if the sound Aleksa hears from his knees **isn't** that sound?

Tiny detail, tiny question...but the man escorting her to the train station came alive for me when I suddenly got the answer, and understood what it meant.

I stopped at 300 words exactly.

How did you do?

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Bouncing a story off an

assumption

By Holly Lisle

I'd sent my heroine, Aleksa in one direction yesterday—and I thought it was a pretty good one. But today as I was re-reading my last couple of paragraphs, I discovered that I was missing an opportunity to make her life miserable—as if having people trying to kill her wasn't enough.

I deleted the last two paragraphs, re-wrote them to change the neighborhood through which she was driving, and suddenly the identity of the person on the phone with her became suspicious, the instructions she was being given became frightening...

...And as I realized she was in real trouble, and getting in deeper by the second, she came up with a cool-headed way to save her own neck from a danger that hadn't even existed last night. The solution flashed on me as I was writing—as quickly as the problem had tempted me to write it, and it's just beautiful.

So tomorrow night I have something cool to start out with, and something scary to continue—and all because the neighborhood she'd previously ended up in was simply too nice.

I got 520 words not including the two paragraphs I deleted and re-wrote. Good writing night.

Coming up with any cool twists on your story?

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Aleksa's Demon

By Holly Lisle

I worked tonight on the decidedly un-supernatural demon of memory, and Aleksa's violent past. Her approach made sense to me, as did the place she went inside her mind when she knew she was in danger.

Tomorrow, I start writing Lesson 3 for HTRYN, and my beta testers start the course. I'm excited about that, too.

But tonight I flew through the words for **Dreaming the Dead**, and in my passage found the tracks of who a woman might become when she has walked through hell.

How about you?

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Setting Out A Bowl For Jim Baen

By Holly Lisle

Just over a year ago, on October 28, 2008, I had a dream that is still changing my life.

My first publisher, Jim Baen, who died on June 28, 2006, paid me a visit.

Now, I'm not pagan, Christian, or otherwise religious in any way, shape, or form. I'm not a believer in things. I'm not a

fan of faith, which to me is the denial of the provable and rational in favor of the unprovable and irrational.

I do NOT, however, think that humans are just animated meat. I think that we are creatures of energy AND flesh, and that when the flesh falls apart, the energy goes on.

In what form this energy that we were goes on, I don't know. I have some speculations based on areas of science I follow, but they're only that, and worthless beyond my own personal interest.

However, while I'm waiting for scientific proof in either direction, I'm willing to play with my theory, and consider it as rationally possible as the theory of oblivion at the moment of death, which does not deal in any fashion with what happens to the energy of life.

I'm willing to consider that, along with the possibility that my subconscious had a brilliant idea while I was sleeping and found a way to make it unforgettable, I also could have experienced something real on October 28th of last year.

Either way, it's Halloween, traditionally time to acknowledge the dead, and I would like to take this moment to set out a metaphorical place at the table for Jim Baen.

I'm still writing the book that came from that dream. The idea I got that night is still something that at times leaves me trembling with the potential power of the story, if I can only find the craft within myself to realize that potential.

And whether the idea came from Jim, or whether my subconscious used him as a highly effective attention-getter, he is in my thoughts today. And whether the experience was real or metaphorical, I offer my thanks for it.

And I miss you, Jim.

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Sweet, sweet fiction, words like storm after drought

By Holly Lisle

The story called me back tonight, in spite of this being my official night off. I suddenly knew what had to happen next—not what I had planned, but what was better than what I'd planned.

Aleksa is on her way into deadly trouble, while fleeing deadly trouble—her problem with the rock and the hard place is that both of them are careening straight at her.

So I got 479 words, and I feel like I took my first deep breath in a week.

How are you coming with your story?

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The Deadline Crunch

By Holly Lisle

Okay. So I've done 1800+ words tonight, and there are going to be a whole lot more before I'm done. What I'm writing is

already 5622 words long, and I still have a couple of critical elements to include by tonight.

Problem. My writing tonight is non-fiction. My two beta testers are starting into **How To Revise Your Novel** next Monday, and in between the hospital stuff, Margaret and I have been working madly to get the course software debugged—and now that it's done, I'm wrapping up Lesson 2 tonight because I **MUST** have a buffer between myself and the lessons students are taking, in case I get sick. But I still have a lot of stuff that has to go into the course before next Monday.

Two lessons is all I had for the whole insane Think Sideways run.

Two lessons is evidently all I'm going to have as a buffer for HTRYN, too.

Not much in the way of sick time. ☐

That's my night.

How's your writing coming along?

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No Words Tonight

By Holly Lisle

Just got back from the ER.

My brother-in-law had a seizure, and ended up back there again, and we were there all night waiting for news.

The story has an up-side this time.

A neurologist came to see him who has done the procedure he needs, who is willing to do the surgery for him, and who will work with the family and deal with the payment issues after the giant tumor is removed.

He'll have surgery this Thursday.

I did not, however, do any writing tonight.

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WABWM is back...I got 431 words

By Holly Lisle

It took me a while to get back into the story—not the least of which was time spent just getting my head back into a fiction place.

But when I left Aleksa, she was being followed, and she is now preparing to deal with the man who is about to break into her home. It always helps to leave your character in a bad spot if you're going to be away for a while—makes it much easier to get interested in figuring out what happens next.

I'm glad to be back. I've missed being here.

So, for the first time in a long time...

How is **your** writing coming?

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Followed

By Holly Lisle

Aleksa knows she's being tailed. She has no idea who's back there, but she's sure whoever it is has a connection to the murder of her colleague Mike.

258 words today, done early because I also did about 4000 words on Lesson 2 of HTRYN, and when I go to bed tonight, I intend to sleep.

How are your words coming?

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