

The Wishbone Conspiracy: Yesterday and today

written by Holly

March 1, 2019

By Holly Lisle

Yesterday, a couple things went wrong.

First, the writing dragged because I didn't know where the novel was going. I made it up to 21,843 words – so it wasn't a complete wreck. But it was not that flowing, flying race against the timer that is so fun.

Second, I chose to get sidetracked figuring out some Amazon ads for *Hunting the Corrigan's Blood*.

I did not trip. I did not fall. I made a shitty choice knowing it was a shitty choice, and spent writing time doing non-writing things, and then berated myself for the choice.

Not productive – except it pointed out to me that I absolutely have to have a Provisional Outline to stay on track with this novel.

And in starting to put that together, I found exactly where the story broke yesterday – I was focusing so much on the second conspiracy Cady and friends discovered that I forgot to follow up with the first one.

I'm only thirteen chapters into the thirty-seven I need to outline to get the book into writeable range for "short, tight chapters and 70,000 words", but with the story summary written (the story summary is what I WANT to write, though not necessarily what I'll end up with), and with my focus on weaving the two conspiracies and "Newsletter Guy" into the plot, this is coming together in an interesting fashion.

I'll get back to countable words on *Wishbone* next Thursday.

Today I'm building the foundation that will make getting them easier.

Added at 12:39 PM – it took me hours, but I got the outline built, and I like where it goes.

I know parts of it will change when I'm writing, but for the moment at least I have figured out specific things I need to accomplish in each chapter – and if I can beat those things with better ideas as I'm getting my words, that's all to the good.

Contents © Holly Lisle. <https://hollylisle.com> All Rights Reserved

The Wishbone Conspiracy: 2000 words and intrigue

written by Holly

March 1, 2019

By Holly Lisle

As of right now, I'm 21,525 words into *The Wishbone Conspiracy*, and making good progress. Not having a great day otherwise, but my daughter and I got to write together for a couple hours and hit our word counts.

And the story tied itself in more tightly with the little secret story I'm hinting at in my SF newsletter.

Not feeling great at all, though, so I'm going to get the rest of the items in my bullet journal checked off, and then just rest for a while.

Contents © Holly Lisle. <https://hollylisle.com> All Rights Reserved

The Wishbone Conspiracy: I discover Tangerine's real name

written by Holly

March 1, 2019

By Holly Lisle

Tangerine got himself in some hot water with Cady today – he's a clever chap who did some deep digging, and found out a bit of her past he would have been better off not knowing.

But during what turned into an awkward encounter between the two of them, I learned both his original real name and his "grew up and legally changed my name" name.

Original first name?

Furball. (His mother had some serious issues.)

Grown up, changed real name?

Keff Ronin.

Keff is having a much worse day than he anticipated. But it will get better.

Because when all is said and done, he's one of the good guys. It's just a bit hard to tell that at the moment. He hasn't yet done a good job of proving it.

2116 words today – took a while, but I'm happy with what I got.

Contents © Holly Lisle. <https://hollylisle.com> All Rights Reserved

The Wishbone Conspiracy: Tangerine Returns

written by Holly

March 1, 2019

By Holly Lisle

Today, a blast from the past who yesterday showed up for this party uninvited today became a major part of the story.

Tangerine was a one-scene character in *Hunting the Corrigan's Blood*. He was in that story to change Cady's appearance when she was in trouble but did not yet know exactly how much trouble she was in.

The rule of thumb with characters you don't want to have popping up uninvited is exactly the same as it is with stray animals:

- Don't name them
- Don't feed them
- Don't get to know them too well

I did all three things in Tangerine's one scene.

I gave him a name, I discovered that he, like Cady, was a Maryschild, and I let him say the bunch of funny lines that he threw at me.

And then I came up with nine more novel concepts for Cady that I planned to pitch to Baen, one of which actually had Tangerine in it. That was Number Eight, I think.

But then... Baen didn't reprint *Hunting the Corrigan's Blood*, a book that hit the Locus bestseller list two months in a row and sold out its first printing in two months.

And refused to look at any more SF from me.

YEARS passed before I finally reacquired the rights to *Hunting the Corrigan's Blood*. More years passed until I made the time to get it back into print and to write its sequel, *Warpaint*. That second book rode off into the sunset with the idea for *The Wishbone Conspiracy* firmly planted in my brain. Where it sat simmering for several MORE years, because... <sigh>

Life is what happens while you're making other plans.

This is my planned third book.

But ***Tangerine was nowhere*** in my concept for this book.

He showed up yesterday as an uninvited extra, and today made himself a main character. ***The Wishbone Conspiracy*** is not – and has nothing to do with – the novel I plan to write that actually features him.

Oh, no.

This is him showing up dragging something useful to prove me how much I need him, in much the same fashion my much-missed cat Bouncer used to bring me squirrel hindquarters as his contribution to the family. "See, I'm taking care of you."

The squirrels, the birds, and I were a lot happier when I turned Bouncer and my other cats into indoor-only cats. Bouncer? Probably not so much. He'd sit on windowsills and shit-talk the wildlife outside the windows.

But Tangerine... turns out that isn't his real name... And who he *was* wasn't and isn't who he is, either.

He and Cady actually were acquainted with each other back in their Maryschild past, though in their previous meeting neither recognized the other.

And today he dropped the back half of a squirrel he'd apparently been holding between his metaphorical teeth and without saying the words, told Cady, "You need me."

Turns out, he was right.

Oh! Words I got on TWC today? 2024

Contents © Holly Lisle. <https://hollylisle.com> All Rights Reserved

The Wishbone Conspiracy: Tangerine?

written by Holly

March 1, 2019

By Holly Lisle

I got 2014 words today on *The Wishbone Conspiracy*, and sent Cady home – back to Cantata, back to Oldcity...

And someone showed up whom I was not expecting to see for

several more books.

Tangerine, the bodyartist from *Tangerine's Dream* back in Book One.

I knew when I met Tangerine that he was a lot more than he was letting on, and over the years I've found out a lot more about him. But he wasn't supposed to be in this book.

Until he showed up uninvited.

Tangerine met Cady when she dropped into the newbie bazaar, ambushing both of us. And he met her intentionally, knew she was coming, and...

I have no clue why. What he's doing there, what he wants from her – the book I've planned for him is something entirely different from this one, and I still want to write that one. But this isn't that.

THIS ties in to the guy whose dead wife Cady just helped find, and into the Wishbone Conspiracy, maintained for at least a couple centuries by real folks who get real bennies from it.

So tomorrow is going to be interesting and fun, because Tangerine is going to tell Cady why he came to meet her and volunteered to help her, in spite of the fact that he's a big, important Cantata councilman now.

Going to tell her what he wants from her.

And when he tells her, I'm going to get to be there to hear what he says.

If I didn't have a stack of other things in my bullet journal for the day that MUST be done today, I'd just keep writing. But – this is going to make it really easy to roll out of bed tomorrow morning.

Contents © Holly Lisle. <https://hollylisle.com> All Rights

Reserved

Wishbone Conspiracy: 2176 words and some GREAT twists

written by Holly

March 1, 2019

By Holly Lisle

Fun, fun writing day today. I ran for about two hours, and got 2176 words, a really cool twist I didn't expect, a second twist that I did, and put Cady, Tarko, and Storm Rat in the eye of not one but TWO coming storms.

Herog is off doing other stuff in this novel, so is missing the fun – but he's dealing with fun of his own.

And I just love the way this is clicking.

On to the next thing for today, which is putting together and posting my Patreon Rewards for my patrons, and then getting the other half dozen things in my bullet journal completed.

But 'fiction first' and the ten minute timer make my mornings crazy fun.

Contents © Holly Lisle. <https://hollylisle.com> All Rights Reserved

Wishbone Conspiracy: Excellent writing day

written by Holly

March 1, 2019

By Holly Lisle

I got started late this morning.

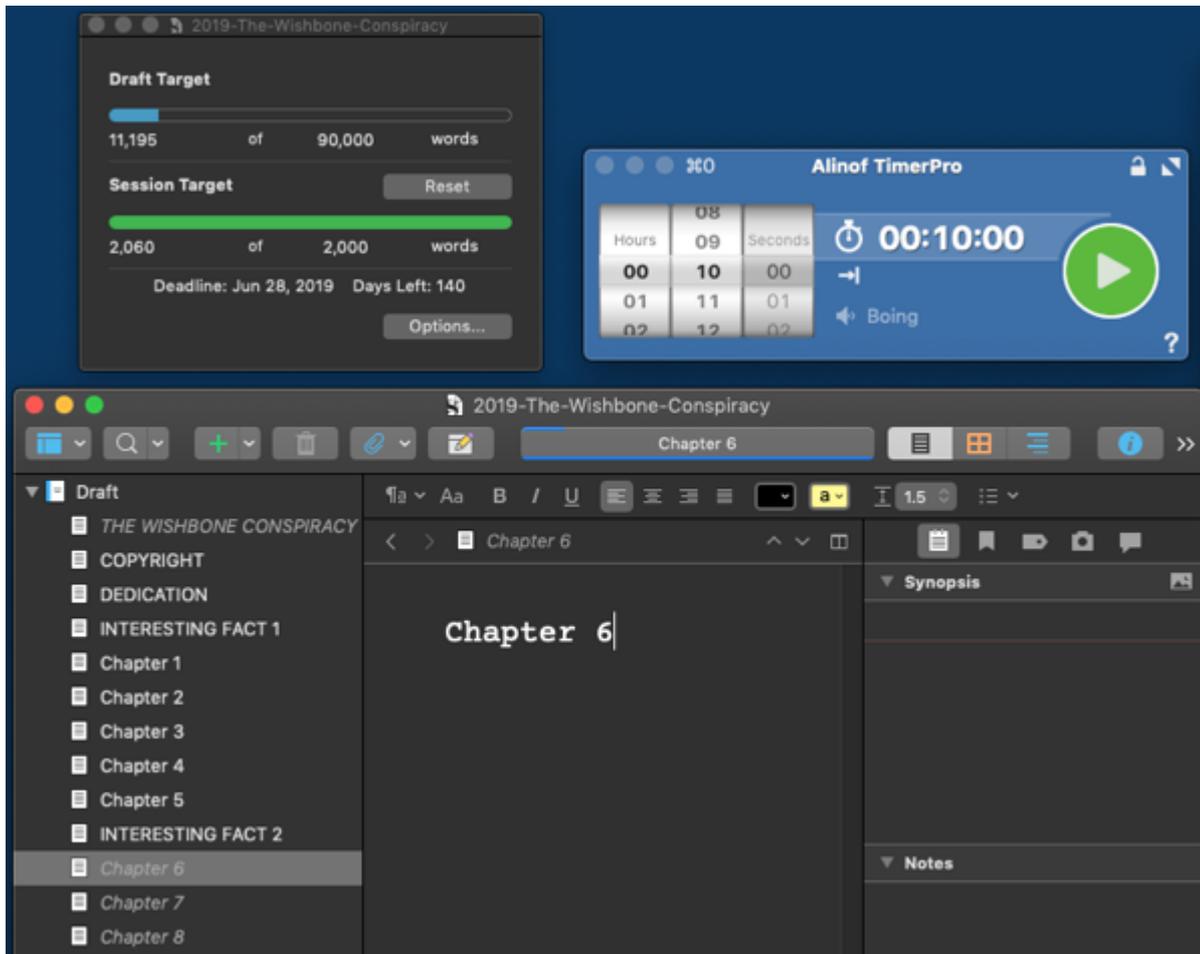
Every once in a while I have a night where I can't sleep. I went to bed around midnight, woke up at two-thirty, and couldn't get back to sleep until seven AM. So I wasn't back up and at work until ten AM.

And I feel a bit fried. But I set my timer, set my counter, and jumped in on finishing Chapter 5 of The Wishbone Conspiracy, and then writing out my "Interesting Fact #2" – which turned out to be as interesting as I'd hoped, and I think pretty creepy as well. And wrote for about two and a half hours.

Got 2060 words in that time.

Cady's current job has just run sideways into something she didn't expect. It's unrelated... but its big, and nasty, and in her pursuit of the truth in her current investigation, she has a funny feeling she might have stirred up something ugly that should have been left sleeping.

I had a blast writing today's thing. And tomorrow, I'll start Chapter 6.



Contents © Holly Lisle. <https://hollylisle.com> All Rights Reserved

Retool of The Wishbone Conspiracy Playlist

written by Holly
March 1, 2019
By Holly Lisle

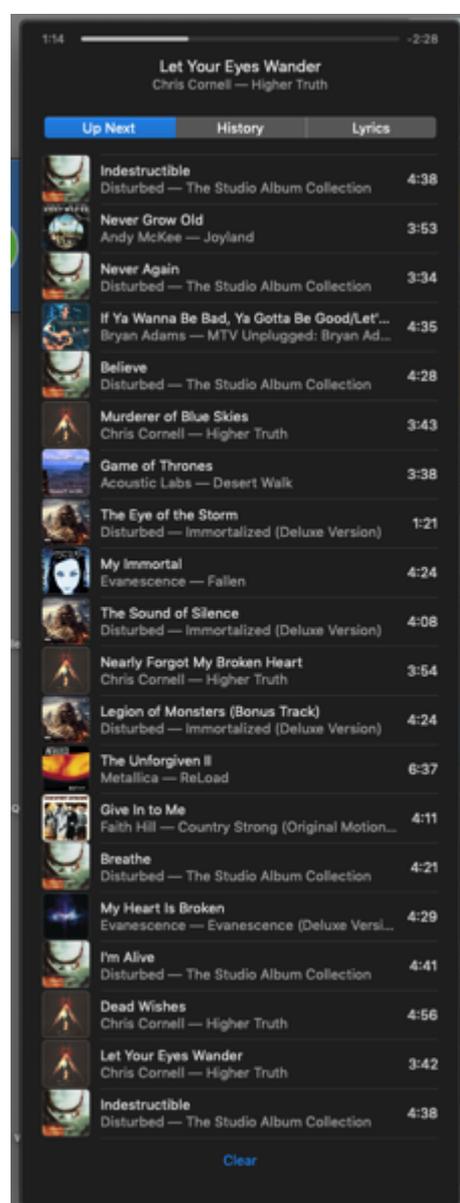
The themes of *The Wishbone Conspiracy* are getting clearer for me, and I did a pretty major rip-apart of the playlist I'm using to stay focused on the novel during my two days a week, and to get myself into that place every time I write.

I might have too many songs in the list. For some books, I've looped just one song (which drives people around me nuts). But this is a big story I'm telling, with secrets inside of secrets that are sneaking onto the page.

So for now, it has a pretty long list that won't give me a lot of repetition.

Here's the new list. A lot more Disturbed, some instrumentals, some Chris Cornell, some old stuff that connects to this in ways I haven't figured out yet.

All of these are selected by the process of "Muse says so."



The Wishbone Conspiracy: My odd discovery about writing Cady

written by Holly

March 1, 2019

By Holly Lisle

I got 2056 words today on *The Wishbone Conspiracy*. Finished Chapter 2, and now am 586 words into Chapter 3.

I did this in about an hour and a half writing time – eight ten-minute timers and part of a ninth.

The story flowed, the characters did interesting things. And I discovered that my mystery character from the Cadence Drake mailing list emails (the little puzzle game I've gotten behind on) is involved in this book. That worked itself into this without warning, and jumped out at me with a little "GOTCHA!" that startled me.

But the odd discover I made today about writing the Cadence Drake novels wasn't that.

It's just that being inside Cady's head is... different.

She's not the only first-person character I've written.

But she's the only one who, every time I write her, feels like coming home when I slip into her voice.

It's hard to stop writing. Hard to hit my word limit and quit,

rather than just pushing on.

Today was a GOOD writing day.

Contents © Holly Lisle. <https://hollylisle.com> All Rights Reserved

First new fiction deadline: Update on The Wishbone Conspiracy

written by Holly

March 1, 2019

By Holly Lisle

Wrote for right at two hours today. Got on a roll, did not want to quit.

Got 2269 words on *The Wishbone Conspiracy*.

Cady has a new job and a new client, and in what has to be a very bad sign, both Storm Rat and Tarko have volunteered to go along with her on this job for her client ... unpaid ... just to keep her company.

MEANWHILE

The words came easily this morning, and I had some fun putting together the situation.

Have changed my wordcount and target goals. I'm now looking at 2000 words per day as my objective on this project.

That's up from both one hour and "about 1500" which is what I

comfortably do in one hour.

I did this because I increased the planned length on this novel to 90,000 words. Cadence Drake novels run 90,000 words.

So...

Divide 90,000 words by 2000 words, and you get 45 days. And working on this novel two days a week (Thursdays and Fridays on my current schedule) and without figuring in LIFE, I'll finish the first draft in 22.5 weeks.

Now add the LIFE MATH. There are going to be a random number of events that screw up a random number of Thursdays and Fridays. I'm going to pull random shit out of the air, and say that there are going to be THREE weeks that get totally screwed up, and in which I get no words on *The Wishbone Conspiracy*.

That takes me to 25.5. Round up. 26 weeks.

So my COMPLETE FIRST DRAFT goal for this novel is July 25, 2019.

After that it'll take a month or two to get the revision done, the editing done, the bug-hunt done, the cover art done, and get the book published.

But...

Fiction!! Lot's of it. Really digging in, doing three projects I love, is clicking with me.

I'm already looking forward to tomorrow, and finding out what happens next.

Contents © Holly Lisle. <https://hollylisle.com> All Rights Reserved