

# Ohio 5: Chapter 2 Finished!

written by Holly

February 1, 2022

By Holly Lisle

So today went well.

For me, anyway.

It was NOT a nice day for my main character, who experienced pain, and feeling like a jerk (deservedly), and who has been tucked out of the way for the time being with the simple instruction "STAY OUT OF TROUBLE."

I don't see that going the way the person who gave her the instruction had hoped. It won't be because she engages in "voluntary stupidity" in which the character knows the intelligent thing to do and doesn't do it because she's an idiot.

Rather, tomorrow something is going to go badly wrong so that she HAS to not do what he told her to do, because if she doesn't act, worse things will happen than the things that have happened already.

But I have no idea what's going to go wrong...

I'll find out how and why she doesn't do the simple thing she's supposed to do tomorrow, while I'm writing it.

Right now, stuff is just cooking in the back of my mind.

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# 452 words today on Ohio 5... and wicked fun!

written by Holly  
February 1, 2022  
By Holly Lisle

There's hurting characters for the good of the story.

There's one-upmanship between two characters who have both provably been through some serious shit...

And then there was today, where I laughed my ass off while being Mean To Characters I Love(TM), where the one-upmanship got really, really intense.

452 words for the day, 3574 total on Ohio 5 after some days where I didn't get to do any words at all (because we're down to the wire on moving the site).

Today... was glorious.

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# Ohio Novel #5- 251 words on Chapter 2

written by Holly  
February 1, 2022  
By Holly Lisle

So to get the context of this, the picture above is what's going on outside my house right now.

I'm inside, where it's warm (if you're wearing sweatpants, double-layered socks, and a hand-knit wool sweater, anyway).

I'm writing about Ohio in the spring... which (ahem) this *ain't*... while looking out the window at snow spiraling down off the barn next door, with the snow currently coming down so hard that the house catty-corner from us across the street is just a hazy impression of its big old monster self.

Turns out, this is the perfect time to write a spring scene. Because to get spring right, you have to want it. You have to be able to summon the shapes and colors and sounds and scents, the still-cool air that feels like a kiss, the smell of warming earth and fresh-sprouting grass... and as much as I'm enjoying watching the snow because I'm inside and don't have to drive in it, (and right now, we don't have a road anyway... we have an unbroken blanket of snow that's going to be last to get cleared because we live on an alley...) I do find myself happy to contemplate dogwoods and crabapples and Judas trees in full bloom.

Those are next on the Ohio Weather menu.

Meanwhile, I got 251 words, NOT about the weather, but about scary things happening to people I like.

Now I have to go talk with my guys over at HollysWritingClasses.com about the upcoming website move. And work on that. So...

ONWARD!

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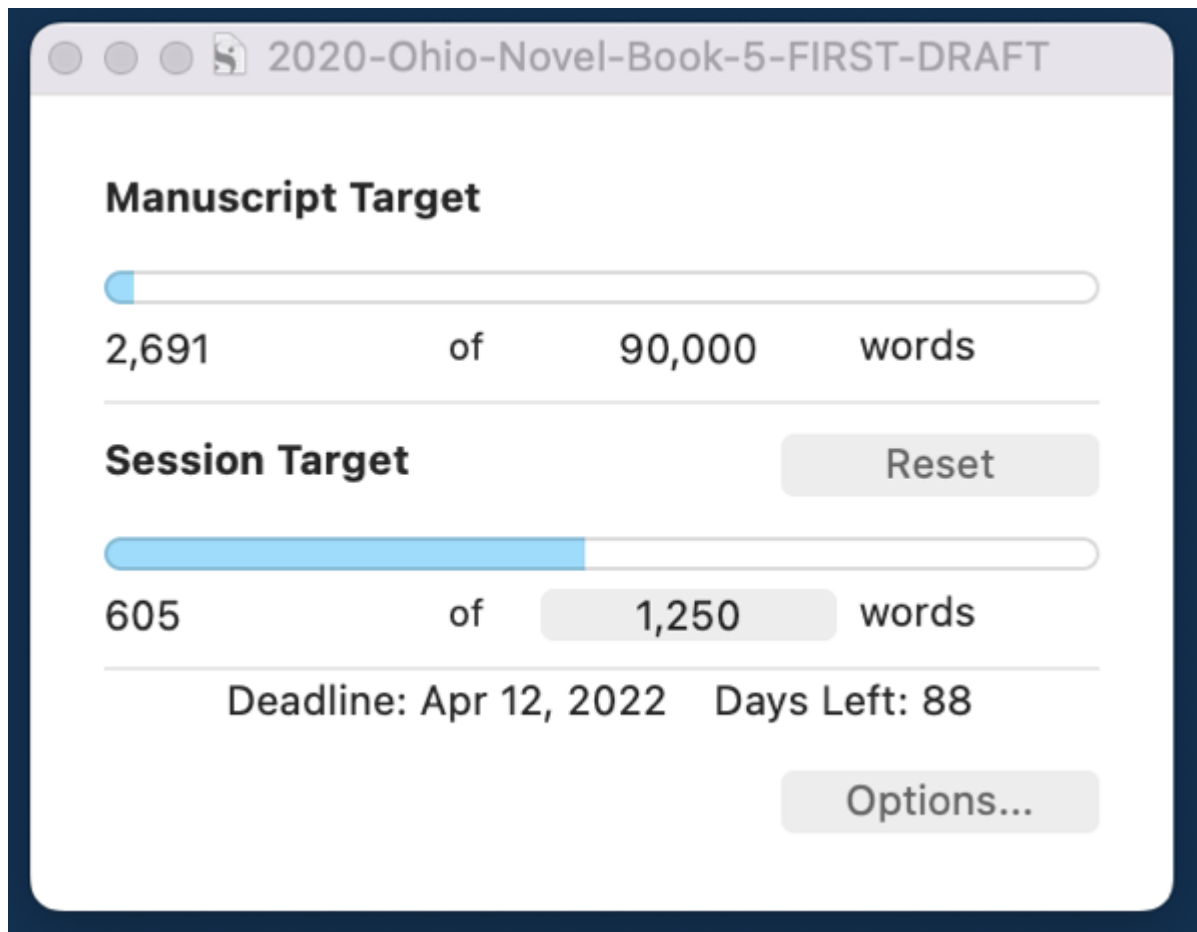
# Finished Chapter 1 of Ohio Five!

written by Holly  
February 1, 2022  
By Holly Lisle

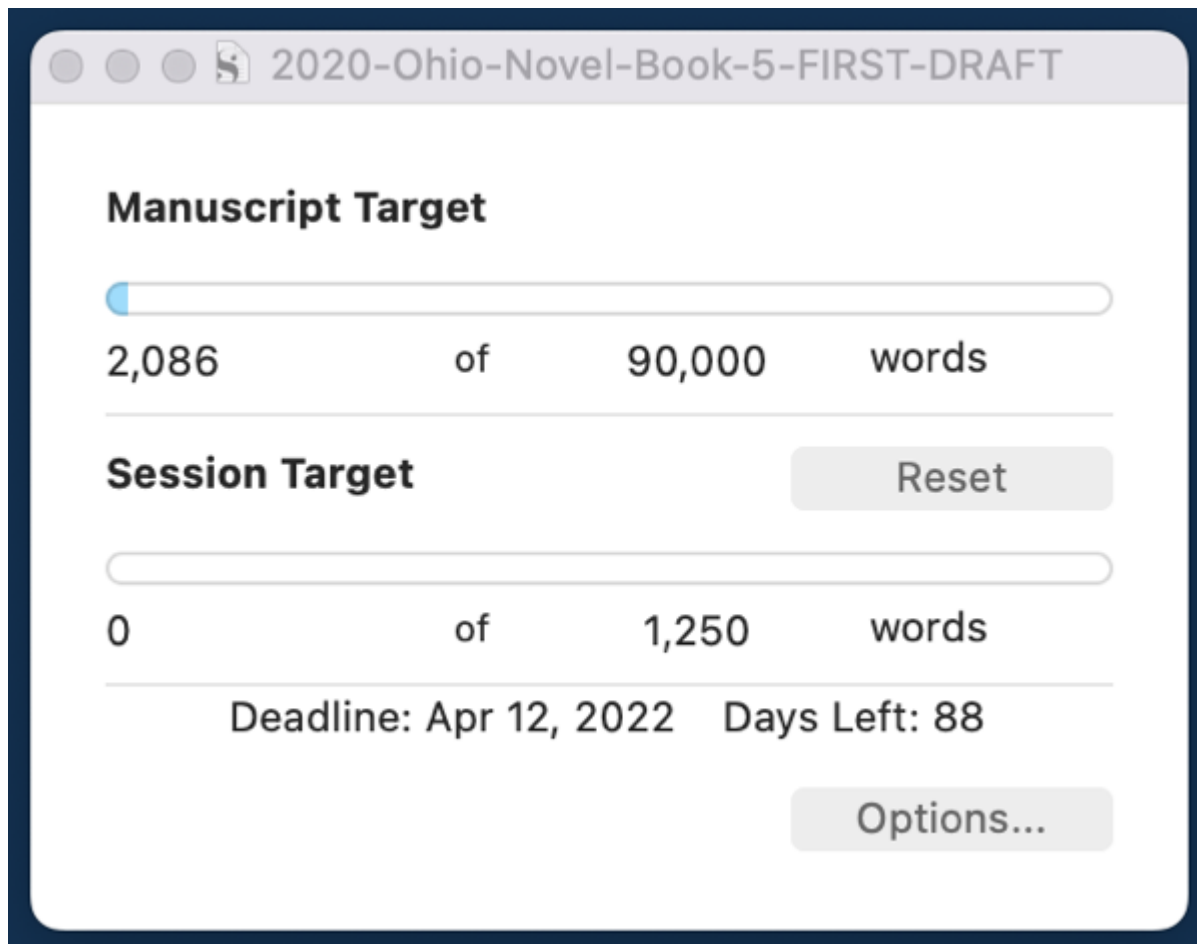
And it was not easy. I wrote words, then deleted a BUNCH of words, including some of the ones I'd just written, and then got the right words.

I managed to capture this in pictures.

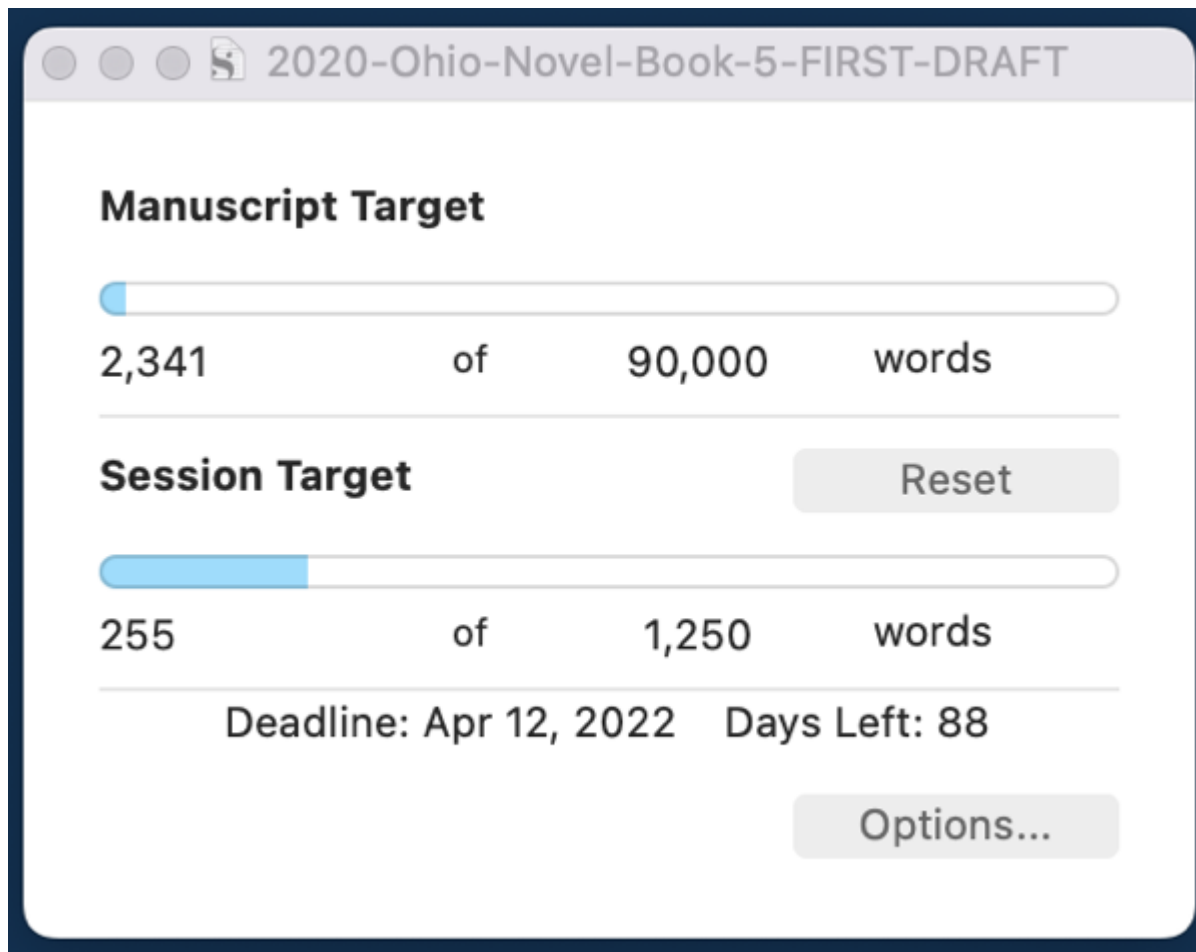
My starting wordcount...



The wordcount after I realized I was writing in the wrong direction and deleted a hefty chunk of stuff...



And my final wordcount after realizing what the right direction was...



It's a process. And this time the process let me dump a lot of thicket so that I could see both the forest AND the trees. Which, considering my main character and the guy who was first to the scene of a BIG crime are now hiking together towards the woods, is an appropriate metaphor.

With good and happy and dangerous words now on the page, I can head off to work on the website again, a more cheerful and considerably less stressed-out person.

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# Another stolen hour on Ohio Five... 541 words, and a new discovery. AND a website update.

written by Holly  
February 1, 2022  
By Holly Lisle

In Ohio Five this morning, I got a bit of additional backstory on the terribly important guy who has now gone missing, and am moving to a big moment for my main character.

And I got to write some more fiction, which was a pure joy.

Now back to the website, with the knowledge that we are very close to being done with it, at which point I'll be able to go back to Book 5 pretty much full time.

Giving my first hour to writing Ohio Five these past couple of mornings has been a joy. Starting the day with my real job reminds me that the website building (which has never, ever been my favorite thing) is just a temporary disarrangement of my life, and that the work I love is waiting on the side of this.

Now, however, I'm off to [HollysWritingClasses.com](https://HollysWritingClasses.com) to find out how close we are to wiping out the old software and replacing it with the new software. Pretty sure it will be early this week. And if it is, after my hour of stolen time each morning, I'm going to be doing a bunch of bringing writers into their new accounts a bit at a time, and working in the help desk with Becca getting folks back to their classes, and making sure all the links we break in the move get updated to working links in all the lessons of all my classes.



I'm SO grateful to have site members who volunteered to help out.

Wish us all luck on the post-site-upgrade repairs. <shudder> It is going to be a big job.

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## **My next week-ish: Brain reset, but no rest**

written by Holly

February 1, 2022

By Holly Lisle

I may not be in here regularly for the next week (I am possibly being a bit optimistic on that week thing, by the way. It might take me two or three to do everything I have to do.)

The first part of what I'm doing is letting Book 4 settle into the back of my brain. I need to figure out Book 5 – and Book 5 needs to bring the first series to a strong ending. The first reason is that I cannot know how well these will do, and if they flop, I don't want the folks who bought all five to be left hanging.

The second is because if they do well, I have stuff in mind for following books, and I'm torn between each one being a complete adventure, and doing a second five-book series.

Gotta get some distance, some perspective – and gotta think about the stuff in the closet. It's a pretty scary closet.

The other thing is, of course, the HollysWritingClasses.com complete rebuild.

The classes – lessons, videos, and downloads – are already built on out out-of-the-way work domain. My moderators did that part.

But the SITE is not built. I hooked it up to the new shopping cart yesterday, and we did test purchases, and the word that comes to mind is... BUTTERY. I don't imagine a lot of people "squeeee" over a new shopping cart.

I squeeeeee.

I've owned this software for years – I got it when Dan was building the first version of the HollysWritingClasses.com site. He couldn't come up with a way to integrate it into what he was building, though.

So I just hung onto it – it was, like the stuff I create, a one-time purchase that you can go back to any time.

And when I had to buy all-new classroom software, I made DAMN sure before it bought it that it worked with my existing cart.

And... <SQUEEEE! (yeah, again)> Boy, does it.

Dead simple to set up classes, and my moderators doing test purchases were saying stuff like, "Wow, that was flawless."

FLAWLESS.

*We like flawless.*

The software comes with built-in affiliate software, so the affiliate program for members will be coming back.

EMAILS.

My database guys got me ALL the membership emails for HollysWritingClasses, going back to the days when there were

just the one class: How to Think Sideways.

There were more than 7000.

Obviously, a lot of these are going to be dead emails.

And obviously, not all of the folks who owned the classes will want to come back.

I told folks when I sent out the emails, If you unsubscribe, we'll remove you from the classes. Had a total of 222 unsubscribes when I came in this morning, handed off those email addresses to my database guys so they could start deleting accounts.

Had 477 so far who will be staying. I'm delighted such a high percentage of folks are staying.

**I'll give this a week-ish to sort itself out, re-email only those folks who didn't do anything, and give them one more week.**

Then I'll delete all the non-responders from the mailing list, and my moderator/database guys (Tom & James) will remove their classes and delete their accounts.

And we'll move on to the next big obstacle.

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# 6:47 AM – Finishing Ohio 4, starting Ohio 5, while building the new HollysWritingClasses.com site

written by Holly  
February 1, 2022  
By Holly Lisle

So...

My website over on HollysWritingClasses.com is undergoing a **massive** overhaul (complete site rebuild).

And I anticipated the process taking FOUR months.

**Turns out... it's probably not anything like that.**

My amazing community moderators over there have ***already finished building all the classrooms*** in the new software, and getting all the class materials into them – a process I'd expected to take about **two months**. That means that all the lessons, all the downloads, all the videos, all the EVERYTHING... are done.

**Except** for the lesson timers (the things that make a new lesson show up each week for the writer taking the class), which I have to go in and do manually.

Turns out, that takes about ten seconds a lesson, and all the lessons are (for the person building the class), on the same page, so you can just go through and check a box and put in a number and it takes a couple seconds if you're being careful.

So, timers are a non-issue. I have to do them, but they won't slow anything down. That's what I'm going to do today on all

the classes... and I anticipate having all the classes done today... even if I have to duplicate the BIG classes to offer the slower-pace/smaller monthly price one-lesson-every-OTHER-week option.

I'd figured another two months for my two database guys to figure out how to move all the existing members and all their existing classes into the NEW database, while I built the front end – the sales pages for the classes, for us to test the new classroom with the new, beautiful, professional, already integrated shopping cart.

**And it very well might take us that long.**

But since the software we're using has built-in professional integration with the shopping cart we're using... probably not.

Moving ever single writer who ever bought a class (and who therefore still owns it) into the new database might in fact take two months.

**But I'm going to say odds are pretty slim that anything else will.**

So I'm saying BEST CASE, we could be on the new software and live on December 8th (one month from now).

I'm saying that the **Reasonable Assumption** is that we'll be moving everyone and everything to the new site (and the new site to [HollysWritingClasses.com](http://HollysWritingClasses.com)) around the New Year.

I'm excited. There are a lot of things I'll be able to do on the new software that I cannot do on the old software... but that's a post for another time.

Right now... I'm heading in to write the ending of Ohio 4 novel. Yep. LAST SCENE. And I know what I want to have in it.

Tomorrow, I'll start outlining Ohio 5.

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## **OHIO #4: GOT 'EM! 2110 words... and sheer joy!**

written by Holly  
February 1, 2022  
By Holly Lisle

Fun, fun writing.

It flew, and I made myself laugh.

I'm not done with the novel yet, but I'm done for today.

I left things hanging, but I wrote considerably more than my 1250 words goal.

Now I have to go work on the website.

Monday, I get to come back to this, and to the follow-up scene I realized has to follow this one to end the book.

Beautiful stuff today, and a process that makes me happy every single time it clicks like this.

Also... remember Crosby, Stills, Nash, Young... and the song Our House. The band and the song get a weird little nod in this book.

# **I know how Book 4 ends!!! And will probably finish the novel TODAY!**

written by Holly  
February 1, 2022  
By Holly Lisle

I woke up this morning knowing the ending. As has happened sometimes in the past with novels, it was just *there*, something my brain figured out while my body was asleep, and dumped into the hopper for me to see when I woke up.

So TODAY, I need to dump about 1200-1400 words that went in the wrong direction.

That's a whole three seconds of my day.

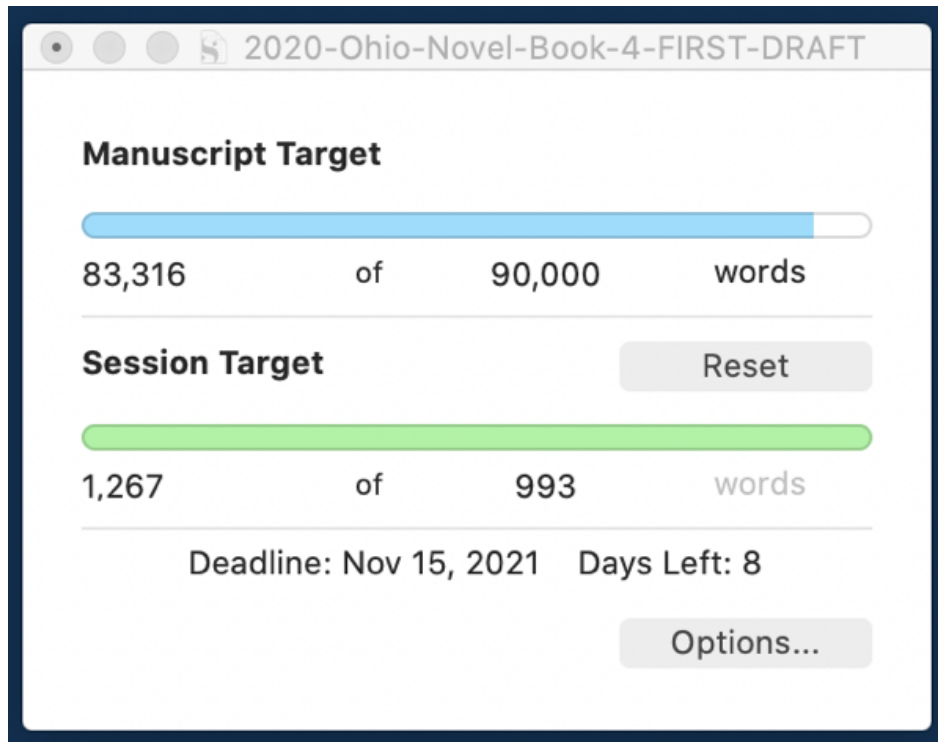
And then I settle in, and I write the ending.

That means that this book won't look like 90,000 words when I finish it. Not a problem. Short books for me always get longer in revision. (Long ones frequently do that, too – but that isn't today's issue.)

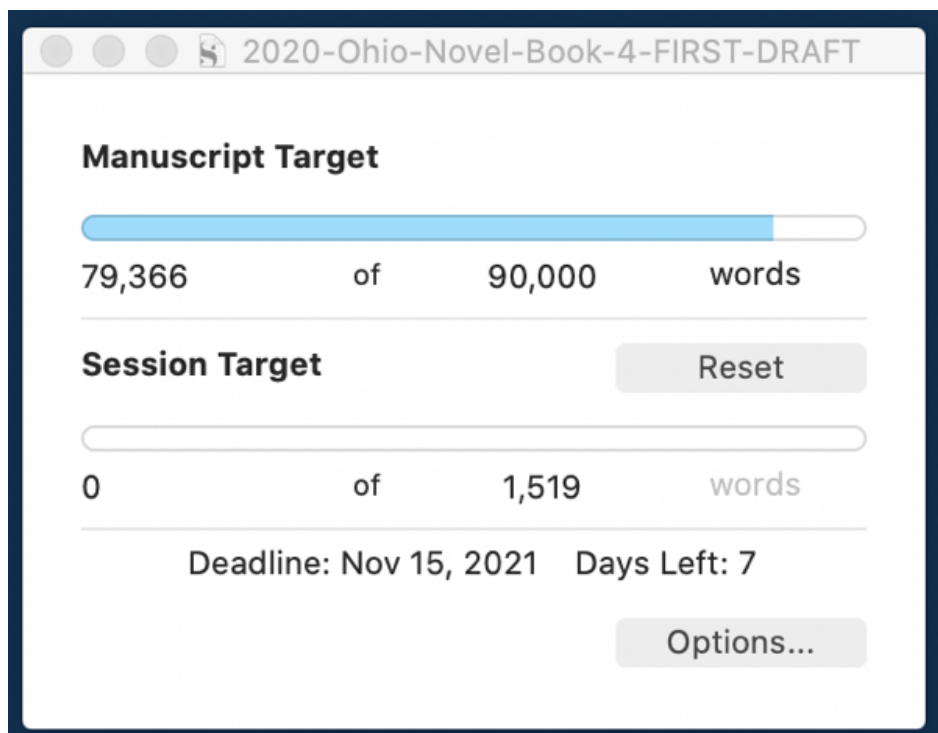
But odds are BIG that I'm going to finish Ohio 4 today.

If I stop messing around here.

So... this was yesterday's end-of-day word-count. 83,316.



And having just cut the words that had to go, this is where I'm starting this morning.



You can see that I ripped out a lot of words. Don't care, they needed to go, they were slowing me down. I know how BOOK FOUR ENDS.

So now... it's time to wreak havoc, and let loose the Cat of War.



Hot SHIT, I love this job!

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# There were chickens. There was roosting... and Evil Took A Bow

written by Holly  
February 1, 2022  
By Holly Lisle

Another day of building the fix for the HollysWritingClasses.com website.

And then a day of coming in late, and tired... and falling into the story.

I did not know that today was going to be the day one of my secondary villains came out of hiding. Or that the various things this character has done would pick TODAY to... er... roost like chickens.

I might have chickens on the brain (my daughter has taken up raising them).

But I stepped into the story distracted by work problems, by stuff that hangs over my head that isn't any fun... and the story kicked me in the shit, howled "Pay attention..."

And then did weird, interesting things.

And I got good words and lots of them.

**1,334 words for the day, 82,047 overall.**

I'm closing on the end. I don't know what it's going to be – my outline went out the damn window some ways back like ... like a chicken eyeing a big vat of boiling oil (now I want fried chicken)...

And now I'm thinking blogging while hungry is a bad idea.

BUT...

I'm near the end of Book 4.

Something today changed everything.

My MC has a new enemy. A new way of seeing not just her town, but her time since she arrived in Ohio.

And until I've slept on it, I'm not going to know exactly what changed, or exactly what effect it's going to have. But I'll say this: Tomorrow should be *really* interesting.

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