

Up early, with a fun scene that flew – 1319 new words, and 79,749 total on Book 3

By Holly Lisle

I'm getting close to the end of the third book.

At the moment, things are going right for my main character... and days like that are fun to write.

However, all the rightness is leading up to things going wrong for my main character in ways she cannot yet even imagine.

I have a grin on my face typing this, because I *can* imagine...

And she's about to take on a whole horde of the most difficult employees in history.

They are the stuff of legend – and so are their moments of ... impossible-ness.

And I get watch them in action while I write them.

I'm so happy.



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The combat accountant debuts peacefully... 1811 words, and 69,295 total

By Holly Lisle

...and he introduces a weird and complicated good-news/bad-news problem for my MC.

I've been looking forward to writing this scene. And writing it turned out to be as much fun as I'd hoped it would be. I got to play a bit with Earth geology, and the problems of high finance and non-liquid assets (though I guess her new assets could be made liquid if it got hot enough)...

Anyway, today was a fun writing day that left me with a spiffy little twist I get to pick up on tomorrow... and now that I have my words, I still have a bunch of time left in which to catch up with all the non-writing work that builds up over the weekend.

So... ONWARD!



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The combat accountant arrives. The hero wanders, lost. And a monster speaks. 1333 words today, 67,484 total.

By Holly Lisle

I'm now reworking every damn plot sentence, writing new ones before I get my words each day.

The series is gathering its own momentum, stripping off bits

of “pretty” and “fancy” that I thought would have a place, and getting sharper and edgier as I go.

Lots of magic – but that is cleaner, simpler, and more straightforward than what I’d imagined and initially built.

The villains are gaining power.

The heroes are feeling overwhelmed.

And while the series isn’t unfolding exactly as I’d planned, when the villains are gaining power in the middle book, and the heroes are feeling overwhelmed, *things are in fact going the way they need to.*

And today, my MC finally visits her accountant. She’ll meet him on Monday – today she just made it past the secretary.

Monday, I think, is gonna be a LOT of fun.

* * *

A bit of extra for readers who like sneak peeks

I’ve argued with myself about including this in the blog:

It’s a bit of worldbuilding that I did that probably won’t end up in the book. As written, anyway.

I was working out the details of an important secondary character. The character is already there. Has been in the story all along, but invisible. Makes an appearance in Book Two, but not physically. It’s... complicated.

But I was trying to understand this character, and because the paper was handy and I knew I wouldn’t lose it, I started worldbuilding in my daily dot journal, and right in the middle of explaining what I needed to in upcoming scenes, the secondary character’s voice showed up.

As follows:

*Stand you then on this fair ground and call forth hell?
You do not know hell as I do. I am its beast,
And it has burned my flesh and ground my bones –
Devoured me, left nothing back but rage.*

*I know you, bitch – you pup of coward curs!
I've seen that face across a thousand years
And heard time and again your snivelling welp
With tail tucked 'tween your legs...
And now I'm here.*

*I know your shabby soul, and I have come at last
To eat you whole, and cleanse us of your reek.*

This is raw first draft, it doesn't rhyme, and when I look at it, it's simply a weird mood piece... and as I said, it probably won't be in the book. At least not as poetry – and why the damn monster spoke to me in iambic pentameter I cannot even begin to guess. My mind runs in iambic pentameter on occasion, but again... I don't know why.

Anyway, I've already written this character into the story back in book two, I think – where I met it in terrible and terrifying circumstances.

And now it's pushing to come back.



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1131 words in the wrong direction: I just caught what I was doing, and I'm going to start off tomorrow by ripping back

By Holly Lisle

So. Word-counts first. I got 1131 words today (fewer than my goal of 1250, but not by much).

I stopped with time still on the clock and some words not yet written because I realized that I took yesterday's great leap forward, and started driving this novel into an area of fiction in which I do not under any circumstances want to write.

Tomorrow, I'm going to have to start my day by ripping out a chunk of today's words. Might be as few as 250, might be as many as a thousand.

But the rest of today, I'm going to be thinking about what I can create to replace the part of the story I wrote into that giant pothole, and that I'm going to have to destroy.

Not the best of days.

But at least I caught my error before it ate the second half of Book Three.

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**Yup. That worked like
gangbusters: 1376 words,
58,903 total**

By Holly Lisle

I ripped out a big chunk of *happy*, and replaced it with *mean, bad, terrible, monstrous, scary...*

The *happy* is now all the way at the end of the book, where it belongs, not right smack dab in the middle where things are supposed to be going from bad to worse.

So now things are **good** – *in that they have gone from really bad to way, WAY worse*. My main character (MC) is in hellish trouble, the person who was supposed to help my MC has been made so dangerous to her that the character tasked with protecting my MC's protector tries to kill its charge... and, oh...

What a tangled mess we weave... (Marmion, Sir Walter Scott)

My MC has to deal with protecting something dangerous from the one who was supposed to protect *that*, and tomorrow she has to figure out how to start unravelling the nightmare we're now

all firmly knotted up inside.

And that's Monday.

<insert big, happy grin here>



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**My poor, poor characters!
1673 words, one scene that
had my gut in knots... and a
small and lovely win**

By Holly Lisle

I was up early, which helped. Six AM gives you a bunch of extra day to work with.

But while I didn't know what I was going to write this morning when I came in and sat down, I knew what the writing had to do.

And all I can say is that I pity the characters who show up out of my subconscious mind when I'm holding auditions for roles in novels.

Such awful, scary, *scarry* things happen to them.

This was the day where scars were born.

And this was the day when a couple of my key characters were hoping that they could hide in the closet where I wouldn't find them so they didn't have to show up for work.

But they walked into the page (grudgingly and trudging) and embraced their roles (while calling me by some impressively bad names)... and my hands flew. This was the Bad Things Happen, Bad Things Get Worse, And THEN... part of the book.

Second half of the midpoint for the novel, and for the series, AND for the character.

It will get worse for her, of course. Still two and a half more books to go, and the darkest darkness comes in book five.

But today was where my MC had to prove that she CAN do what she believes she cannot do, because without this moment, without this action, she would never have a chance of getting anything that she loves through to the end.

She knows she is and has always been simply the wrong kind of person to do what has to be done – except she also knows that she's it. The one person. The one chance. If she doesn't do what has to be done, there isn't anyone else...

And while I was mentally gearing myself up to write this, having absolutely no clue what was going to happen today – only knowing why it had to happen... the still small voice of my Muse whispered, “We haven’t heard from Sam in a while...”

And the click that followed was a piece of my own childhood ripping itself out of my earliest memory and throwing itself onto the page, fitting disaster with survival, fitting monsters with home, holding my main character up and keeping her focused and resolute during an unarmed walk through an inescapable and unthinkable hell.

Today was a very, VERY good writing day.



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Brutal writing day. NET GAIN of 769 words, but to even get into a positive word count was a damn battle

By Holly Lisle

Okay. I knew the fight scene was going to get messy.

I knew getting my MC home was going to be tricky.

Some of what I wrote yesterday was really good, and it put my character in exactly the right sort of danger.

Some of it wandered off into the weeds and got lost, and meandered around – and I had to burn down the weeds, cut the head off the meandering, and wipe up the mess afterwards.

Which is actually pretty much what's now in the chapter. Chapter 11, FWIW.

And I like what I have.

I just ran out of time with fewer words than I would have liked to have.

Still, I can take the fixed, much better scene with me into tomorrow, and maybe make up some of the wordcount I fell behind on today.

Way more than three hours on this today, though.



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The discovery of a beloved grandmother's legacy

By Holly Lisle

I was not expecting what happened to day. It wasn't the sentence for this chapter in my life-for-scene outline – I had to write a new LFS sentence just to make sure it wouldn't break the book when I started writing. But reworking the outline was definitely the right thing.

Along with meeting someone whose going to become increasingly important as the series goes on, my main character discovered that she only ever knew a very small part of who her grandmother had been.

Today, she discovered that one of the secrets hidden in the house she inherited had been sitting out in plain sight since she was a little kid..

And it's still sitting there, waiting exactly where she left it.

And she's now finished meeting the guy I've been waiting to introduce to her for two-and-a-half books.

Their meeting didn't go at all the way I expected.

It went better.



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**Good words, a fun scene, and
the very good tension of**

upcoming danger

By Holly Lisle

Today's words came easily, and were fun to get.

I started by reading through the last few paragraphs from yesterday, picked up where I left off, and today's scene flowed nicely, introducing both a long-running "failure to mention something important" by one of my important secondary characters, and then a second such "gee, why would anyone need to know that?" from the same character.

This particular unreliable protagonist has been fun to write from scene one in Book 1 onward, and he continues to both amuse me and make me want to whap him with a fly-swatter (or something bigger) on a pretty regular basis.

My folks, including my main character, are piecing together a dubious rescue attempt into dangerous territory – and while I have no clue how this is going to work, or what's going to happen next Monday, I do have the entire weekend to let it percolate in the back of my mind, and run little footsteps through my dreams.

Most excellent writing day.

And a big, big thanks to the folks who are funding my Ko-Fi for the three hours daily that are making it much, much less stressful for me to write these five books. If you're one of those folks, please make sure you're on the mailing list for the weekly blog updates, because at the point where I'm ready to take these live, I'm going to have to make sure your name in the acknowledgements is spelled correctly (or whatever you want me to put in instead of your real name).

I'll let everyone know its time to send me the name you want in there from the email address you use on Ko-Fi. If I don't

hear from you, I'll just use what you have in the Ko-Fi account, but I know a LOT of folks have previously (when I was on Patreon) wanted something different than what was in their account.

We're, best guess, still about a year and a half off from that. But it's definitely worth mentioning now, so that you can make sure you're on the list.

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Good wordcount, a good concept... but, jury duty willing, tomorrow I'll be doing a fair amount of fixing

By Holly Lisle

Yesterday's jury duty message was, boiled down, "Call again today." So at 5:30 tonight, I'll find out whether I'll be working tomorrow or not.

Meanwhile, instead of my daily short fast (from the night before until around 4 or 5 PM, when I eat my daily meal) – I'm doing a long fast.

For folks familiar with intermittent fasting, my daily eating-to-fasting ratio is anything from 1:23 to 3:21. And some weekends are "any hours if it's keto".

But this week, my last food was Sunday evening. And I will

have my next food on Wednesday at around five or six PM (or whatever time I leave the courthouse, if there is a session and if the day's work runs longer than that).

Meanwhile, I'm a bit – skittery. A bit predatory.

I've learned that when you fast, after a couple days your body starts ramping up energy, pushing you to get up and move, to go out and hunt things, to find something tasty and kill it because you need to feed the fat stores – because those stores are the stuff you're suddenly running on exclusively.

Fasting is very, very good for those of us who at one time had cancers fed by blood glucose – and being down about two thirds of the right side of my tongue to remove a lot of dysplasia and a tiny bit of cancer, and thinking I might prefer to hang on to the rest of my tongue, I eat very few carbs.

Carbs raise your blood sugar, blood sugar feeds susceptible cancers – and tongue surgery after the anesthesia wears off hurts about a hundred times worse than wide-awake no-medications-not-even-Tylenol childbirth. I've done both.

Anyway.

I got 1446 words, and met the character I needed to meet today, and she's talking to me from her point of origin – but the voice I originally had for her is wrong. I'll be able to keep a lot of today's words, but my start tomorrow – if I'm here writing – will be to read through from the point where she starts speaking and bring the first bits of voice up to the stuff I got toward the end that is better.

If I don't... well, she'll wait.

I've met her now. I like her. And introducing her to my MC before the event that happens on (book time, not real time) Friday before the concert is going to be interesting.

The words weren't perfect. But they were good enough to take

me where I need to go.



If you want to be invited to my Readers' List for the Ohio Series, sign up below. This is the weekly blog digest, but only folks on this list will be invited to the Ohio Series launch list.



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