DMP Revision Monday, and Not Too Early for the Halloween Listener Episode

written by Holly
July 16, 2019
By Holly Lisle

I did **four** hours of work on *Dead Man's Party* yesterday.

I got **one** page of manuscript done.

HOWEVER, I finally got the chance to do the thing I used to do first — world building.

I got six closely written pages of worldbuilding done, in which I figured out (this is AFTER having written the whole first draft of the novel) how my hero works.

Why would I do worldbuilding after writing the whole first novel and being well into revision? Because by working with an incredibly light concept in first draft, I allowed myself to find the story I really wanted to tell — and it took me twelve chapters to find that world. They were chapters in which I got to know the characters, and in a couple of cases didn't. They were chapters in which I found the real conflict, for which I only had a vague concept when I started.

It's a funny way to work for me, but it saved me a helluva lot of time getting started, it allowed me to finish, and it kept me from having a notebook full of stuff I won't use… **because** *I thought I was building an entirely different world than the one I wrote.*

Here's an example:

In the earlier part of revision, I discovered that the guy I

wrote as my hero was a complete non-character, while the guy who wasn't even supposed to be there became not just a great character, but a guy I really loved.

Here's another example:

I discovered twelve chapters into first draft that I needed to move the story from Year Ten back to Year Two, because if I didn't, one of the characters (the one who I've now removed) would have been dumber that a bag of bricks.

I LOVE what I got yesterday. It doesn't count as words — what I built will have to be used during type-in revision — new stuff that will replace things I'm ripping completely out. But what I discovered gives me the conflict for the first part of the book where I have to completely redo the places where the story is set, and bring in the Post-Apocalypse that I discovered twelve chapters in had happened just two years earlier, not ten.

And now, for something completely different…

WRITERS: The AIARWIP.com Halloween Episode is COMING!!!

Last year in our FIRST Halloween episode, my daughter Rebecca, my son Mark, and I all read (and sort of dramatized) 500-word short fiction written by podcast listeners. We are going to do it again.

Which means you can submit ONE 500-word story you've written to us at the podcast — more details on that when we're actually ready to start accepting.

But it means you have to know how to write 500-word stories. PLOTTED 500-word stories. Not slice-of-life, not mood pieces, not and-then-they-all-died.

Real stories. If you have not every learned how to do this, How to Write Flash Fiction That Doesn't SUCK is my free writing class — and to understand what I mean by REAL stories, listen to the stories last year that won.

Our First AIARWIP Halloween Listener Edition is here. We will only accept one story submission per writer, but to get your best story, you generally need to write a batch of them. Which the class is set up to help you do. By the time you finish, you'll have written eleven stories.