

For the first time ever, I'm writing a novel in NaNoWriMo

By Holly Lisle

I've spent the past few years doing very little fiction. First there were the problems with WordPress on my writing site that broke my writing classes and wrecked my income, and which had to be fixed.

Then there were the five surgeries in twelve months that caused me enormous pain, a lot of down time for recovery, and meant I had to spend a lot of time playing catch-up with putting my writing classes back together. (They're still not all back together, but I am getting there.)

But it turns out that neither of those were the BIG problem. The big problem was the parathyroid tumor that I'd been carrying around for about fifteen years. Which may have caused the problems with my tongue, but which most definitely caused the problems with my writing.

Gradually and over a period of years, I lost dreaming – including lucid dreaming and nightmares (which were beneficial to my writing, if not to restful sleep) – spontaneous idea generation, developed nearly constant headaches and migraines, and felt my desire to write fiction ebbing away. Conceptually, I still wanted to write fiction. But it wasn't driving my work each day.

I thought that loss of my passion for writing fiction was just life, or maybe life plus overwork.

Turns out, not so much. It was the parathyroid tumor. When removed (at the Norman Parathyroid Clinic – best surgery EVER), **my NEED to write fiction started coming back.**

Started getting inside my skin, started pulling me away from all the things I was supposed to be doing and back into the stories that were running through the creative part of my brain again.

I try not to think about the fact that I nearly lost this feeling forever – the feeling that there are stories I **need** to tell.

I focus on the fact that it's back. I've done some small things for various projects I'm not ready to reveal yet.

But starting tomorrow, I'm going to be pushing to complete a full novel during November. I've linked to my NaNo book page so you can see what I'll be writing (you have to be logged in, but NaNo accounts are free, and you don't have to write to cheer writers on).

You'll be able to follow along there to see how I'm doing.

I won't be blogging during NaNo month, because as soon as I finish my words I have to do all my regular work.

But – and this is a bit weird, I know – if you're the sort of person who enjoys watching paint dry, I'm setting up daily writing rooms where some of those of us from my site who are doing NaNo novels are going to meet and count words together as we write them.

How this works? I set a timer for ten minutes, and write as many words as I can in that ten minutes. The time goes off, all the writers present give their running totals in the chat room, and I restart the timer. I'll be doing this until I've written 2500 words, my daily planned word count – probably two to three hours per day.

Because we don't have dedicated software for this yet, I have to set up a fresh room, which means my first order of business each day is going to be to set up the room and mail out the

link to everyone who wants to attend.

If you're a writer (or a reader) who wants to get the links to each day's writing room, sign up below.

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