

# Getting started late, a grateful mother

By Holly Lisle

Turned off the alarm and just got up when I woke up this morning. Becky and her boyfriend were in a car accident late last night. They're both fine, and from what I know, the people in the other car are fine, too. But both cars were pretty much totalled. Matt went out and got her; I stayed home with the other two. So I spent a few middle-of-the-night hours awake, waiting for her to get home, talking to her, rehashing what happened, and then lying in bed after everything was over waiting for sleep to come. But everyone's okay. They might not have been, but they are.

Every time one of the kids walks out the door, I go through the same dread – *What if this is the last time I get to wave goodbye?* I hate that feeling. If I could, I'd keep them safe from everything. That, unfortunately, isn't one of the options you get when you have kids. They grow up, and they get their own lives, and they move beyond your reach to protect and defend. And the world doesn't care who they are, or that they matter to you. It rolls the dice on everyone, and shit happens.

So I'm heading into the book this morning smaller, and grateful, and with my fears renewed. My goal is two thousand words – maybe a bit over, because I'd like to wrap the second scene as well as finishing the first one. That's my goal. But focus this morning will be hard to find.

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