

Miscellaneous FAQs About Writing

By Holly Lisle

- Why do you do this site – don't you worry that you're making more competition for yourself?
 - Are collaborations a good idea?
 - Are you still answering frequently asked questions?
-

Why do you do this site – don't you worry that you're making more competition for yourself?

No. I'm my own competition. If I can write better books, I'll sell better. If I can help you write better books, you'll sell better. But the people who buy your books won't stop buying my books because of you. They'll buy both. I do this page because a couple of idealistic writers (one who has gone on to be phenomenally successful) took me under wing when I was a neophyte and told me how to do things right, and taught me how to avoid making the major mistakes they knew about (though I've still managed to make some pretty impressive mistakes on my own,) and because one of them told me, "This is the way my help works. You can't pay me back for what I've taught you, any more than I can pay back the mentors who taught me. You can only pay forward."

This is part of how I am keeping my promise to pay forward. If what I've done here has helped you, then you are the recipient

of a chain of mentoring and the shared valuing of writers and writing that extends from me back to Mercedes Lackey, and through her to C.J. Cherryh, and Marion Zimmer Bradley. It probably goes back further than that.

If I've helped you, you can't pay me back. You can, however, pay forward. When you make it—and you can make it—pick up the torch and use it to help light the way for the young writer who is coming up behind you. That young writer is not your competition. He is the next good book you'll want to read, and the promise that books worth reading will continue to be written after you and I are dust.

Tell him what I'm telling you: Life is short. Love is eternal. All we have to offer to each other that amounts to anything is our love, our time, and our belief that individuals and their dreams matter. Dare to love. Dare to believe. And never give up on your dreams.

Are collaborations a good idea?

In spite of the fact that I've done a lot of them, I'd have to say no. You'll only live so long, and in that length of time you'll only be able to write a certain number of books. For every collaboration you do, that's one solo work you won't do.

I did them because I was broke and dependent on my writing income for survival, and new enough in the business that I couldn't hope for royalties or subrights sales to get me through. I regretted the necessity, and I still regret it; every collaboration I did was good, and some of them are the best work I've ever done, but I have fans who won't read them because of the perception that collaborations are inferior

work.

They're harder to write than solo work, they take just as much time and sometimes more, you make a lot less money, and they don't sell as well when you're done.

Aside from that, they're great. You get to meet some neat people. But you could do that at a convention, too.

Are you still answering frequently asked questions?

Yes, I am.

Some of them (the ones I'm getting bombarded with) I'll continue to answer here.

Most, however, I answer in my free writing community.

If the tone of this site and my contents here resonate with you, and you want to meet other writers who share your passion and who are working in a friendly, supportive environment, come hang out with us and make progress on your writing.

Contents © Holly Lisle. <https://hollylisle.com> All Rights Reserved