

NEVER GO BACK – Ohio 4, Day 2. Epic chaos begins. 1271 words for the day, 2945 total

By Holly Lisle

I'm making good progress.

I'm also making a mess – I tripped over part of the mess in the last section of Book 3 when grabbing details there to continue into Book 4, where I discovered that I had not cleaned up the ending of THREE quite as well as I remembered.

This, however, is where process matters.

The process for finishing a series on deadline when you have to do all five books at once so you can revised them together and release them in series order over five months is this:

Save revision and tinkering until all five books are complete in first draft.

That way, once you know how the series ends, you can go through all the previous books, bring them up to the current story as determined by the epic ending you discovered while NOT following your outline, and make all changes just once, rather than continually dropping back, tinkering, smoothing, and debugging every time you figure out something that is better to bring to the current novel.

Here's the thing.

If you don't set this rule, and then never succumb to the temptation to break it (just this once – HAH!), the better ideas YOU WILL HAVE in each book will constantly have you tinkering with all existing previous novels, just to keep everything updated and matching – and by always going back

when critical bits of the story are constantly changing – you will become a slave to the “better idea”, and you will never manage to get all the way to the end.

And you will delete good shit that needs to stay – only you can’t see it in the heat of “I need to fix this.”

Worse, every better idea dumps you into tinkering mode again. Over, and over, and over.

There will always be a better idea (including better ideas that turn out to be breathtakingly stupid, series-breaking nightmares).

There will always be a “reason” to go back and tinker with finished books.

I didn’t. I won’t.

All five books get finished in raw, buggy first draft first.

ONE BIG REVISION comes second.



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