

So My Genius Outlining Idea . . . Wasn't

By Holly Lisle

Had this awesome idea for breaking out story conflict into its component parts based on critical plot issues (this is STILL an awesome idea), and then taking the conflicts from various components and playing them off against each other to quickly outline scenes.

That's where the idea crashed into usability in a big, ugly way.

See, STORY comes first. Writing down *X vs. Y* on index cards and then expecting these cards to spur scene ideas flattened me and the writing on **Dreaming The Dead** for over a week. I did everything else BUT write last week, while I looked at those hundred *X vs. Y* index cards and tried to see the story in them.

This week I deleted every damn one of them, and am doing the cards the "old-fashioned" way...that is, by writing out a Sentence Lite for each one. And THEN I'm using those awesome broken-out conflict elements to give each card depth.

But...

The story comes first.

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