

Stillness in the Heart of Chaos

By Holly Lisle

After a gruelling two years in which I've written very little fiction but have:

- Built a stellar team of folks to help me run my writing site:

Dan Allen – Developer

Kirsten Bolda – Site Designer

Cat Gerlach & Amy Padgett, Forum Head Moderators

Carol Englehaupt – moderator

Karen Lynn – moderator

Chris Makowski – moderator

Tom Vetter – moderator

Rez Zircon – moderator

Rebecca Galardo – help desk

- Completely overhauled one of my Big Three writing classes, *How to Think Sideways*
- Built two new writing workshops: *Title. Cover. Copy. Fiction Marketing Workshop* and *24-Hour Intensive: Find Your Writing Voice*
- Threw out the first version of *How to Write a Series*, and am now writing an all-new Version 2 that everyone who owned the original Expansion Version already owns
- Worked with the head of my team, Dan Allen, my site developer, to get a new website built on HollysWritingClasses.com and all the classes broken by

WordPress nearly three years ago up and running

- Worked with my designer, Kirsten Bolda, who is making my designs beautiful (you haven't seen any of her work yet except for the headers on the new HollysWritingClasses.com blog
- Designed the internal and external interfaces for the new site software Dan is building me, using online paper-testing, feedback from my writers
- Designed a couple of additional software projects Dan and I will be building together over the next couple of years
- Wrote the third and fourth (still unpublished) stories for the *Longview Series*
- And got through a bunch of surgeries with one less parathyroid gland and minus pretty close to half a tongue, but healthier and with a lot more energy and focus than I've had in quite a few years
- And I've drunk approximately 2190 cups of unsweetened plain green tea. Three cups per day, every day, without missing one cup or one day, since the day after I was diagnosed with dysplasia, which was the day I went home, searched the Internet, found the book *Anticancer*, and read it straight through. The amount I'm drinking is just enough to keep me perpetually a little bit queasy. Which tells me it's enough to be of benefit.

The last two years plus have been rough. But worthwhile.

The definition of LIFE is: *Shit goes wrong. Deal with it. Shit goes right. Enjoy it. Wash. Rinse. Repeat.*

So I'm not going to say, "Hey I'm getting to an easy stretch!"

Because the definition of STUPID is: Thinking that when life gets better, it will stay better.

I've been stupid. I'm getting smarter.

There's been a lot of chaos the past couple of years. A lot of times when I felt like I'd been ground into the dirt, when I was scared for my life, when I was scared about money, when I could not see my way clear to a time when anything was ever going to be okay again.

But every morning when I step into the shower, I close my eyes and breathe deep and let the water pounding on my head become the sound of the rain, and the silence of solitude, and I embrace whatever the day might bring, and my resolution to get through it.

And so far, every day I have gotten through it.

Sometimes that brief stillness, that brief respite, gives me a gift.

Which it did today.

As soon as I post this, I'm writing a story, the title of which is "Freebie," which made me cry and made me happy at the same time when I thought it up, and which is going to be included in the anthology my HWC writers and I are putting together right now.

More on that in another post. Right now, I have a story to write.

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