Writing Projects Gone Weird: or, Saturday, I Knit A Cat

written by Holly
June 13, 2011
By Holly Lisle



KnitCat Stares at Nothing

The migraines and vertigo are back with a vengeance, and I'm stuck in horizontal mode (laptop propped on lap and lying down as I write this, in fact).



KnitCat Naps

So Saturday, I dragged out some cotton string (a very nice German variegated yarn), and needles, and did one of the few things that doesn't make me feel worse when this gets as bad as it is right now.

I knitted.

I'm doing this odd secret project on my day off—a writing project so weird when I first explained why I was knitting sweaters for balls of yarn, my husband got this look in his eyes that asked "do I commit her, or grab the kid and run for the hills?"

And this project calls for a cat.



KnitCat watches Mad Men

A tiny, agile, clever cat.

So I got out light-gauge florist wire and narrow green florist tape and built an armature. And then I knit around the armature, ripping back when anything happened that didn't look like a cat, filling with yarn stuffing as I went.



KnitCat looks Regal

No pattern, no picture, no guidelines—I remembered my various cats over the years and worked from that. It took me about ten hours over the course of the day to finish him.



KnitCat hears food hit a bowl

When I was done, I showed him to my husband and son, who had seen me knitting around green armature all day, and who hadn't seen anything particularly catlike in the blob I was making. Both of them were a little creeped out by how much of a cat he became when I started posing him.

I was a bit, too. I hadn’t expected scrap yarn and wire to turn out quite so well—and now that I see him, I’m getting a feel for his character and the role he’s going to play in my secret project.



KnitCat fights the Mighty Husband

So what’s this project? Well, it’s fiction, but it’s about writers and writing. And KnitCat is a good representative for what I’m doing. Beyond that, I’m not ready to say anything, except this project will be available for free—it’s my playtime—and should be a nice complement to other things I’ve created to help writers.



KnitCat leaves to search for adventure

As for other things, even though I'm currently bedridden (well, couch-ridden) I did manage to get work done on both TalysMana and the HTTS Walkthrough. I'm doing the plot outline for **The Emerald Sun**.

And I'm hoping I'll at least be able to sit up at some point this week, so that I'll be able to do the Hotseat interview for the Walkthrough.

Anyway… have you ever done anything as weird as knitting a cat to get to the heart of a story?

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Where I am right now

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I apologize for my absence. The last few weeks have been hard.

I've been back to full-time vertigo and full-time migraines, and though I know this is nothing life-threatening, it is damned difficult to work through. I'm doing my best, I'm still producing the HTTS Walkthrough, and Margaret and I are worknig hard on the transfer of all my courses to NovelWritingSchool.com, but other things have slowed down a lot.

And then a couple days ago my computer died, and it’s taken me that time to pull the part of my backups that would fit on my laptop and get more or less up and running again.

I hope to have my main computer back in a day or so, and to have everything back to normal in that regard by next week. (Right now I only have access to some of my software, and some of my records. There simply isn’t room on the hard drive of my older computer for everything I’m using now.)

I’ll do my best to start posting in here again, and to pick up the threads on TalysMana and WABWM. Once I have the site transfer finished and am no longer working such awful hours, I expect the headaches and vertigo to taper off. They did the last time I had some down time.

I miss being here. I’ll be back again as soon as I can.

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