

The more easily you write, the worse you spell?

By Holly Lisle

Initially, I thought it was just me. I'd really get ripping on a story, sink into the flow of the thing, the world would go away, and my spelling would go to pieces.

Then I noticed that it went to pieces in a very specific way. I misspelled homophones. You know, the words that sound like words that mean something completely different, and are also spelled differently.

I spent some time thinking about this, and devised a theory about why it happened, but figured it was just one of my peculiarities.

Over the years, other writers would mutter something that sounded like the same problem, but nothing really pinged on me.

Then yesterday while I was doing revisions, I was also online with Jean, and, typing fast, I typed something like, "We're having the same weather hear."

And of course, caught it a second too late, and typed her the one word correction "here."

She spotted it, and said she'd been doing the same thing more lately, and it was driving her nuts.

I've had to correct 'thrown' into 'throne' in the current revision. Multiple instances of to/too/two errors.

It's always homophones for me. I'm curious if you're catching yourself doing the same thing.

So here's my theory.

When you're in flow, the subconscious is in control of what you put on the page. The subconscious is not a picky speller. That's the job of your internal editor, your conscious mind. Your non-muse, as opposed to your muse. Your muse is content that you got the word that sounds right on the page, because your muse hears and feels the words. It doesn't process them as letters.

If this theory is true, then noticing that you're making homophone errors in your writing would be a way of telling that you'd connected with your muse.

This theory may also, of course, be a load of horse hockey. But have you noticed anything like this happening to you when you write?

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