

Wow! 1412 words, two hours... And LIGHTNING struck! (Or... “Am I making a huge mistake?”)

written by Holly

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By Holly Lisle

I'd written myself into a corner yesterday, and I had absolutely no clue what was going to happen next.

See... Brain writes the outlines and the overall planning. Gut, however, writes the words, and Gut – like a willful horse – is entirely capable of getting the bit between his teeth and galloping straight toward whatever suddenly looks good.

Over the last few days (my time, not hers) my main character has experienced an appalling revelation, a near-death experience, and an unexpected triumph combined with a terrible loss...

And I thought she was still heading toward the same basic end-story objective, but getting there by some strange side paths.

I was still having to get there by pure pantsing, because I left my line-for-scene outline a couple chapters ago in pursuit of The Better Idea.

But today I found myself staring at a wall where I realized I'd just caused the utter obliteration of the ending I thought I was going to write.

Brain was muttering...

“Right... That thing you blew up yesterday was supposed to be

the heart of your conflict for another five books after this five, and now... BLAMMO? You sure you want to save what you did yesterday? You can go back. Back is SAFE. Back in KNOWN. Back is the PLAN... and you liked the PLAN when you wrote it."

Gut held firm. Gut said, "Don't be a chicken. You knew yesterday's stuff was cool when you wrote it, and now you want to wuss out and go with what's safe? C'mon! Grow a pair!"

Small side note here while I point out that my gut is kind of a jerk sometimes... but it's almost always right about the fiction, so I have learned to look past the taunting to the meat of the argument.

Which is that what I got yesterday was really cool. Gut is absolutely right about that.

It isn't what I planned, but it's better than what I'd planned. It isn't Safe. But Safe in fiction, the Known in fiction, the Expected in fiction... are always okay.

They are NEVER fucking amazing.

And today I had to look at the loss of some words to return to the Safe Known. Or to keep moving forward in pursuit of the hope of bringing home something fucking amazing...

With the acknowledged very real possibility that I will fall on my face, absolutely wreck this story, and then have a gruelling, long slog through it when I go back through to do the One-Pass Five Book Revision <shudder> that waits for me at the end of this process. Where I will end up turning it into the book I'd planned to write.

I'm choosing to chase the chance to make this fucking amazing.

This may be a serious tactical error on my part, and if you find me in here next month muttering, "Yep... should have got back to the outline..."

Then...

You're invited to say, "Well, I thought you were nuts when you veered away from your plan into fresh new territory."

Not yet, though. Let's see where this goes.

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