



Hi Authors!

When I was asked to write this piece, one of the phrases used to describe it was "pep talk."

That is not a good mental metaphor for me. "Pep talk" makes me think of pep rallies and color me grouchy, and I firmly believe that nothing involving pom-poms can ever end well. Besides, pep rallies seem to attract the sort of super-hyper-peppy people whose veins glow with caffeine and whose bounciness, even when they're sitting still, is enough to make a hyperactive ferret feel like he's falling behind.

Falling behind is not what you need to think about right now. Trust me on this. I have been there and done that. I cannot begin to tell how many times I sat before the keyboard and as I sat there, somehow I was gifted with the psychic power to know that every single other writer in the whole blessed world was doing a better job than I was, and faster, too! Oh, and did I mention that they were all talking about me behind my back, sniping at my unworthy writing, and snickering? Snickering!

Yes, I know I'm being silly, but sometimes you need to tap into the Silly to get things going again. The Silly makes you laugh, and the laughter performs a great service: It restores your perspective, especially when it opens your eyes and lets you see that feeling tired or discouraged or even a bit overwhelmed by the need to tell the story you know (know!) is worth telling is not the end of the world, nor even the end of your novel. You can tell the difference. Unlike the end of the world, when you get to the end of your novel you can have pie.

As for me, I face my nonexistent snickerers with a rousing "Oh YEAH?"

Say's who?" And you know what? It works. The mad scientist's demented cry of, "Laugh at me, will they? The fools! I'll show them! I'll show them all!" is not exactly the attitude of which After School Specials are made. It's prickly and confrontational and is sadly lacking in Team Spirit, but writing is not a team sport. If it were, pom-poms would be involved, and I believe you already know my attitude towards pom-poms. Writing is all about you and your story, the story that no one else in the entire history of the known universe (and parts of Poughkeepsie) can tell in just the right way---the way only you can.

And you will tell it, and when you're done it might make a lot of other people happy you did, but the main thing to remember is this: Telling it will make you happy!

You.

With no pep or pom-poms. Just pie.

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