



Story Magic...  
starting with you  
*Four Steps to Manuscript Bliss*

THE CONFIDENT WRITER

*by Bethany Hensel*

# Hey there!

I'm so glad you downloaded Story Magic... Starting With You. This is going to open your eyes and reinvigorate you to create with all of the internal magic that you possess. And trust me, you possess a ton of it.

My name is Bethany and I am a writer, editor and teacher. And just recently...a podcaster! I'm the host of The Confident Writer Podcast and let me tell you: as a Delilah After Dark fan, I've been wanting to have a podcast before I even knew what podcasts were! So I'm just thrilled. I've been working with writers for over thirteen years and I truly believe that stories – and storytellers – are so vital and important to the world. Stories are the things that connect us most, show us humanity and give hope and shine light in the darkness. They're what makes the world go 'round.

So yes! I love stories and storytellers! And one thing I love most about storytellers in particular is their resilience and imagination.

I am consistently blown away by people like you and all that they create and aspire to be. Many of you have been writing since you were children. Play acting or taking out some looseleaf paper and letting your imagination go wild. And many of you have also recently picked it up because something inside of you was just hungry to get your ideas down on paper. It's like a dam had burst and your stories aren't holding back. I totally get that. As a writer myself, I know how wholly enveloping a great story idea or character can be.



But I also know that the life of a writer and the actual task and daily grind of writing a story is tough. Not only is writing so self-motivated (unless your Paul Sheldon, you probably don't have an Annie Wilkes standing over you forcing you to write – at least, I hope not!) but the road can be littered with people who say, “you can't do it” or “it's just a hobby, quit wasting your time.” Or you hear over and over about the statistics and probability of getting a book deal. Maybe people tell you that you're not good enough. Maybe you're afraid that people will judge what you write or that your family will be disappointed.

Pretty soon, your initial excitement turns to doubt. That story flow starts to clog up. And you're wondering if you should even start.

My dear, that's why I created *Story Magic...Starting With You*.

Because I know how extremely delicate a story idea is. And I know, after working with so many writers and talking with so many more who want to write a story, and also my own personal experience, how easy it can be to get discouraged and give up.

But if you can tap into your story magic, if you can nurture and celebrate it, trust that it's there just for you...oh my goodness, you'll be unstoppable!

You want to know why? Because your story magic is powerful. It is indelible. It is a one-of-a-kind, absolutely can never exist again, straight up starlight and all the alchemy of the universe! Why?

## Because it's you!

You are all of those things and your story magic starts precisely and exactly from that incredible place. From you.

Now, I know this sounds big! But it's true. Think about it. Think about all the things that needed to happen, all the people who needed to meet, all the people who needed to not meet, all the circumstances and car rides and job interviews and yeses and no thank yous that had to occur for you to come into this world.

Think of the people before you, the people before them, and before them. So many things had to go right for you to be on this planet today. And if you think of everything you are, the choices that had to happen, the things that had to go right, to create your worldview and your opinions and your likes and dislikes and the way you laugh and what you laugh at, the things that comfort you and console you, the things that excite you and bring you so much joy. Think of all the things that had to happen, both right in front of you and the stuff you don't even know about. The stuff God or your guardian angels or fate or whatever you want it call it protected you from. But think of all the things that needed to have happened, both past and present, to make you who you are.

**All of these elements are one-of-a-kind. And that means you are one-of-a-kind.**

That means you are your own brand of magic, a culmination of generations, a total sum of so many parts. You will not exist like this again in any lifetime in any universe. Let that sink in. Let it sink in how unique and wonderful and individual you truly are. Did it sink in? It should make you feel damn good to know how uncopiable and outrageously awesome you are.

And how does this relate to your creativity?

It relates big time to your creativity! Because you're bringing that special magic, the one swirling inside you, to your stories. The characters you create, the worlds you build, the plots that you have your cast navigate and go through. All that is coming from you – which we already determined is a very unique and special place.

Like I said, I know it sounds big but it is true. You are story magic. It's not something you have to look outward for, it's not something that you need permission to do or get, it is not something that you have to somehow buy, borrow or steal. It all generates from you and the amazing and magnetic person you are, that took generations of magic to build.

*Story Magic... Starting with You* is about tapping into that incredible magic. Forget about the probabilities, forget about statistics, forget about agents and wish lists and anything else. Your story magic is innate and wonderful and you do not want to tamp that down by thinking *oh no, he won't like that, that's not on the wishlist. Or oh no, she won't like that. That's not "in"*. If you saw a peacock and you knew what it could do with its glorious feathers, how she could expand them into this dazzling pattern of colors, you would never tell that peacock “Don't do that! Don't show your glorious colors! Don't expand into what you can do!”

**No! You would want them to fully grow into who they are and show off exactly what they can do. Or say you knew a young Barbra Streisand or Whitney Houston or Mariah Carey or Selena. And you heard them sing first and it was just so beautiful it made you cry. Would you ever tell that person to not sing a note? To not embrace her talent and voice? Nope. No you would not. You'd want them to sing and sing big, to let their voice fill a room, to step up into their incredible magic.**

**This is what Story Magic is all about. You are going to embrace your beautiful peacock feathers. You're going to embrace and use your incredible voice. And you're going to fully expand into your power as a creative writer.**

I'm going to take you through the four fail-proof steps so you can get out of the loud white noise of Twitter and booktok and Instagram and all of that. So you can bring your creativity back home. Bring it back to you.

So let's begin.





## Step One: Allow Yourself Incredible Clarity

Story magic can hit you at any time. In the car, on a walk, in a very boring meeting that should have been an email. It can hit you when you're just zoning out at your work desk or when you're walking between classes at school.

It can also hit you in a number of different ways. You might see a character, just the look of him, and it's amazing. You want to know who that person is.

Or it could be an entire plot in your head. Maybe there was a headline and it just sparked this wild idea and you loved every moment of it. Or maybe it's a scenario. Just a single scene but you can see it in your mind as clear as a movie.

Maybe it's an emotion. It struck a nerve and you're like, wow, I really want to explore that. I want to explore this ache and pain of being lost or heartbroken, or the thrill and fear of being dropped into the middle of a dragon's den. I want to feel how it feels to fall in love, fall out of love, and fall in love again.

Or it could be a snippet. Just a moment. Flowing red hair in an otherwise sea of black. A spindly creature in a princess-pink room and the door begins to slowly open, a child laughing on the other side of it. You don't know the why or how of it, but that snippet of scene just dropped into your head and it haunts you.

No matter how it happens, however your story idea comes to you, it is not wrong. Your imagination works in wonderful ways. Weird ways, wonderful ways, all sorts of ways. But when the story idea appears on your mental doorstep, step aside and let it come in and offer it some Bundt cake. Say, "I'm so glad you're here and thanks for stopping by."

Now, you have to get super clear with it. What do I mean by that?

Let your imagination run wild with it!

Roll with this, honey!

If your story idea is like a guest who dropped by, have him take off his hat, his coat, his shoes so you can see him better. Have him relax and stay a while. Turn on some music and get up and dance with it. Break open the white zinfandel and have a few glasses!

Let the idea cut loose and get silly!

Which means...no telling yourself the market won't like that. Or *I saw someone tweet that they hate that trope!* Or *oh no! Another author wrote a character just like the one I'm thinking of. I can't do that. No way.*

Nope. Clear that gunk right out. Because this is when you need to get super clear, as clear as you can, about this idea that's inside of your head and heart right now. And you get that clarity by just letting it be...letting it expand in your imagination more and more. Don't push it away, don't try to change it yet. Just sit back and let the movie play in your mind. Let your story guest, let's call him Mitchell, have some chips with that zinfandel and go nuts.

One of the biggest mistakes I see writers do, especially when they first get this little seed, this little baby plant of an idea, is that they already want to criticize it, examine it, find something lacking with it. Because they're letting outside noise dictate what this little plant should be. But you, at this point, need to just nurture it and see how it grows.

So allow yourself to get clear, which means allowing the story to take shape in your head. Or, if a character popped into your head, it's letting that character become more fully formed. If all you can see right now is blond hair and purple eyes, let your imagination work on it. Let your imagination think *okay I see blond hair and purple eyes. What else do I see. Tattoos I see tattoos. That is fascinating. What else?*

Or maybe there's a snippet of a something happening and right now you can see two people in it. You don't know where they are or who they are but they're there and they look perturbed. Something is amiss.

Now sit back and let your imagination work on it...and by the way, I mean that both literally and figuratively. Literally, if you can, just stare off into space or close your eyes; but also figuratively. If you've got a full day of work or errands or family obligations, let your story simmer in the back of your mind for your subconscious to work on it. There's no time frame or time limit to this.

But let's go back to your snippet of a scenario. It just dropped into your head and there's two people sitting there. But you've sat back, you let this idea have his chips and drink. You're not questioning it or criticizing it. You're just letting it expand.

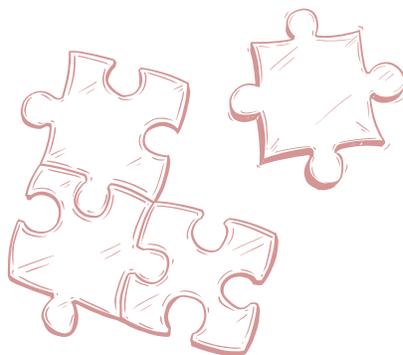
Suddenly, what started out as two people in a white space turns into two people now on top of a mountain surrounded by morning mist. And oh wait! Now there's actually a third person. He's dangling off the side of the mountain. Okay! Well, I guess you know why those two looked so perturbed! And now you're intrigued.

Getting clear on your story picture is important because you're giving your imagination full permission to just throw it all at you. It's kind of like if a little kid comes up to you and they're holding a tiny puzzle piece. Let's say the corner of the puzzle. Ten pieces already snapped together. And the image is really arresting and really fascinating. You're drawn to it and you're like, "Hmmm, that's a really cool picture. I would like to know what this actually turns into it."

So you say, "Hey, this is really cool. Is there more?" And the kid is like "Yeah!" And you're like "Can I see it?" And so the little kid hands you two more puzzle pieces. And then three and then four and as more pieces are given to you, the more the picture takes shape.

You didn't turn the little kid away. You didn't say, "Hey get outta here and off my lawn!" You didn't throw out the picture because Twitter told you so. You welcomed the idea. You told that kid to keep 'em coming.

**You let you're your imagination work  
itself up so that snippet could have a  
chance to become a story.**



And to be clear, I don't mean that your idea or character or whatever it is that comes to you has to be already fully formed. I don't mean that you have to sit back and wait until every piece perfectly clicks into place.

What I am saying is that this first step? It's about letting your imagination work, about letting your idea breathe. This is the little seed. You wouldn't rip it from the ground before it has a chance to grow, right?

Same with your story idea. Don't shoot it down, don't criticize it, don't let the white noise of the internet in your head.

Right now, respect that your imagination went to a particular place for a reason. You might not know that reason but it went there. If you saw a desolate landscape and that white haired, purple eyed boy wielding a sword, maybe deep down there's something about that scenario that's tapping into a question that you want answered. Or maybe deep down there's something about those two characters on the mountain with the third one dangling off the side of it because a part of you is like yeah, that'd be a terrifying yet sort of thrilling moment to be in. Kind of why people like scary movies or haunted houses. Or maybe you have a world show up in your imagination that's just pure escapism.

That a part of you is just yearning and hungry for. You want to escape. You need to escape.

And that is why you need to let all the pieces come together, so then you can get clear on the picture that your imagination is trying to give you. And that leads me to step number two.



## Step Two: Get Excited!

I've seen it happen again and again: writers get scared of their story ideas. They think of what their family will think, what their friends will think, what the market will think, what their coworkers or ex-boyfriend or girlfriend will think. But right now, this story idea, your story magic, that's just between you and your imagination. You don't have to utter a word about all the good, juicy creativity

happening in your head. It is yours and yours alone. And if you can, I want you to keep it that way. I want you to not tell a soul about your story idea for at least three days. Because right now, it's so vulnerable. It's so sacred.

Let me tell you a quick story. I had a very good friend who was a writer and she loved her romance books. A huge romance fan. And one day she got an idea in her head to write a romance of her own. The scenario came to her as this big romantic suspense and she was so excited about it. She grew up in the 80s on Tom Cruise and adrenaline and Harlequin books. And this story that was swirling in her imagination was just the perfect mix of all of these things. But then she told her husband about the idea. And he laughed in her face.

He laughed and said it sounded ridiculous and said that she should write something better than a "stupid romance". If she was going to write it all. And that idea...the one my friend was so excited about...withered and died on the vine right then and there. It never saw the light of day. She never wrote a word of it. She never did anything with it.

Our ideas when we just get them are so vulnerable. Not only to outside opinion, but also to our own self sabotages and doubts and fears. It's so easy to think *no, something like this already exists I can't write it. Or no, who am I to write this? This author writes like this. Or the market doesn't want romantic suspense right now. I'll probably never get a book deal, I'll waste my time writing, all my family and friends will make fun of me and tell me that they were right and I would never write a book. I should just quit while I'm ahead and not have wasted any time.*

I said it before but it bears repeating: writing a story is one of the most difficult things in the world to do because it is so self-motivated. It's just you. And motivation is a hard thing to come by and an even harder thing to sustain. Now, I have a lot of opinions about motivation but I'll save those for another day. Maybe check out my podcast because I plan to talk about it. But!

My point is, writing a book is challenging enough.

That's why I really encourage you not to tell anyone when you get a new story idea or character or snippet. In fact, I suggest you keep it on the hush hush for at least three days but if you can't do that, then 24 hours. Honestly, a week sounds awesome. That'll give you some real time and space with it. And hey, maybe even try not telling anyone until the book is written! The end! That one could be harder to do.

But either way, regardless of if you tell the world or keep it quiet as a dormouse:

I want you to get excited about it! Don't cut it off at the knees, don't pull away from it. You are allowed to be excited about your really cool idea. You are allowed to be happy that you got this gift from God above or the universe or firing neurons or whatever you believe in. You are allowed. I give you full permission.

**Let yourself get excited because in that excitement,  
more ideas will come to you.**

**If getting clear is your imagination diving deeper, getting excited is  
your imagination going wider. And that's what you want. This is your  
unique story magic and you want it to be a full IMAX top to bottom  
experience.**

Here's another little mental image if you want to put it in your mental image bank. You ever see The Little Mermaid, I'm talking the animated one? Do you remember the song Poor Unfortunate Souls and that part where Ursula is just throwing potion bottles, one after the other, over her shoulder into her cauldron? And there's explosions and colors and smoke and mist?

Do that! Just throw it all in, let it all go messy and bright.

This is your story magic.

Inhabit Ursula's excited, can-do attitude, if not her intentions and well, nefarious plans.

Be wild with abandon.

This is your story magic.

Get excited.

This is your story magic.

Now! Let's move on to step three. And this one is oh so fantastic, you'll love it. Ready?



## Step Three: Connect To Your Incredible Intuition

Mm-hmmm. Now what does that mean. It means that now that you have a clearer vision of that first lightning strike of an idea or character or world or theme that you want to explore, now that you've given yourself full-on permission to be excited and happy and joyful about it, now you're going to follow and listen to your intuition as a creative person.

This might be when you're out on a walk and you're kind of just thinking of the story in your head. Or maybe this will be when you have your laptop out at a coffee shop or maybe it's when you sneak in a piece of paper while you're at a meeting that again should have been an email and you are just thinking of bits and pieces of your story as it comes.

Or maybe it's at the end of the day after the kids are in bed and everything's wound down and you're at your desk with your Word doc or Scrivener file open.

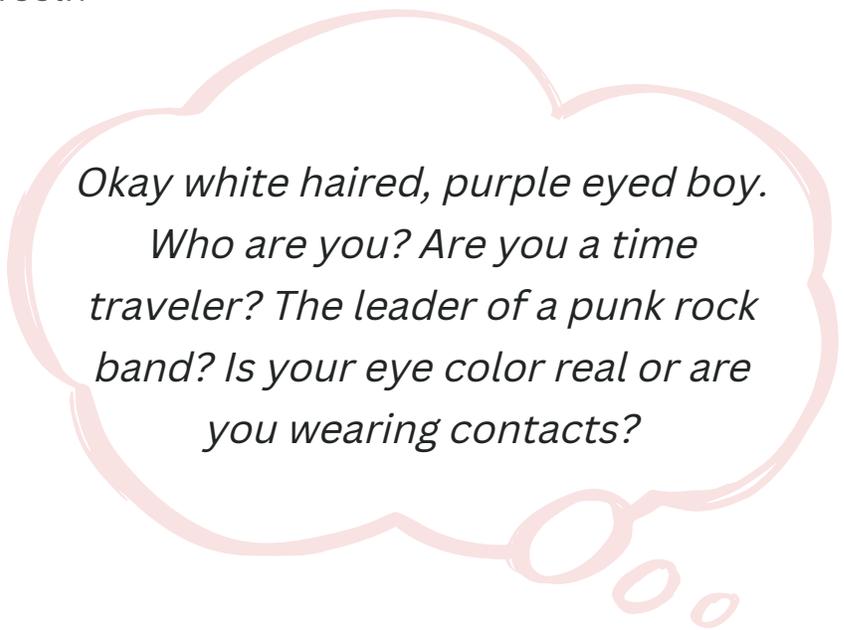
No right or wrong way to do this.

But you must, and I mean must, shut out the white noise of Twitter, booktok, internet trolls, even literary agents themselves. Remember, your story magic comes from you. It's generated and created by you. You power this.

But how exactly do you make sense of the stuff floating around in your cauldron? Of Mitchell your story guest still bouncing around your house, chips and wine in hand? How do you make all this effective and mesmerizing and spellbinding?

You get quiet. And you listen to that intuition. You already possess it. Trust me. Let's get down to some tactical tips though.

First, I want you to do a big story scan. Let's go back to the white haired boy with the purple eyes and tattoos as an example. You already let your imagination get clear and excited. Great. Now, with this scan, you're going to ask some questions. No judgment, no pressure. Just...gentle curiosity. You think to yourself:



*Okay white haired, purple eyed boy.  
Who are you? Are you a time  
traveler? The leader of a punk rock  
band? Is your eye color real or are  
you wearing contacts?*

And on and on. Your imagination, Mitchell, the cauldron, it may have given you lots to work with. So now you're scanning. What makes you excited? What feels good? What, when you let your imagination wander to it, has your shoulders relaxing and you just sink into the idea?

Get quiet with this one, okay? It's so important. You must must must shut out the white noise of the internet because having that static on in your head can definitely color your choices and process. And we don't want that.

So don't be afraid to really follow the current of your intuition. And don't be afraid to push past initial thoughts and ideas too. Sometimes the first three ideas you have might be the safe ideas. They might be the ideas that you just kind of default to because you're listening to friends and the internet and it feels like that's what you should be writing.

But the magic is in those last four ideas that you may have. The magic is in the ones where you let it go and say, "You know what, I'm gonna let the chips fall where they're gonna fall and that'll be it. These are weird suggestions but hey, it's just my imagination doing its thing. I don't need to prove anything or answer to anybody"

There is magic in choices like that. There is magic in story ideas like that. When you're not thinking I should write this because it's sellable. But you're thinking I want to write this because I'm excited and it calls to me and there's something inside of me that craves this storyline. There's something about this that's true.

That's what tapping into your intuition is all about. It's thinking about where YOU want to go with your story. Where do you genuinely want to go with it? What is the truth in this character? What is the truth about this world?

From there, do another scan and think okay what do I not want to do? Well, maybe you thought you'd make your white haired, purple eyed boy an alien. But, after your big story scan, you're like I'm not feeling it. Maybe aliens are even "in" right now but meh. Don't love that.

**And that's okay! That's totally fine. Just because something is "in" does not mean you need to write it.**

But maybe after you discard the alien idea, you mind scans it again and comes to the idea that hey, he's a vampire! And not just any vampire but a vampire from this dimension at the center of the earth and he literally clawed his way out from the ground!

That has you excited! That feels good. That feels true. That feels like the story you want to write!

That's your story magic at work. It's a glimmer, a moment, a snapshot of an idea, character, world, theme...and then the excitement....and then the unique, most true to you, must genuine exploration of that idea, character, world, theme. Ask yourself:

- **What do I want this story to say?**
- **Who is this character, truly?**
- **What excites me about this world?**
- **What makes me feel good about this plot?**
- **What don't I want this story to be?**

These are big story scans. Do you see though how it opens up even more of your imagination? How it helps you get even more clarity on the story you want to write and hopefully has Mitchell dancing around your living room because he's so excited?

Let's use a real story example. One of my favorite movies of all time... 1994's *Speed*, starring Keanu Reeves and Sandra Bullock. Pretend that one day, this idea pops into your head: bomb on a bus. And you're like huh, that's interesting. And you let yourself get clear with it. You don't worry what a movie exec or your roommate or your mother will think. Cause right now, it's just you and the idea. No one else knows anything.

So, you let yourself get excited. You wonder why is this bomb on a bus? Who is on this bus? What is this bus doing? Does the bomb go off? Does it not go off?

Your mind starts scanning these questions. Your intuition starts getting gently curious. You get quiet with it.

Why is a bomb on a bus? Ummm, terrorist. Terrorist with a personal vendetta.

Who is on the bus? Well....how about a person closely tied to his personal vendetta.

What is the bus doing? Bus stuff. Driving. Going round and round. Alright, some questions answered. But keep letting your intuition gently question and be curious.

Okay, but if there's a bomb on the bus, how'd it get there? Logically, how'd that thing get there.

Why's it there?

How can I make the story even more suspenseful?

Ah, I know! I can put people on the bus. People on the bus sounds great because that gives it stakes and emotional impact. Perfect.

# This is your intuition filling up the story in a way that's true to your story magic.

BUT! What if a well-meaning friend said, “You know what’s big right now? Wizards! If you put a wizard in your book, it’ll sell like hotcakes!”

Alright. You think, sure. Okay. Let me scan that idea. No pressure, no judgment. Just gently curious. Let’s see how that fits.

So, you have this story where there’s a bomb, and a bus, and people on it who are quite concerned and scared, and right when the bus hits fifty miles per hour, BAM! A wizard appears, opens a portal and whisks them to a galaxy far away before the bomb can explode!

How does that feel?

- **Does that feel awesome in your bones?**
- **Does it feel logical, organic and true to what you first saw, what you got excited about, and what your intuition is pulling you towards?**
- **Is it what you want to write? Is it what you want your story to be?**
- **Or, is it wildly different than what you wanted?**
- **Is it like trying to shove your foot into a shoe that’s two sizes too small?**
- **Does it feel logical, organic and true to what you first saw, got excited about, and let your intuition scan?**
- **Is it what you want to write? Is it what you want your story to be?**

This is why it is so important to get quiet with yourself and let your intuition scan and guide you. Because if your initial enthusiasm and intuition is saying you want badly to write a modern-day action thriller, then you know not to put a wizard on that bus.

Now, is there a story with a wizard on a bus who transports people to a galaxy far away before something horrible happens? Sure. Absolutely. But is that your story? Is that the spell you want to weave and the journey you want to take yourself – and your future readers - on?

By the way, tapping into your intuition, getting in that current, isn't to say that you're always going to feel calm and cool and excited about your story. I'm not saying it all snaps into place in a single day and that you won't write and delete and write and delete. Or that there won't be days that will be extremely frustrating, where you can eek out 29 words or none at all.

Writing has its ups and downs and that's totally normal. In fact, I talk about this very thing, normalizing the roller coaster of creativity and writing, on my podcast *The Creative Writer Podcast*, which you can listen to after this.

But when you have tough days like that, remember the reason you're writing. The heart of it, the why of it. The question you want answered, the theme you want to explore, the character you want to fall in love with. The world you want to escape into. The truth you want to highlight. You didn't get this story for no reason.

There is something in you that called to this story. There is something in you that craves something in this story. It might not be obvious what that is. And it might take you a lot of soul-searching to really discover it. But the fact remains is that your ideas, your story magic, comes from a very deep, personal, and totally unique place.

And your intuition wants to guide you there, so let it!

Because just as much as it can help you in the big story stuff, it can also definitely help you on a smaller chapter or scene level.

You're scanning with the same gently curious questions.

How does that feel?

Does that feel awesome in your bones?

Does it feel logical, organic and true to what you first saw, what you got excited about, and what your intuition is pulling you towards?

Is it what you want to write? Is it what you want your story to be?

Or, is it wildly different than what you wanted?

Is it like trying to shove your foot into a shoe that's two sizes too small?  
Does it feel logical, organic and true to what you first saw, got excited about, and let your intuition scan?

Is it what you want to write? Is it what you want your story to be?

So if you have a scene and you can see it clear as day, that it's like a dessert you can't wait to dive into but you're not exactly sure what anchors it or what happens before or after, that's when connecting to your incredible intuition comes in so handy.

**Ask questions, be gently curious. No pressure, no judgment, definitely no white noise of the internet.**

Just think...you have a scene. Let's say it's a big, dramatic rescue scene. I'm talking high drama and blood and tears and screaming for help. And... that's it. You have no idea what happens before or after or where this scene even goes! Is it the end? A prologue? The "all is lost" moment? Get quiet, step into the current of your intuition.

You have a big rescue scene. So logically, you that scenes can't exist in a vacuum. They connect and springboard off each other, there's emotional follow through and resonance. So if you have a scene where that white haired purple-eyed guy (let's bring him back) is stuck between two rocks, two huge boulders, then your intuition tells you that you need to show a boulder falling. A scene where it all went wrong and this guy ended up literally between a rock and a hard place. Well, another rock.

Keep scanning with your intuition. You have the rescue, you have the catastrophe. What else? Scan this character. Scan the scenerios you have. Be gently curious: what is this purple-eyed boy doing that would get him stuck between two boulders? Where is he? What took him to this place?

## **Let your intuition answer those questions.**

From there, you can boil it down even more. You figured out how the guy got stuck, you figured out his rescue. What scenes could then, logically, organically and true...connect and springboard off these, have emotional resonance and follow through?

Scene by scene, moment by moment, it will start coming together more and more.

And always keep going back to your first two steps: let those puzzle pieces of your imagination get clear. Then get excited. And welcome in your incredible intuition and start gently asking questions and getting curious. No white noise allowed.

But if it does enter your brain, that horrible static...if your inner saboteur does try to tell you something, you know what to do? It's very simple. I want you to say:

Shut up. Or that's too harsh, say shush up. Zip it. Quiet down. It is not the time for you. I'm making story magic. So get out of the kitchen. Step away from the cauldron!

This is between you and your story magic. Nothing and no one else. Alright! We have one last step in creating story magic. You ready for it?





## Step Four: Take Powerful Action

I have to admit I did go back and forth on this because at first, I said take inspired action. But actually, I want you to take powerful action because in my work with authors and being an author myself, I know how hard it is to sit down and write. When you read deal announcements on Twitter and comparison kicks in. When you see Youtube reviews of a book you like and they're so negative and you think, *gosh,*

*I don't want to be ripped apart like that* and your fear of judgment kicks in. Or when your spouse or parents or friends or siblings look at you like your cuckoo for coco puffs because you want to spend your evenings writing a young adult sci-fi romance. Maybe an article is making the rounds full of doom and gloom about bookselling and readership. Or maybe your own doubts and worries are louder than ever, telling you that you've been at this for years and it'll never work out.

My friend, I know what those thoughts are like. I know how debilitating and horrible they are. I know how they can make you feel like what's the point? And that's why sitting down and writing, of daydreaming and doing it, that in and of itself is powerful action.

And it's quiet, too. It's tapping away on a keyboard or writing pages and pages, filling up notebook after notebook. It's making aesthetic boards and playlists. It's revising and deleting.

Powerful action.

Instead of watching one more episode of Cobra Kai, you chose to write instead.

Powerful action.

It's getting just get a few more words on the page that hadn't existed before so you're that much closer to finishing the book you're so excited about.

Powerful action.

It's the last step in really igniting your story magic. You have a clear picture of what you want to write. You let yourself get excited about it. You have your intuition working and scanning to see what feels joyful, right and true. It's giving you even more clarity and more excitement.

And now it's time to take powerful action.

**Because here's the real, raw talk: a story like that, one where you're excited and you're thinking of it and thinking of it, and you want to explore those questions or you need a world you can escape into, or you need a character that you can have as a best friend... that story needs to exist. For you. For future readers.**

I remember that I was in a very sad place in 2020 when my beloved family member, my cat Bolitar passed away. I was so sad. One of the things that helped was escaping into a book, where I was worlds away and could for a little while, not be so sad.



Books were a saving grace back then, along with family and friends. Do you see how important you taking small, yet big and powerful action is? And best of all, you don't need to do it every day.

There are some writers who do great with everyday writing. There are some writers who I call Let The River Run writers, where they can just let it gush and they can write thirty-thousand words in a weekend, take four months off, and then finish their book

in another week. There are some writers who write with the seasons. Summer, they're out soaking up the sun. But when winter rolls around, they're living in front of the computer and space heater and they're typing up a storm.

Whatever it is, whatever your process, continue to take the powerful action of getting that story in your head and that magic in your heart out on the page.

This is story magic. It starts with you. It's built from generations before you and all of the incredible things happening now. And then it gets shared to impact people from here to generations ahead.

So let your story get clear. Don't shoot it down.

Let yourself get excited. Don't shut it down.

Let your intuition guide you, not anyone else's  
opinions.

And finally, take powerful action so then you can  
share all of that magic with everyone.

Feel it.

Embrace it.

Let yourself share it.

Your story is magic. Because it starts with you.

And you are magic.

# About Bethany Hensel

Bethany is an editor, writer and teacher. She has been working with writers for over 13 years and recently launched The Confident Writer Podcast, dedicated to helping people get back their confidence and joy of writing. Bethany's teaching style is down-to-earth and her advice is both practical and actionable so then anyone can benefit from her work and courses and write the story they've always wanted to. And confidently.

Follow her for daily doses of inspiration and motivation at:

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And be sure to subscribe to her newsletter at [bethanyhensel.com](https://bethanyhensel.com) to not only receive the latest updates, behind the scenes fun, extras and giveaways, but also immediately get the free masterclass: **The Five Most Toxic Lies That Hold Writers Back...And How to Finally Break Free Of Them.**