

7:48pm- It's perfect. It's surprisingly perfect. It's never this perfect, but somehow, magically, it is. I'm almost giddy with how proud of myself I am of this. I send it to a beta reader- not so much to get any edits but just so that she can praise its perfection as well- and go make cookie bars for the potlatch tomorrow.

8:52pm- Beta reader loves it. I knew she would. She goes through for a second quick read and I start formatting the story for submission. But when I go to the website, somehow the category now says Nonfiction. I stare at it. It still says Nonfiction. I check the calendar twice, then the email, and then the website again. It still says Nonfiction.

But I wrote fiction.

I go to eat a cookie bar.

8:57pm- Husband finishes putting the kids down and notices me sitting on the floor groaning with a cookie bar.

"What's wrong?" he asks.

I explain.

He laughs at me.

9:02pm- Beta reader has two minor nitpicks. She asks if I'm going to submit it now.

I explain.

She laughs at me.

I go get another cookie bar.

9:05pm- Husband suggests I write a story about botching the category on a writing contest.

I stare at him. "But- but my *reputation*."

He shrugs and starts grading.

I open a new document. Then bury my face against my desk and groan, "Oh my gosh."

I want another cookie bar.

9:08pm- Beta reader suggests a word sprint and gives me fifteen minutes to get started. Another writing buddy joins the chat window, but I'm too embarrassed to tell her what beta reader is laughing about.

Somehow three more cookie bars are missing.

9:25pm- The sprint is over and I report back. Things are not going well. I decide I can't bear to turn this stupid thing in.

The writing buddies suggest another sprint.

Husband asks if he can play music.

I say no.

He asks if he can play instrumental music.

I leave.

9:30pm- We sprint again.

Nine cookie bars are missing.

Things are not going well.

9:48pm- I check again.

It still says Nonfiction.

I have no idea what I'm going to take to the potlatch tomorrow. But it's probably not cookie bars.