

[18:08] BRKTeenLib: **Ok, we're going to get going now!**

[18:08] hollybblack: okay.

[18:08] laxfreak26530: ok

[18:08] BRKTeenLib: **We've got a few teens here in the room, and I've got questions from a few teens who could not make it this evening**

[18:08] BRKTeenLib: **Just to go over the chat rules**

[18:09] BRKTeenLib: **We have a few set questions I'm going to start off with**

[18:09] BRKTeenLib: **And then I will open questions up to the teens**

[18:09] laxfreak26530: ok

[18:09] BRKTeenLib: **laxfreak (or Colby -- what would you prefer?), if you have a question, post a ?**

[18:09] BRKTeenLib: **And I will call on you to go ahead**

[18:10] laxfreak26530: i'll just post a ?

[18:10] BRKTeenLib: **If you have more to add to a question, type "..."**

[18:10] laxfreak26530: ok

[18:10] BRKTeenLib: **When you're done, type #**

[18:10] laxfreak26530: ok

[18:10] BRKTeenLib: **Yup, you've got.**

[18:11] laxfreak26530: should i ask the question now?

[18:11] BRKTeenLib: **Ok, then let's get started!**

[18:11] BRKTeenLib: **Hold on, I've got a few to start with**

[18:11] BRKTeenLib: **So, Holly -- thanks for coming!**

[18:11] hollybblack: **Thanks for having me!**

[18:12] BRKTeenLib: **What inspired you to write your first book (Tithe)?**

[18:13] hollybblack: **Well, I was interested in faery folklore and one of the things about the old stories is just how scary faeries really were. It wasn't so much that there was a good court and a bad court.**

[18:13] hollybblack: **And I thought it would be interesting to have a story like that, where the good court is really no better than the bad one.**

[18:14] hollybblack: **I grew up in NJ and I really liked the juxtaposition of the run down industrial setting with the wild wood aspect of Faerie.**

[18:15] hollybblack: **That's why I call it "suburban fantasy" - although no one finds it as funny as I do.#**

[18:16] BRKTeenLib: **One of the teens here was also asking about your upcoming graphic novel -- can you talk a bit about that?**

[18:17] hollybblack: **The Good Neighbors is actually about faeries too - a producer asked me if I had an idea for a TV series and usually I never have ideas about that kind of thing, but I started thinking about the story of Bridget Cleary. She was ...**

[18:18] hollybblack: **--and this is true--killed by her husband, Michael Cleary, in front of some of her family and neighbors because they thought she was a faery changeling...**

[18:19] hollybblack: **This only happened about a hundred years ago. Anyway, The Good Neighbors turned into three graphic novels (because once I had the idea, I wanted to do something with it and I've always wanted to do a comic) about...**

[18:19] hollybblack: **a girl whose mother disappears and whose father may or may not have killed her. The mother may or may not have been a faery.**

[18:20] hollybblack: **And it's going to be illustrated by the fabulous Ted Naifeh who has done Courtney Crumrin and the Night Things as well as one of my favorite books, How Loathesome.**

[18:20] hollybblack: **The first book is coming out from Scholastic at some point, maybe next year, depending on Ted's schedule.**

[18:20] hollybblack: **#**

[18:21] BRKTeenLib: **Will it be three volumes, or three separate stories?**

[18:21] hollybblack: **Three volumes but it's really the story of Rue figuring out what happened to her mother and who she is.**

[18:22] hollybblack: **#**

[18:22] BRKTeenLib: **Is it hard being an author?**

[18:23] hollybblack: **Well, being a full-time author is at once just about the laziest job someone could have (you have no idea if I am wearing pants right now, for example) and a weirdly stressful**

one (bad idea = wasted day = no money to feed dog)...

[18:24] hollybblack: But it is the most fun job I can imagine. Also, the dog can always scavenge. He's a greyhound. They're supposed to hunt.

[18:24] BRKTeenLib: Are you wearing pants? 🤔

[18:24] hollybblack: Am actually wearing pants. I dressed up for this thing!

[18:24] BRKTeenLib: Lots of giggling here

[18:25] BRKTeenLib: We can just imagine your outfit. 😊

[18:25] BRKTeenLib: How long does it generally take you to write a book?

[18:25] hollybblack: Just be glad you vetoed the video interview.

[18:25] BRKTeenLib: lol

[18:26] hollybblack: It takes me about a year to write a book like Valiant or Ironside, but I'll often be working on other stuff a little too. I find that projects seem a lot more fun before they are the one I'm supposed to be working on and I try to..

[18:27] hollybblack: capitalize on that and write notes on the next project when it still seems like slacking off.

[18:28] hollybblack: And I try and write some short stories because they're fun and can be really different from longer fiction. #

[18:28] hollybblack: Of course, it took me 5 years to write my first book.

[18:28] BRKTeenLib: Is there a reason the first one took that much longer? Or is it just practice?

[18:29] hollybblack: Well, I'm always afraid that another book will be like that, but I think the reason was that I had no idea how to write a book. I was learning everything at the same time.

[18:29] hollybblack: I didn't know how to plot. It was all faeries sitting around, experiencing ennui.

[18:30] hollybblack: And finally, I realized that a book could not read like a very long story in the New Yorker plus elves. This was a sad realization, but it led me to figuring out structure and finally finishing.

[18:30] hollybblack: #

[18:31] BRKTeenLib: OK, Colby, I'm going to open this up now, so if you have a question, post a ?

[18:31] BRKTeenLib: Do you keep a journal or diary to jot down ideas?

[18:31] laxfreak26530: ?

[18:32] hollybblack: I jot down ideas in notebooks, but the first journal I've ever kept for longer than a few weeks is actually my LiveJournal. I don't write about my life for myself, but I do write down ideas and impressions or scenes on tiny bits of

[18:33] hollybblack: paper that I then lose and accuse my husband of moving.

[18:33] hollybblack: #

[18:33] BRKTeenLib: Go ahead, Colby!

[18:34] laxfreak26530: What (if you did) did you base your characters on in the Spiderwick Chronicles?

[18:35] hollybblack: Well, the Spiderwick books were based in part on kids telling Tony and I that they'd really met faeries and we thought that was so cool that we based the books on it. But when you're writing characters, any characters, I think you

[18:35] hollybblack: draw unconsciously (or consciously-although I think that's harder) on the people around you and, most of all, on yourself.

[18:36] hollybblack: I was a mean older sister and I based a lot of Mallory's interactions on the way I talked to my younger sister.

[18:37] hollybblack: And my husband loves animals and had a bad temper when he was a kid. He got kicked out of public school and his parents were divorced, so there's a lot of him in the twins too. #

[18:37] BRKTeenLib: lol

[18:38] hollybblack: I liked writing Jared as an atypical kid's book hero. He's not really into books and he's angry.

[18:38] hollybblack: It was interesting to put him at the center instead of the more typical fantasy hero, Simon.

[18:38] hollybblack: #

[18:39] laxfreak26530: interesting

[18:39] BRKTeenLib: From a teen here: Who, if anyone, did you base Roiben on in Tithe?

[18:40] BRKTeenLib: Also, how do you pronounce Roiben?

[18:40] hollybblack: I pronounce it Roy-ben. Like the two names.

[18:42] hollybblack: Roiben isn't really based on anyone, but I love the idea of a character that initially seems to be the villain and turns out to be more complex. And I wanted Roiben to have done things bad enough that from a certain perspective, ..

[18:42] hollybblack: other characters could really see him as villainous.

[18:42] hollybblack: #

[18:43] BRKTeenLib: **At what point in your life did you feel completely sure about being an author (if you do feel sure)?**

[18:44] hollybblack: Well, I'm finally starting to settle in and believe that this is actually my job, but sometimes I still feel like someone is going to tell me I have to get one of those jobs where you wear pants and don't make things up again.

[18:45] hollybblack: I wanted to be an author when I was in middle school--I actually wrote a short novel when I was in eighth grade--but then I got distracted in high school and college

[18:45] hollybblack: When I hit about 25 and I only had some short stories and the beginnings of novels, I realized that I needed to be serious about writing.

[18:46] hollybblack: It also helped that I met another fantasy writer, Steve Berman, and we formed a two-person critique circle.

[18:47] hollybblack: We really pushed each other to finish things and send them out. Without that, I don't know if I could have made it through all those years of wading through my own prose trying to figure out how to turn it into a story that made...

[18:47] hollybblack: sense and that another person would actually want to read.#

[18:48] BRKTeenLib: **From a teen here: Do you listen to music while you write, and if so, what?**

[18:51] BRKTeenLib: **Did you have any other questions, Colby?**

[18:52] laxfreak26530: yes

[18:52] BRKTeenLib: **Ok, get ready to ask them.** 😊

[18:56] hollybblack: Oh! Right. I actually waste a lot of time making playlists for all my books.

[18:56] laxfreak26530: Hi - I'm here...

[18:56] BRKTeenLib: **Welcome back, Colby**

[18:56] BRKTeenLib: **You get the next question**

[18:56] hollybblack: So I can listen to them over and over again.

[18:56] BRKTeenLib: **Any particular songs?**

[18:59] hollybblack: Well, Ironside is the shortest. It "Sister I Need Wine" from Guided by Voices, "Try Not to Breathe" by REM, "To Be of Use" by Smog, "Somehting I Can Never Have" and "Sin" from NIN, "Keep Me From Harm" by Peter Murphy and "I Wish I

[18:59] hollybblack: Had an Evil Twin" by the Magnetic Fields.

[18:59] hollybblack: I can't believe how long it took to write that.

[18:59] hollybblack: Good thing I didn't pick a longer playlist to try and type out.

[19:00] hollybblack: #

[19:00] laxfreak26530: That was about three minutes!

[19:00] BRKTeenLib: **Colby, go ahead with your question!**

[19:00] BRKTeenLib: **lol**

[19:00] laxfreak26530: When do you write? Where do you write?

[19:01] BRKTeenLib: **Good question**

[19:01] hollybblack: I don't have a particular time that I write. Often I write around all the other weird parts of being a writer -- the phone calls with agents and editors, the emails that need to get taken care of and that kind of thing. Often I

[19:03] hollybblack: write at night when things are more quiet and I know I have a longer stretch of time. I have an office and a comfortable chair in there to sit on and type into my laptop. I also go out to cafes to meet other writers and sit

[19:04] laxfreak26530: What are those other writers?

[19:04] hollybblack: together and work. Sometimes it's good, because it takes me away from the phone and it puts me in contact with other human beings (usually Kelly Link who also likes to meet to write).

[19:05] hollybblack: Well, usually Kelly. Also sometimes my friend Cassie Clare, who comes up to work with us. Steve, who I mentioned before. Libba Bray, when I'm in Brooklyn, and Justine

Larbalestier. Recently, I went out for a writing date with

[19:06] hollybblack: John Green, E Lockhart, Cecil Castellucci, Maureen Johnson, and Cassie. That was fun, but I got nothign done.

[19:07] hollybblack: Sometimes I get stuck on weird things, like googling some obscure bit of research. It's reeeeeeally good to have someone sitting next to you and telling you that you need to move on to the next sentence. Also, there's coffee.

[19:07] hollybblack: #

[19:08] BRKTeenLib: **One last question from here: do you have a part-time job, or do you write full-time?**

[19:09] hollybblack: I am really lucky to be able to write full time. I hope I'm able to keep doing it.

[19:09] hollybblack: #

[19:10] BRKTeenLib: **All right, we all should let you go. Thanks so much for agreeing to chat with us!**

[19:10] BRKTeenLib: **We had a great time.** 😊

[19:10] hollybblack: Thank you again for having me. I really enjoyed talking to all of you.

[19:10] BRKTeenLib: **Shelly, a fan here, just got your copy of Ironside.** 😊

[19:10] hollybblack: I hope that she likes it!

[19:11] hollybblack: I hope that you like it, Shelly.

[19:11] BRKTeenLib: **She says thank you!**

[19:11] hollybblack: Have a good night, guys.

[19:11] BRKTeenLib: **Shelly's very excited.** 😊

[19:11] BRKTeenLib: **Good night!**

[19:11] hollybblack: **Bye!**