

# Friday Snippet ... almost

By Holly Lisle

It's Saturday. I got the words this week, but I haven't had time to breathe otherwise.

However, here, belatedly, is the week's snippet from THE RUBY KEY. (Scholastic, pub. date pending.)

*"You've already crossed the moonroads," the cat said to me. He rode on my shoulders. "If you have not walked them in the flesh, you've walked them in spirit, and they have marked you. So for you, finding one isn't going to be hard. You've got the road into your blood now, and your blood is on the road. The moonroads and the moonworld will call to you—they're nasty that way. When you sleep they will try to drag you in soul-first, and when you're awake, from time to time you'll see some corner of a moonroad try to slide itself beneath your feet, so that you'll step onto it all unwary."*

*I shivered. "I don't like the sound of that."*

*"You shouldn't," the cat told me. "The moonroads want to be walked, but those who can find them are not usually the sort of folk a gentle young girl like you would want anything to do with. The moonroads feed off their passengers, and at the same time feed them. None walk them and remain unchanged. Although," he said, and dug his claws into my shoulder, making me wince, "I do know a few tricks for taking the worst of their bite out of them."*

*We were hiking away from the old woman's tiny cottage and her goat-stinking, dog-stinking yard, and I was beginning to catch promises of scents other than cooked fish and onions and woodfire smoke and animal dung.*

*"So really," the cat said, "the problem is not so much*

*finding a moonroad as it is staying off of it when you don't want to find it."*

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