

Friday Snippet, from The Ruby Key

written by Holly

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By Holly Lisle

The following snippet is the beginning of Chapter Two from The Ruby Key, the first book of the MOON AND SUN series. This is YA. Genna, the heroine and narrator of the first book, is fourteen, and her brother Dan is twelve.

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All I remember of Letrin in that moment is his eyes. They seemed to me deep as the oceans of fable, as if, should I dare to step toward him, I would fall into them and meet my death by drowning. Those eyes, cold as deepest winter, sent a chill through me that I can neither explain nor fully recall. Dan's hand slid into mine again, and we locked our fingers together.

"A different deal," Kai-Lord Letrin said with a slow, careful smile. "Surely you do not wish to make good on a deal that will result in your deaths and those of your siblings at the end of it. For even if you save the village, the caer will not spare you. He cares not for your mother, or for your brothers and sisters, or for you, or for anything but that he become an immortal with the world in his hand. But you ..." And he looked at Dan, and then at me, and tipped his head slowly to one side. His smile grew a little broader.

He stood before I could think of words to say, or even before

Dan could—and that is a trick—and said, “You will be my guests at dinner tonight. We will feast you, for so few of your people brave Arrienda.” He swept a hand out and around, encompassing the great city in which we stood, that we might know by Arrienda he meant the wondrous realm over which he ruled. “And while you prepare for the feast, you must think of what, exactly, you want.” His smile gone, he said, “In the meantime I will be thinking of what I want. And once we have eaten and drunk and sung together, we will sit down, just the three of us, and we will see if we can come to an agreement.”

Then he was gone. I cannot say how he left us—only that one instant he stood before us and the next he did not. Behind us, the black-robed nightling who had led us to him cleared her throat and said to the nightling girl—who had been, I just realized, nowhere near us while we talked to the kailord—“Take them. You know what to do.”

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