

Monday morning

By Holly Lisle

I can hear faint echoes of *The Mamas and the Papas* singing **Monday, Monday** in the back of my mind.

I'm tired. Really, really, really tired. The last few days, I've had to set a timer to remind myself to stand up and move once an hour. I hand-wrote more than twenty new pages yesterday, plus editing (read *cutting, cutting, cutting*) existing pages. My schedule has been dawn-to-pass-out.

Those three endings I had? All gone. The one that ended up on the page as my cramped fingers and aching wrist were scrawling across the desert sands of a stack of bleached-bone paper was a fourth ending, one that tied in elements of the three endings I couldn't make my mind up about. It twisted those previous endings like pretzels, stood them on end and shook out the real story, the real heroism, the real sacrifice, and it made me cry. Not a sad ending, but an emotional one. A strong one. The right one. Finally.

I'm typing in today. My eyes are already crossing, I ache everywhere, but long hours and an absolute commitment to cutting everything that wasn't right and writing better and the brutal process of line-for-scene and slash-and-burn and question-the-premise got me the book I wanted. The characters I wanted. Now I just have to nail it down in pixels.

So, onward. I'd like to say the worst is over, but I still have a long way to go. No guaranteed that it will be, and I don't want to tempt fate.

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