

# Promises You Make

written by Holly  
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By Holly Lisle

Claire liked "C". Robin e-mailed me yesterday, and mentioned that she wanted to know about a couple of changes to the basic premise, though.

Throughout the years I've been doing this, I've made plenty of changes in previous premises, rewritten whole vast chunks of books, never quibbled because in every instance I could see how the changes would make the story better and how in making them I could still keep the story mine.

But every book has a heart, a kernel that is the thing about that book that makes you love it, makes you have to tell that story, meet those characters, live those lives.

And this time, for the first time, Claire needed changes that would have taken my heart out of the book. It would have been a good story her way, and marketable as hell, and I could have written it. But "C" would have been dead.

I've always promised myself that if the time ever came that I had to choose between saving the story and taking the money, I'd pull the book. The time you have to make good on a promise like this, is, of course, never when you're flush with money and everything is cozy. But who you are, as a writer and as a human being, is never about the promises you make, but about the promises you keep.

I pulled "C". It's out of consideration, and the three alternate ideas I worked up yesterday when I stalled on LGD – all of which are exciting and tight and strange but not too strange – went out to Claire yesterday.

And "C" will return to its life as my new "PR", which was

PHOEBE RAIN, which eventually became MIDNIGHT RAIN.

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