

Sunrise

By Holly Lisle

I love watching the sun come up. Right now it's illuminating the dew on the grass out my back window, and etching some elegant tracteries through the line of woods at the back of the yard. It will actually be over the horizon soon.

I spent years working in a room with no window and no door, with a little prayer taped to one corner of my desk that said only, "East-facing window, office with a door."

And now the office is real, and it's better than I could have hoped. The window opens, too, to let in the smells of fresh-cut grass and autumn. In spring, I'd catch honeysuckle. Summer it was rich with growing things. Winter, I suppose, I'll have to content myself with the sunrises and maybe enjoying the occasional frost patterns. Opening it ... probably not so much.

I spent a little time meditating before getting started this morning. Will probably talk to my Onyx editor, Claire, today, about the current book plus the proposal for the next one. I suspect Claire is going to shoot down the proposal in its entirety. I finally think I've figured out why.

I complicate things. I have spent twenty years aiming for complexity – Byzantine cultures, roccoco ecologies, Machiavellian plots – because SF and fantasy reward complexity.

Mainstream suspense does not, and the shift in gears here has been rough for me. I suspect I left half my transmission somewhere behind me on the highway.

Writing is always a learn-by-doing proposition. Switching genres can be doubly difficult because if you've been at all successful in a previous genre, you then tend to think you

know at least some of what you're doing, and that you can rely on past experience – only to discover the part you did really well in the previous genre is the part that doesn't translate to the new one.

Sunrise on a new day. On me back at the bottom of a big learning curve. So I guess it's a good thing I'm a morning person.

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