Well, How About That?

written by Holly
May 1, 2006
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Sometime in the middle of 2002, I got an acceptance from Josepha Sherman at Walker Books for a YA titled **Rule, Covenant, and Promise**, a very dark high fantasy young adult series. I was thrilled about the pending sale, because I love YA and had always wanted to write some. (YA is Young Adult, for those not familiar with book jargon.)

My beloved, accepted, not-yet-paid-for series promptly killed Walker's YA line.

So I stuck it on my hard drive and forgot about it. My then-agent was unenthused about YA in general and my YA in particular, and I had other books to write (there are always other books to write), so I got on with my life. And then, in the press of many other novels, I even forgot the YA existed. Several months ago I stumbled across it again in the weblog, and then found the 90 pages I'd actually written on my hard drive. But I did not find the extended outline, the short synopses of ideas for other stories in the series (they're intended to be sequential stand-alones), or any of my worldbuilding. Which meant if I wanted to work on the project, I would have to redo all that work, retrofitting around the ninety existing pages.

I put the YA aside again. Because that was a lot of work, and there were other books to write. There are **always** … yeah, yeah. Anyway.

You know about the romance/paranormal thing I've been pitching. My agent was not crazy about it. She wanted to know what else I had. You know about Hell Year and The Neverending Proposal, which left me with a dozen fully-fleshed out

proposals and sample chapters that were deemed too smart or too complex for the current women's fiction market. You don't know about the perky fantasy romance thing I came up with that was sort of ***Sympathy for the Devil*** meets **Bullfinch's Mythology** over lunch at the office.

I tossed two of those to her, but … well, she wanted to know what else I had.

So I sent her that YA.

And she loved it. Loved, loved it. So did Diana, her assistant.

Problem is, I left myself one monster cliffhanger, and I have no clue what happens next. I don't remember what I'd planned. I don't remember the actual writing of this story. Those ninety pages, the characters, and the adventure fell out of my fingertips with a mind of their own, and while I'm reading the story and refamiliarizing myself with what's there, and falling in love with the characters and the world … it's like playing that party game where someone else writes a paragraph and ends it with a stumper, and you're the one who has to pick up and write the next paragraph. 2002 me had something in mind for this, but 2006 me has no insight into the mind of that earlier self, and now is going to have to rough it.

So now I'm retrofitting a missing world, an absentee mythology, wayward languages, escapee maps, and an AWOL outline and several synopses. And swearing at the bitch who wrote this stuff and didn't file her damned notes.

That's my day. And probably week.

How's yours?

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