

## What readers have said about *All For Love*

I couldn't put the book down, read it in a day! I was completely swept up in the story and before I knew it I was finished with tears in my eyes. **Michelle, Nelson**

I loved this book! It's a real page turner. I loved the characterisations, descriptions and the exploration of bias and differing generational attitudes. **H. Garner, UK**

Best book ever! **Teenager reader**

*All For Love* is quite different to the two previous novels by Heather Holmes, in the regard that this is a Romance, and what a whirlwind one at that. The story has everything from the innocence of a young music student from the countryside to the hectic life of a dangerous rock star in the big smoke. From the moment they meet, the blast of Cupid's arrows is full on, but life for anyone being close to this Harlequin is no dance on roses, rather a fandango on drugs, sex and rock 'n roll. Will they make it in the end?

Heather Holmes' gutsy and charming writing style makes the reader smile, laugh, weep, and curse through this stormy love story. Can it be any better? **Annika Ohlson-Smith, romance writer, Nelson**

This is a wonderful book! Took me back to Africa. It was like I was there with the characters in their journey. It was so real. **Savita P. Appleby**

Very moving and satisfying. The characters have great depth and are utterly convincing. An emotional rollercoaster. Would love to see it in the movies. **Dave H. Hope**

This book is an incredible love story and captivates you as a reader with its ups and downs. It's a book you can't put down even through the tears. A very enjoyable read. **EP Richmond**



**ALL FOR  
LOVE**



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LOVE**

HEATHER HOLMES

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

Published 2020  
by Heather Holmes

ISBN 978-0-473-55429-3 (Paperback)  
ISBN 978-0-473-55430-9 (Epub)  
ISBN 978-0-473-55431-6 (Mobi/Kindle)

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Printed by The Copy Press, Nelson, New Zealand. [www.copypress.co.nz](http://www.copypress.co.nz)

## Foreword and Dedication

Every day, world-wide, over two million people are diagnosed with cancer. No family or group of friends is left untouched and we all want to help.

The motivation for this book has come from inspirational colleagues at Waimea College who, when faced with a life changing diagnosis and its treatments, have tackled this challenge with incredible strength, courage and determination to fight.

It is dedicated to Faye, Graeme, Diane, Audrey, Pam and all the others who are fighting; to those who have won and to those who have sadly lost their battle.

Many thanks to the Nelson Romantic Writers Critique Group for their feedback, proofreading support and amazing English language skills, Annika and Sally in particular, Dave and Suzanne from The CopyPress and my wonderful husband, family and, of course, friends. There are too many of you to mention specifically but you know who you are. Without you, this story would never have made it to print.

Together we can all make a difference. Thank you for buying this book.





## Part One

*There are days that change lives. Some arrive with a hiss and a roar, like a birth or a death, life-changing injuries or a win on the lottery, while others sneak in, hardly noticed, until it is too late.*



## London – 1980

On the wall by the window the clock silently slipped the minute hand to seven-thirty. At the same time, outside on the quiet street, Rosie pushed her key into the lock, opened the door, dropped the Yale latch behind her and climbed the stairs to the recording studio.

It had been a bonus to find that no one arrived for work before nine-thirty, so different from her family farm. There, the needs of the animals came before any extra minutes in bed. When the sun was up so were the Browney family. Their lives, always in harmony with nature, had no connection to where she found herself now.

She'd only been in London for a month but, from her brief experience of the big city, it appeared to be populated by more owls than larks; but with that came a surprise reward. While her work-colleagues grabbed an extra couple of hours in bed, she had somewhere private to practice undisturbed.

Opening the door to the *Live Room* she dropped her bag on the floor and sighed. It was a mess. Discarded coffee cups littered the polished wood surface of the studio's prize possession, the Steinway baby grand, and the floor was dotted with empty biscuit-wrappers and sandwich-papers. Someone had obviously been working late into the night.

Dropping the wrappers into the waste bin, she collected the cups on a tray and left this on the small table by the door with a mental note

to deal with the problem later. Her working day didn't start until the others arrived. This was her time. Time for her music.

Instead of the usual printed score someone had left a sheaf of handwritten music scattered across the keys. For an exercise she propped these on the stand and practiced her sight-reading before beginning to play. When the final note faded she looked up and literally jumped with fright.

In the doorway and leaning against the jamb, arms folded casually, stood a stranger. Tall and dark-haired, wearing a white open-necked shirt, dark trousers and white trainers, he was staring at her with a half smile on his lips. He straightened up and held his hands out in a calming gesture when he saw her wide-eyed reaction.

"Sorry," he said, stepping into the room. "Didn't mean to startle you."

Rosie was speechless with shock. Ice-cold adrenalin raced through her veins and took her breath away. Her heart hammered against her ribs and stars danced in front of her eyes. The studio didn't open for hours. Who was this man and why was he here? She knew she'd never seen him before and where he was standing was blocking her only avenue of escape. Swallowing hard, she found her voice.

"How did you get in?" she asked in a croaky whisper. She knew she had locked the door behind her.

"It's okay," he attempted to reassure her. "I'm supposed to be here. I have a key." He reached into a back pocket and pulled out a key ring. "Marcus gave it to me. He said I should treat this place as my own, and come and go as I pleased."

Rosie recognised the enamel black cat on its silver chain. It belonged to her boss and Glory Studio's sole owner, Marcus Okeke. She breathed a sigh of relief and with an involuntary shiver running down her spine, felt her body begin to relax. Her heartbeat slowly began to return to normal and the stars before her eyes faded to nothing.

“He didn’t tell me you’d be here though,” he added with another smile.

“He wouldn’t.” Reassured, Rosie smiled back. “I don’t think he knows. But it’s alright. I work here.

“Me too, for the moment. You play beautifully.” He moved to stand beside her and nodded towards the score. “Do you like that?”

“Oh, yes.” Rosie looked back at the music. “I haven’t played it before. I only found it here this morning, but it’s beautiful.”

“Will you play it again for me?” he asked.

Rosie’s heart skipped a beat. Playing for others had always been her downfall. Alone her fingers flew across the keys; give her an audience and the opposite could be true. But this was only one man. She could do this. Taking a deep breath she touched the piano keys and delicate notes filled the room.

“You’ve a real talent there,” he commented as she finished the piece.

“Thank you.” Rose flushed under his compliment, adding shyly. “I have a place at the Royal College of Music next year.”

“Hey, I like that too.” He touched her pink cheek with the back of his fingers. “It must be years since I made a girl blush.

The colour on Rosie’s face moved from pink to crimson

“Harry,” he said holding out his hand. “Harry Quinn.”

“Rosemary Browney. My friends call me Rosie.” Rosie shook this hand. “I’m sorry,” she added as an afterthought, “but you’re not in the diary. The studio’s been fully booked by Pantomime this week, but they’re not expected until later this morning.”

“That doesn’t matter. It’s nice to meet you, Rosie. What do you think of this?” He unfolded a crumpled sheet of music headed *Ideal Woman* and joined her on the piano stool.

Rosie watched him play. The concentration of his face was intense while his fingers flew over the keys. His features were sharp, his dark hair cut short and brushed back, and his eyes so

dark brown they were almost black. Rosie guessed he must be in his early thirties.

“Now you,” he said when he’d finished. “You play. I’ll listen.”

Rosie started confidently but half-way through she stumbled; the arrangement felt clumsy. She went back two bars and tried again but with the same result.

Harry put a hand over hers to hold her fingers still. His skin was warm and Rosie sensed the briefest wisp of lemon scented cologne.

“That’s right,” he said. “You’ve spotted my deliberate mistake. Try this.” Pulling a chewed pencil from his shirt pocket he altered the score.

This time the notes flowed like water and once again Rosie found herself wrapped in the beauty of the music.

“Did you write that?” she asked when she’d finished playing. “It’s really good. Do you do this for a living?”

Harry looked at her quizzically for a moment, his head on one side, and then smiled his beautiful smile.

“Yes,” he answered. “I do this for a living and you are helping me. You’ve probably earned me a couple of thousand already. Play this again but with more emphasis here and here.”

He marked two bars on the second line and another three further down the score. It was so wonderful to have someone so enthused with music by her side that Rosie forgot her self doubt and rose to the challenge. Together they worked without speaking, Rosie playing and Harry changing the score, adding or subtracting notes as they went. For Rosie it was pure magic.

Their concentration was suddenly broken by the studio manager and owner, Marcus. The expression on his face was so flustered that Rosie’s heart skipped a beat. She looked at her watch. It was nearly ten. Where had the time gone?

“Oh, Marcus, I’m sorry,” she gasped. “I didn’t notice the ti...” but he wasn’t listening. Instead he walked straight to Harry and shook his hand.

“Great to meet you at last,” he said. “I’m glad you got the key.”

“And you.” Harry answered. “We’ve been improvising here. Rosie’s been a great help. Hope you don’t mind.”

“Not at all. Not at all.” Marcus beamed and rubbed his hands together. “This recording studio and its staff,” he gestured at Rosie, “are entirely at your service.”

Rosie was confused. She knew Pantomime were expected at ten o’clock. Marcus had been beside himself with excitement when they had signed the contract to use Glory Studio for their latest album. Everyone had instructions to be on their very best behaviour for the duration of the recording. But they were a group, not a single musician. So who had she been making music with? Perhaps he was one of the backing crew sent ahead to make sure everything was ready.

“I must go.” Rosie excused herself, “I’m late for work.”

“Same time tomorrow?” Harry caught her wrist as she moved to leave his side.

Rosie blushed again. “If you like.”

“Great. It’s a date.” Harry started to gather up the sheets of music they’d scattered across the piano top. “Hey, Rosie,” he added with a smile, tapping the loose sheets into some sort of order, “you’ve got real talent.”

“So have you,” she replied, picking up her bag and the tray of dirty cups she’d left at the door.

Stepping into the narrow corridor that stretched the length of the building she made her way to the kitchen. Newly appointed as the office ‘gofer’ washing up was always her first task of the day.

From the window Rosie could see two sparrows on the red tiles of the roofs opposite, squabbling over a crust of bread. She watched the birds as she washed the cups, stacked them to dry on the tiny draining board and then made her way to the studio’s tiny office.

Still obviously flustered, Marcus met her in the corridor, followed

her into the office and closed the door behind him. Claire, Rosie's flat mate, looked up from her desk.

"Rosie," Marcus ran both hands over his face and took a deep breath in an attempt to calm himself. "Do you know who that is?"

With a shake of her head Rosie hung her bag on the row of wooden pegs on the wall. "Not really," she said, turning to squeeze into the small space between her chair and desk. "I think he's a song-writer. He said his name was Harry, Harry Quinn. We've been playing some of his music."

"Harry Quinn?" Claire echoed the name.

Marcus rolled his eyes and pointed to one of the posters that decorated the room.

"That's him," he said.

Rosie looked at the picture of the band, Pantomime. At the front of the stage, laser lights and plumes of coloured smoke behind, Harlequin, the flamboyant lead singer stood before his keyboard, resplendent in his black and white painted face, orange wig and diamond patterned leotard, arms outstretched towards the heavens.

"Harry Quinn is Harlequin. You've been making music with the wild man of rock himself." He laughed and shook his head. "And you didn't even recognise him."

Rosie took her head in her hands in disbelief. Harlequin – Harry Quinn. How could she have been so stupid?"

Claire laughed out aloud.

"Only you could do that." She raised her eyebrows as their eyes met. "Tell me. What's he like?"

"Not now. You've got work to do. Look efficient." Hearing footsteps on the stairs, Marcus left the room. The other three members of the band had arrived. Within seconds, Marcus was back.

"Rosie. In there. Now." He pointed to the *Live Room*. "The backing pianist hasn't turned up and Harry wants you."