

## **His Human Librarian**

### ***Bonus Content***

#### *Sten*

“It’s a beautiful day,” my bound chirps pleasantly, with her chin to the sky. The long, human hair on her head blows tendrils off her shoulders in the breeze.

It’s been eight years since the day we met and Taylor’s as beautiful as ever. Her lack of horns and tail has not made her too delicate, instead she’s as resilient and strong as the day we met. The sparkle in her blue eyes and the lilt of her voice, along with the slight accent when she speaks my language never gets old. I continue to be lucky that I found this female and convinced her to remain on Tarvos as my bound and the mother of future Flagstones.

A puff of white steam escapes from my nostrils as I gesture at the wide blue sky above. “On Tarvos, it’s always a beautiful day,” I remind my bound.

“Not during the rainy season,” she looks back and grumbles.

I chuckle at this response.

The month long Tarvos rainy season recently ended and the land is now dry and the suns provide a pleasant amount of warmth. All four of us ride our beasts, on a trek to our favorite location. Our two girls will play on the water’s edge, and we will all eat together, sitting on a blanket on a small meadow next to our favorite pond on the main Flagstone ranch. My parents took me and my brothers often to this prized location with epic views of the surrounding mountains, and their parents did the same. My chest puffs with pride, knowing I am continuing this tradition with a new generation of Flagstones, teaching my daughters the ways of our land. Their offspring will one day do the same.

I admire my bound's curves and her thick thighs as she expertly rides Leetra and wears traditional Hyrrokin clothing, but still uses those odd human foot coverings that I have trouble understanding. But on the other claw, I've learned that I love her small, delicate feet. Taking her "shoes" off in our bedroom is always a delight.

"We've been busy getting everything ready for the post rainy season event and it's good to take a break," Taylor comments, because my female loves to chat while we ride. "I hate the rainy season though because I still detest the thunderous rain and I don't like being cooped up inside for that long with so much possible destruction going on outside."

"I don't hate it. It's fun," Stora, our seven-year-old responds. "We play games."

Taylor smiles warmly at our daughter who rides beside her. "I love staying with all of you for that long. If I didn't have my family I'd go crazy. That's the one good thing about rainy season, it's good quality time with my bound and offspring."

"We can't go anywhere during rainy season. It's *not* fun," Jula, my youngest daughter pouts.

I look down at my smallest offspring who shares my saddle while I ride Thunder. She's snuggled close with my arms on either side of her. "That's why we are out here today," I reassure my daughter who loves the wildlands as much as I do. "We are out to get in the sun, the wind and hear the sound of the animals and the buzz of the insects. It is good for our body and mind to be out on our land. This recharges our spirit after so much time spent inside."

"Outside," Jula cheers.

Thunder snorts in agreement.

Both of my daughters have features that look mainly like their mother, but their personalities are different. Stora is quieter and two years older and rides alone for the first time,

while Jula is much more talkative and remains on Thunder with me. They both can flash flame, which is all that matters and have smaller horns than most other Hyrrokin and their skin is a faint shade of red. Neither have silver claws, but they do not require human foot coverings and they can protect themselves with significant flames. My daughters are fierce Flagstones. The ranch house is now full of laughter and the sound of offspring. Roda loves caring for this latest generation.

“Why do we have to ride today though?” Jula whines. “I wanted to stay home and fire play.”

I blink, confused. “The rainy season is over and to celebrate we’re having lunch on our favorite spot,” I remind her. “I thought you said you wanted to be outside.”

“She does, it’s just that the ranch kids had a flame trial planned today.”

“Flame trial?” I glance down at my daughter who only recently achieved her first flame. “Did you want to enter the contest too?” I question Stora.

She shrugs. “Maybe.”

“We will have another trial at the event tomorrow,” I announce.

“We will?”

“Yes. For the first time we will have one for offspring your age. Both of you need a chance to show your Flagstone flame prowess.”

Both my girls cheer in response.

Taylor rolls her eyes. “Flagstones are competitive.”

“It’s true.” I laugh. “It’s our best feature.” And then we reach a fork in the road and I direct my family unit toward a narrow path that leads towards a mountain peak.

“We’re going up there again?” Stora whines.

“I want to check on the cave opening,” I confirm. “There could be a change after the rainy season.”

“Is that the cave where you and dad fell in love?” Stora questions Taylor.

My bound looks over at me with heat in her gaze. “Yes, this is where I fell in love with your father.”

More white smoke billows from my nostrils.

“Gross.”

“Is there going to be kissing again?”

Taylor laughs. “Most likely.”

The girls remain in the meadow with the three riding beasts for protection. I scoop Taylor into my arms and jog us up the path. Meanwhile, my daughters run around, yell and clash, flash flaming. My girls are fierce and will make wonderful stewards of this land one day. I suspect they will want to stay in the wildlands for their entire lives, exactly as the other Flagstones have done for centuries. It’s in our blood. Stora is the eldest and one day it is her option to take on the responsibility of inheriting this ranch, if she chooses.

When we reach the ledge I set Taylor on her feet and we both examine the cave entrance together.

“It looks the same. No difference.” She glances at a tablet in her hand. “It’s good to visually confirm, but all the monitors also show no change.”

“Good.”

“Let me take a quick soil sample...” I watch as she bends down and gathers dirt into a small container and returns it to her backpack. She stands and walks over to stand next to me and

looks down at where our daughters are two small dots playing below and out over the vista of our land. “Can you believe that was eight years ago, when we were trapped here together?”

I glance over at my gorgeous bound, my gaze settling on her lush mouth. “When you saved my life, twice.”

She licks her lips and reaches out to take my hand. “You saved my life too. This does give me good memories. To me, our time spent in this cave is our anniversary each year, not our actual bound declaration ceremony.”

I pull her into my arms and cup Taylor’s face with my red claw. “You are everything to me,” I rasp.

Her eyes grow wet. “You are everything to me too.”

And that’s when I scent another pheromone trail. I bury my face in her neck and inhale to confirm.

“Sten, there’s something I need to tell you...”

I place a claw over her stomach. “We are going to be parents again and blessed with a third child?”

She chuckles. “I can never surprise you.”

“I am always surprised by how lucky I was to meet you and talk you into staying.”

“Oh no, I’ve been lucky to find you, Sten Flagstone.”

And then she throws her arms around my neck and she’s kissing me and I kiss her in return. I pick Taylor up and swing her in a full circle while we kiss.

“Oh, gross, they’re kissing again. Yuck.” My daughters’ faint voices shout from below.

We laugh and take each other’s hands and walk back down to give Stora and Jula the good news that they will soon have another sibling in their midst.