

Chapter One

Swimming with Sardines

The beach screeched with gulls and the waves smacking within itself. Trees flowed in the grass half a mile off the sandy shore. It was just that time, every decade or so, that the Sardines were trapped near the shore for miles along. Sometimes, you could briefly see dolphins pushing the fish to the shore, joined in with sharks and sometimes seals. It was a great feast for the North Predators that lurked in the depths.

Of course, the Sardines were quite far off from the land, but if you swam in you could grab a few, if they had not fled from the currents. Hestia, a fifteen year old, was slowly walking into the water with her net held high. She caught sight of the Sardines and thrashed her net through the air and plunging it into the water, failing as the fish swiftly swam away dodging the predator. She growled in annoyance at the unsuccessful catch. She walked in, almost shoulder height and stood still as the fish slowly swam near. She carefully swung it down, successfully picking out the fish. She moved onwards and frolicked in the water, Hestia jumped upwards and as she came back was swept over by a salty wave.

Hestia quickly tried to stand up but she was knocked over again by a second wave. Everything was blurry as she tried to breathe, gulping in the sea while trying to gasp for her breath. She was kicking and struggling in the water till she felt hands grasp her arms and she was pulled out, realising she was only in waist-deep.

"Bloomin heck!" came the voice from above her, "You almost drowned!" Hestia could barely hear them but made out the words. She heard another pair of feet rushing over and then a hysterical laugh and gasping breaths.

"HAHA!! How can you drown in waist deep water?! You have to be really stupid!" laughed her younger brother, Erebus.

"Erebus enough!" lectured her other brother Val, still dragging Hestia across the beach.

Hestia struggled out of Val's grasp embarrassed and stomped home up the vast hill leading to a small village. "Hestia! It's alright!"

"Liar! You would know how embarrassing this would be! Dafty!" she shouted back.

She trudged back with her body soaked from head to toe. As the houses grew as she got closer in the village so did the people. Each cottage was busy with a fisherman's shop and the black smith curling his long, black moustache. Sitting in his chair was

The fisherman, so far he was taking nets down and selling fish while the Butchers son, Fasuer, took the nets to his father, who was a kind muscular man. Hestia walked up to the fisherman's place. She walked

past the queue looking at his wife, her gran.

"Barnis, he's in the back" she said smoothly and shakily for her old age, as she gestured at the back. Usually Hestia would ask her grandfather all about dragons, as his dragon was very small for it had a rare genuine which made dragons not be able to grow.

"Granda" she whispered in her regular scottish accent. He was sleeping, "Granda!" she said louder as he jolted up.

"Wha-, oh, "he laughed, "It's only you Hestia."

"Aye" Hestia chuckled, "Tell me more about dragons"

"Knew, you would come back" he smiled "So the dragons are amazing creatures. And you know, only the most skilled Riders can use magic. The great magicians lived for hundreds of years, barely aging. Everyone has a drago-" he stopped and looked at Hestia, her face was clearly angry, for she didn't have a dragon. Having no dragon is almost like looking at someone without a head. "Dragons are unique, unlike the goblins and Kelpies, even bean-nighe. But, I'd say that you are unique. A great unique. I can tell you have a great adventure ahead of you."

"Pfft!" Laughed Hestia" Yeah, and become a bloomin magician with a dragon!" she said sarcastically.

Her grandfather smirked, "I wouldn't jinx yourself. Fate is a strange thing and so is *your* future." He said wisely pointing at her heart. "Never

trust Nessie"

"Why?"

"She stole my picnic, that's what she did" he frowned. Hestia thought he was joking and waited for a laugh but none came.

"Och, Nessie is a wise and great creature!" she laughed, "I don't think she would want a mere, old man's **picnic!**" she giggled.

"*You think*" He looked at her hard for a moment then stood up and walked up the stairs leaving Hestia to ponder at this. Hestia walked out past the counter and up the road. She could see her house in the distance.

Her brothers had already gotten home and stood at the doorway waving at her. "Enjoy your chit-chat?" shouted Erebus cheekily.

"Shut it!" growled Hestia. Arrgale circled overhead, her emerald body glistened in the sun her gaze at Hestia as she came in. Arrgale was her brother Val's dragon, just as wise as him. The only silly ones were Erebus and his dragon, Wirjo.

"Grandad was telling me about the dragons" she said walking straight in home.

"Lucky too, aye?" Her mother smiled, "Glad you came back. Your dog, Jessi, was missing you."

The collie sprinted out of Hestia's room, circling her, then pouncing up on her happily licking her face. Jessi wagged her tail then trotted over to the fish meat, laying on the ground as her dinner. Hestia smiled then walked in her room, laying her bag on the single bed next to the

small window, gazing at the hills behind them. The wood was dirty but strong, there was little room in her bedroom and a shelf hung over the bed and side-table. A small cushion lay beside the table for Jessi to sleep, although she mostly squished Hestia on her bed.

She growled as it was clear Erebus had raided through her cabinets and the whole desk in front of the bed full of muddled papers and books about dragons, "Erebus! You've been through my stuff again!" she screamed.

Her mother gapped Erebus shouted at him while he just grinned. Hestia walked out and sat on the table with a vase of a tall plant. Hanging on the walls were portraits of mainly of their family but also one of their father, he was standing tall and proud with his dragon by his side and their mother. Wirjo sat on the Fireplace watching the family eat their dinner. Without looking, Erebus held up his hand with a piece of chicken and Wirjo glided swiftly and plucked the meat from his hand, landing on his arm and scratching it with his sharp talons.

"Ow! Wirjo not so sharp!" He moaned. Wirjo looked at him and gave a sympathetic look, then ate his chicken oblivious to his surroundings now. "Hmph, thanks for the sorry."

The Scots finished their meal then Hestia hurried to her room with Jessi at her heels. Immediately, Hestia dove onto her bed, exhausted from the day's events. She sat up, bored set over her mind. A knock thundered on their door like the pouring storm outside that grew and grew.

Chapter Two

Raging Storm

The door knocked, Hestia heard her mother's footsteps echo down the hallway. She peeked out, watching Mr Vincen let himself in. Trelawny Vincen was a cunning man, he walked in their doorway. His big, fat dragon crawled into the stables disturbing the two horses.

"Good evening, Mrs Scot." he said coldly. "That horrible storm has caught me and Fergoin in flight, we could barely make another step so we decided to go in the closest house . . .we saw your fire going so we headed to here." Vincen tried to say sadly, but everyone knew him too well.

"I hope you understand, that I don't take any of your rubbish!" growled Mrs Scot.

Mr Vincen laughed, "I am only here for shelter . . .I *assure* you. Well, where can I rest? I am very exhausted."

"So am I, from already listening to you!" Erebus gaged.

"Yes, we have an extra bedroom." she glared at Trelawny.

"Aren't you going to tell your cheeky, runt off"

This was the wrong thing to say, Hestia grabbed Erebus and the dog to her room then felt the heat increase and the explosion of the volcano.

"How dare you call my child a *runt*!" snapped their mother, "Get out you-" Hestia covered her brother's ears from all the swearing, "Never

come near my kids again you! Out! OUT!" she screamed.

Hestia let go of Jessi and she ran at Mr Vincen biting him in the backside, Wirjo joined in, his scarlet body clawed at Vincen's face. "Get 'em Jessi! Get 'em Wirjo!" cheered the children.

Val just returned as Trelawny sprinted out the door screaming and holding his eyes with his dragon racing after him. Erebus smiled evilly and so did Hestia, they hated that man. Everything about him was ugly and mean, their mother told them not to be so mean but she hated him too. Joy ran around the family. For once, he got a taste of his own medicine.

"Wow" Val said impressively shown across his whole body, "Never knew you had it in you mum."

"Aye, and I've still got more. So get to bed!"

With that, they all rushed to bed. Hestia cuddled with Jessi as she slept, loudly, in the stormy night. Thunder crashed and Lightning struck. Mist lurked out of the sky hiding the village in a depressing night. Arrgale slept in the second floor in Val's room. The whole house was topped with an attic except Val's room which had another small floor hanging over it, held up by wooden beams. The rest of his room was a tall, wide room.

In the stables was where their mothers dragon was, Hercro. She was a dimly, pale blue dragon. Her eyes shone brown like Hestia's mothers did.

The day faded away into complete darkness, the mist was unseen as the whole night was pitch black with no moon or light. The ocean

attacked the sandy shore. Every wave was dangerous, even for a dragon. But not a water dragon, for many dragons came in different types for example. Arrgale is an Earth/leaf breed. Wirjo is actually a very powerful breed, for he is a Storm Dragon. Hercro is Blue Fire, not regular fire where the owner has no experience with magic. Fire came in many colours, more than anyone could think of, that only meant that Harcro and their mother were very powerful magicians. The Scots slept happily that night.

Chapter Three

Hogtie

Hestia awoke, yawning and rubbing the sleep out of her eyes. Angus, the pony in the stables whinnied loudly, awakening the whole family. Jessi rolled off the bed, Hestia laughed as the dog struggled to stand up on her back. Clearly, Jessi was not paying attention for as soon as she rubbed her eyes with her soft, snow paws, she started barking at the horses.

"Quit it Jessi!" groaned Hestia, standing up lazily.

Jessi trotted into the stables barking at something. Hestia jogged in, staring into the face of Mr Vincen.

"Trelawny!" she growled and so did Jessi.

"Greetings, Child" He spat out coldly.

"What are you doing here!" Hestia said with her fists clenched.

"Simply, to take you somewhere important."

"Well I don't want to go!"

"It's not a choice" He grinned then jumped at her.

Of course, her slim, strong muscles could not defend herself against a heavy, tall man full of strong muscles. He held her down tight and another man came in, his face was masked and he pulled out rope. He hogtied her, she couldn't move her arms or legs. Before they taped her mouth she screamed and her family tried to budge the door open but the door was wedged with an axe and heavy barrels. Trelawny lifted her tying her to Fergoin and watching the other dark brown dragon fly off.

She saw the last of her home as they edged closer to the clouds and the air grew hard to breathe in. Her lungs began to try and pull air inside, but there was just not enough. Everything went black and her mind went fuzzy, aching with the low air.

She awoke again and the sun was straight up. Hestia spectated her surroundings, they were far from the beach. They were heading inland. Hestia's village was at the highest top of Scotland. She squirmed on the dragin soft blanket, her body close to the saddle that carried Trelawny. The other man looked at her.

"She's awake, Trelawny" said the man, his voice was warm and sweet, his mask was off. His hair a black, velvety and grew longer at his neck, his face was almost perfect except for the cold blue eyes that

penetrated Hestia's mind. He looked back, glancing at her and Trelawny.

"Don't get caught by her looks, Lurdal." Trelawny said sharply.

"I am, most certainly not!" snapped Lurdal.

"Hmph, well, once we get to the hill. The Burson will take *great* care of her. They'll know what to do with her and *the dragon*"

Hestia tried to speak but they only hear murmurs.

"What did she say?" hissed Lurdal. Trelawny pulled the rope off flinging it into the air, as the strong winds pushed it up further.

"*I said*, I don't have a dragon" Hestia shouted.

"Not yet, you don't" answered Trelawny.

"For now, we fly!" shouted Lurdal racing his dragon forward. Trelawny followed and the day broke into silence. Hestia only hoped that her brothers would save her, it was uncomfortable with her belly pushing hard against the rough scales of the dragon, the skin rubbed off her belly, hurting her, but slowly. The rubbing got so painful she began to cry. The dragons descend.

"Time to camp," grumbled Trelawny as they landed down pulling Hestia off of Fergoin who looked worriedly at her.

Lurdal jogged off heading in the woods to gather fire wood. He glanced back at Hestia and moved further into the forest unseen.

"You hold so much" he smirked. "Me and Fergoin didn't really get trapped in the storm it was only an excuse to capture you. If you ask questions we'll beat you so keep quiet and answer only when we say

so" He glowered.

"Why me...?" she queried.

"What did I just tell you!" he scowled. She kept quiet after that but he answered, "Well you see, there's a little *surprise*. At the end of this journey we will guard your imprisonment and you will be trained further on, but if you dare tried to escape then . . . We will *kill it*."

Lurdal returned with wood and set them in a pyramid like shape, closing his eyes and thinking hard. There was an explosion of magic, and the fire was lit. Trelawny hopped on Fergoin and flew off, probably scouting the area, Hestia thought. Lurdal crouched beside her, lifting her shirt and looking at the wounds, the blood dripped down staining her dirty, smelly shirt. He grunted and grabbed a bandage, wrapping it round her quickly and not caring as she winced horribly.

"I would've put you in my saddle if you hadn't struggled like that"

"Do you think anyone would be calmed by getting *kidnapped* and dreaming of it to happen more times!" Hestia shouted angrily and sadly, of missing her annoying brothers and mother.

"Tsk, what I expected from you" he hesitated to rest by the fire and leave her side, but soon he was cooking meat. "It's funny how you struggle" he chuckled to himself.

She gazed at him, her gaze was now the penetrating one. She lay back with her arms and legs tied together, it was uncomfy but she soon fell into the open arms of sleep. Oblivious to Lurdal and Trelawny's conversation about her.

She awoke to her being picked up by Trelawny again, his rough arms

digging into her skin. Hestia blinked perpetually as everything came into focus. She heard talking but it was not clear, it seemed they must have drugged her. She was seated behind Lurdal on his creamy dragon, its scales were soft and its pink eyes stared at her.

Its great muscular wings lifted his body, all the weight of the heavy muscles easily lifted like feathers. Dragons were, remarkable creatures. The other one Fergoin struggled off the ground flying tipsy, while Trelawny shouted at him.

They were heading for far mountains, as they passed a flock of birds flew higher than them, they were only small dots from what Hestia could see.

"There they are!" pointed Lurdal at the black dots.

"Here!" shouted Trelawny waving his arms as his dragon roared.

The birds were sent into a steep dive, wings pushed back and their tail straight to the sky. Their legs pushed against their bodies as they dived down. As they grew closer, they became bigger and bigger until, they were recognised as dragons.

"So, this is the chosen one?" asked a man with quite a deep voice.

"Indeed it is, Captain" called Trelawny. Lurdal went quiet, he was not speaking to his higher rankers. But there were only three dragons and the rest were huge disgusting bat like creatures. Riding them were hideous goblins. Saliva flew out of their mouth, large reins came from the bats mouth. The green goblins wore old caps, the leather was worn and almost seemed decaying, goggles strapped over their eyes, the metal was rusting and they were wearing brown shirts, almost rust red.

They had armoured chest plates and helmets tied to the saddle for war, their legs were clinging onto the bats, or *into*. The bat-like-creatures were misty black, with glowing red eyes and the goblins legs were in the mist.

The night hid the group, lights lay below them and buildings grew from the harsh forest. The hundreds of goblins, standing seven-foot, steadily dived down to the town. A raid was happening, and they were heavily prepared as they pulled out their clubs and long swords with jagged, sharp ends.

"Attack!" shouted the goblins with their disgusting and croaky voices, the town would've known they were being attacked if it wasn't for the wind, cutting the sounds off and sending rain to hit the earth. Lurdal looked down then back up, going with the turn off his dragon as they circled above, Fergoin had trouble staying up compared to his heavy amount.

"Alright, hopefully the goblins can hurry up and eat those ragged rats!" Trelawny said sharply.

The three other riders were riding the darkest, red dragons with flame-like bellies.

"Trelawny! This girl, has she been good?" The captain grinned.

"For now" replied Trelawny, rolling his eyes, "Fergoin's scales have given her a wound on her stomach, it's bandaged but it looks serious."

"Well we can heal her easily . . .and I am taking a liking to her" frowned their captain.

The dragons glided down after seeing the goblins pile the townsmen.

Hestia winced and was still strapped to the saddle while waiting for them. She watched as they took gold, food, water skins and weapons. The dragons lay dead, clutching their owners. Children died, but the Goblins did not care one bit. The fight was over. The Town was unprepared for the attack.

"Now! We ride on!" shouted the captain with cheering surrounding him. The goblins hopped on their revolting bat creatures. Hestia got soaked in the pouring rain. The night grew on, devouring everything.

Chapter Four

Riding on The Road

While Hestia was being carried away, Val and Erebus saw them take her and though, their mother warned them not to go for the few men were going after her, they went ahead anyways. Val placed Erebus on Arrgale's saddle, her body shone in the morning sun. Val took the horses, he hopped on Agnus, the tall horse trotted proudly as they exited the village. Next to Agnus was the smaller mount, PrimRose, the white tall pony was beautiful and elegant, fit for anyone.

"We will have to travel far!" shouted Val up to Arrgale and Erebus.

They are heading for the mountains, hissed Arrgale connecting her mind with Val's, *Val, we must travel far and I will make this little one*

get plenty of rest on my back. She gestured to Erebus.

I know, we have far to travel but, we will get to them. Nodded Val.

The dragon glided and every so often, pushed her strong muscles making her body go flying through the air. They traveled around the large hill, full of magical creatures. There was an opening half a mile long, where they could cut through and into the flat forest and out of the mountain range. This took away the whole day, the horses huffed and blew out misty air. Night was coming fast. In the night there were horrible beasts, not as strong as dragons but more terrifying than dragons.

"Vaaall" moaned Erebus, "I'm tired. . ."

"We'll camp soon!" Val said smoothly.

They rode on and found a place to camp, Val rolled out the beds and watched Erebus get comfy and try to sleep. *Something is bothering him,* Val said to Arrgale, *Its Hestia. . .*

Indeed, I suppose you support him. We're all going through this, she may not be my Rider but you love her, and so I.

"Erebus, "Val whispered comfortingly, "We'll find her." He smiled.

"I hope so..." he looked up then at Val, "Goodnight.

"Goodnight," Val said before going off to sleep.

When they both woke in the morning, Arrgale was laying round them, sheltering them. Wirjo rested on Erebus's chest and as he stood up the dragon yawned and groaned being awoken so.

Suddenly, Wirjo flapped up and heaved himself onto Erebus's shoulder. Arrgale stood up and eyed them, then, stretching like a cat and yawning, Arrgale growled softly as a 'good morning'.

Erebus, Arrgale tried to eat me last night, Wirjo hissed into Erebus's ear.
She wouldn't do that. . . would she?

Erebus strolled awkwardly, around the campfire.

"So. . . Wirjo told me that. . .Arrgal was. . .trying to eat him." he said slowly.

"What? Why would she, he's too small." Val spoke, busily packing everything up onto the horses and tying Arrgale's saddle on. Arrgale let out a strange noise like hiccups and growl repeating.

I did! I tried to eat little Wirjo. Och, it was only a joke! Laughed Arrgale.

"Hey she's laughing!" frowned Erebus.

"Yeah, quite funny," chuckled Val.

So they headed out covering their fresh kill that Arrgale had so proudly brought back to them the night before, while Wirjo had only brought back a Sparrow. Erebus hopped on Arrgale and flew off while Val rode on with the horses.