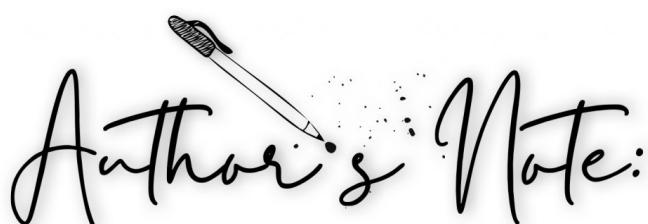


Bean hugged the saddle with her thighs, urging Flick forward, preparing herself for battle. The wind gusted, and Flick banked to the left, making Bean flatten herself against his blue scales to keep her balance. Ryker's dagger glinted in the sun as he pursued them, but Flick soared towards the mountain, climbing high into the fog nestled around the peak. Hidden, Bean nocked an arrow, and released it. The arrow soared out and hit Raisin, Ryker's dragon, marking her with pink chalk. Bean whooped and kissed Flick.

"Bean's point," the commander said. "Ryker, you failed to protect your dragon—again."



Coming up with fantasy again, I couldn't decide if I should laugh or redraw. I did neither, instead spending far too much time trying to name the dragons. Did you know there's a name generator out there for just such a thing? I turned all its suggestions down though. I wanted something one syllable that one could read, with no need for an explanation. Flick and Raisin seem like weird names for a dragon, but then Bean seems like an odd name for a character, I suppose.

I decided the quickest way to capture the action of chasing was to depict a battle scene, but limited to one hundred words, it needed an ending that I could sum up in a few words. Maybe I've watched *How To Train A Dragon* one too many times, because that whole "protect your dragon" line is cemented in my head. As if I even have a dragon to protect.

The Reluctant Author:

