

Interview with Talnovar Imradien and Zane Burns

By
Haerlyon an Ilvan



Haerlyon makes himself comfortable in his seat, throwing his legs over the side while his eyes settle on Talnovar. The grin on his face promises nothing good.

"Alright Tal... tell me. What's the deal with you fawning over my sister like a lovesick puppy?"

Talnovar grabs his drink a little tighter, watching Haerlyon in annoyance.

"First of all, I'm not fawning over the Tarien. Secondly, it's none of your business."

"Hey, man, is he saying you're in love with a princess? Nice going..." Zane comments.

Tal stares at Zane, gritting his teeth. "It's even less of your business."

Zane raises his hands. "Whoa... Sorry, I mean no offense. Just asking. But seriously... The Princess you are charged to protect?"

Tal sighs and takes a long swig of his drink, staring from Zane at Haerlyon, and back. "And what if I am?"



Zane sobers up and gets serious. "Where is she now, Tal? Do you know?"

Tal falls silent, staring ahead into nothing. His voice is soft and distant when he speaks. "No...I don't. For all I know she's..."

He doesn't finish his sentence and takes another long sip.

Zane stares at Tal with a pained expression on his face. "I'm sorry. I know exactly how it feels... Is there anything I can do to help?"

Tal shrugs, a light smirk on his face as he looks at Zane. "Find her, mahnèh... give me proof she's still alive, and I'll be forever in your debt."

Zane lowers his eyes, his lips pressed in a straight line. "I wish I had this kind of power. I lost my love a while ago... She's not in the Realm of the death and she's not among the living... And with all my magic and elemental power, I feel completely useless..."

Haerlyon watches both men intrigued, trying not to show his own pain. "Magic? Elemental power? What in Esahbyen's name are you on about?"



Zane gets up and spreads his arms wide. Fire breaks through his skin and small flames rush up and down his arms. He closes his eyes and inhales deeply.

"It's hard in your world," he says, playing with a small flame in the palm of his hand, "but Fire is everywhere and as long as there is Fire, a Fire Salamander can command it."

Both Haerlyon and Tal jump from their seats as the fire ripples over Zane's skin, both looking wide-eyed. "Mahnèh! You're on fire!.....but, how?" Haerlyon sputters.

Zane chuckles, a lopsided grin on his face. "I am not on fire," he replies, extinguishing all the flames except one on the tip of his thumb. "I am the Fire. I am the Great Fire Salamander - the essence of Fire. Well, I can also wield magic, and not only the fire magic. But that's neither here nor there."

Talnovar stares at him as if he's grown two heads, blinking several times to make sure his eyes aren't betraying him. "I am pretty sure we don't have that...here." He glances at Haerlyon, who is grinning like a madman. "We don't, but it's pretty amazing. How does it work?"



Zane shrugs, extinguishing the last flame and sits down. "It's hard to explain. The Fire is within me." He touches his chest above his heart. "All I need to do is channel it and it'll obey my every command. I'm pretty sure, you have something like this here. Don't you have a god of Fire or something like that?"

"We have Arran," Talnovar replies, looking thoughtful. "But the Gods never walk our earth. Besides, he's also God of invention and crafts...I don't see how that is related to what you...are..."

Zane smiles tiredly. "It's going to be hard to explain to a person who lived all his life in a world without any magic or elemental powers... Our ancient gods are still walking our world, but I'm not one of them. I'm just a little Fire Gecko." He spins in place turning into a small lizard and then back, assuming his human form. "I wonder how you live here without any magic?"

Tal smirks. Haerlyon laughs. "Just like we always have..." Tal lifts his glass to both men and takes another sip. "Although I agree magic could have been useful."



Zane takes his glass. "Tal, if you need magic or some fire power, I'm here for you, man." He drinks the contents of his glass in one gulp. "Is there anything stronger here?"

"Right now," Tal begins, handing him a glass of a honey coloured liquid which smells much stronger than the one from before. "I have no idea where to begin. Things are falling apart around us." He glances at Haerlyon who nods and adds. "It won't be much longer before Mother dies."

Zane takes the glass from his hand. "Thank you." He bites his lip. "There is no such magic that can defy Death. I know him personally, and he's not an easy man to deal with. He follows his list no matter what. I'm sorry." He takes a careful sip of the liquid inside the glass. "In my experience, when you don't know where to start, go back to the beginning."

Tal sighs and rubs his face. Haerlyon looks thoughtful, a mischievous glint in his eyes. "Well now...this....magic gecko....I think he might be onto something..."

Zane gives him an arched stare, mischievous twinkles in his igneous eyes. "Oh yeah? And what might that have been?"

"Go back to the beginning," Haerlyon grins. "Smart man. There's something I need to do. Nice meeting you Zane."

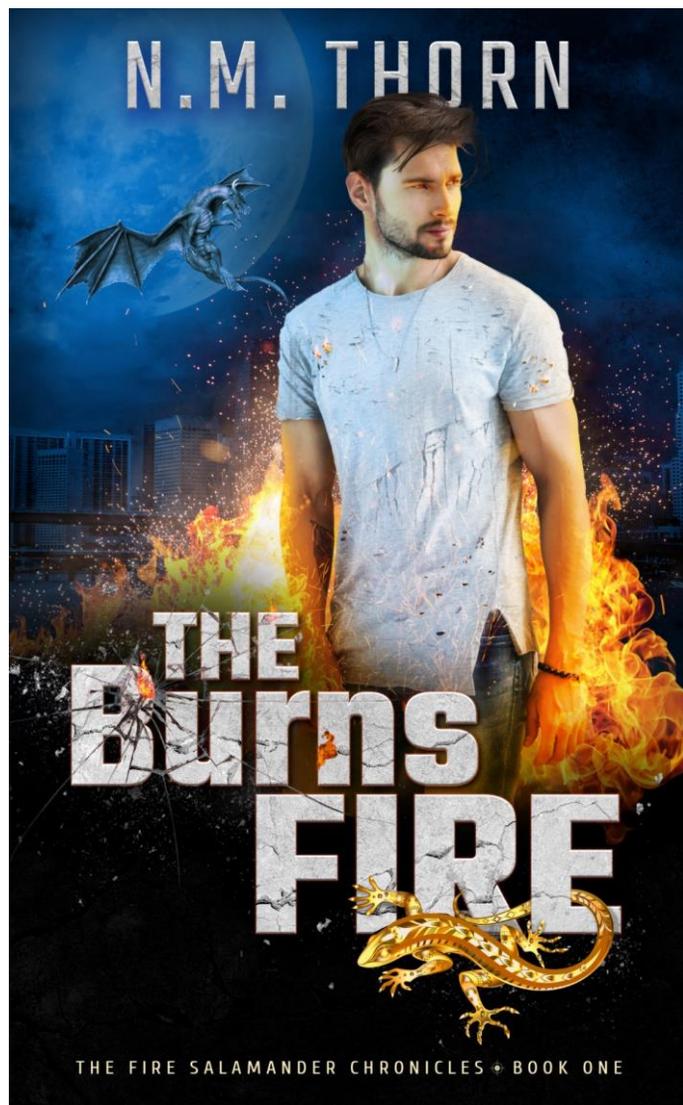
Before either of them has a chance to reply, he has disappeared from the inn. Tal stares after him and shrugs apologetically. "He does that sometimes."

Zane laughs. "I like him." He gives Tal a quick once-over, taking in his height. "I've heard you're quite a warrior. A sparring match perhaps, while I am here?"

Tal flashes him a wide grin and downs his cup in one go. "You're on mahnèh. Let me show you the way."

Zane finishes his drink in one gulp, pulls his Swiss army knife, turning it into a long medieval sword and winks at Tal. "At your service, my lord."





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