
Distractions

by Marie Burcham

2860.10.06

Printed in FTA #26 (2009)

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“So who do you *like*? You still haven’t told me!” Sapherlin said, her face alight with curiosity as she leaned over her flight harness.

“Um... does that matter?” To buy herself some time, Cybris pretended to scrutinize the stitching on Sujath’s flight harness. For Sapherlin, this was a light-hearted subject—the requirement that nobody’s dragon rose while the rider was still a virgin.

“Of course it does,” Sapherlin said. “If you like them it will be easier, at very least.”

“Yes, but that’s not the point—the point behind it is to get experienced so that we don’t panic when our greens rise.”

Sapherlin groaned and snapped her oil rag in her cotmate’s direction. “You sound like the Weyrlingmaster!”

Cybris laughed—she had just been thinking the same thing herself. ‘This is pleasant,’ she thought. ‘Just sitting here on the floor of our shared cot, cleaning and repairing our flight harnesses and talking. Gives me something to miss while I’m on punishment duty!’

“Well let’s go down the list...I’m assuming D’rian and the other Bendenites are out of the running?”

Cybris grimaced. “Well naturally D’rian isn’t on *my* list, if I were to have one.” Sapherlin agreed, wrinkling her nose. Cybris went on, “But I like B’shan. He’s always very sweet to me, and I think Ateith is one of the more tactful bronzes.”

“I know he probably doesn’t remember how Sujath clawed him right after they hatched, but he does seem to be more careful about what he says and does around her,” Sapherlin said. She held up one oil-stained finger, “All right so B’shan is *one*. Who else?”

“B’shan?” Cybris snorted, “I like him, but his dragon would still pose too many problems. Ateith may be a nice bronze, but he’s still *bronze*, Sapherlin. In case you haven’t noticed Sujath has a problem with the big boys.”

Sapherlin rolled her eyes, “You won’t be bedding *Ateith*, Cybris. Besides, Sujath could get caught by a bronze during her first flight, so she should get used to the idea.”

“I doubt it,” Cybris’ eyes were drawn out the window where both their dragons lay in their wallows, soaking up the last sun of the day. “Sujath and Lorseith are always plotting: Lorseith gets the bronzes and Sujath gets the blues,” Cybris teased—it was a constant joke between the cotmates.

Sapherlin nodded, following Cybris’ gaze out the window. “The big lumps,” she said fondly, “but really, you

can’t decide who to sleep with just based on what Sujath wants.”

“Why not? That’s how it’s going to be when she rises.”

“That isn’t how it has to be! I’ve heard the rider can have some choice, some sway on their dragon’s attractions.”

“I don’t think even strong preference for someone like T’syr or D’rian, if I had one, would make Sujath more inclined to accept them,” Cybris said. In a way that was a relief. She and T’syr had a terse truce of sorts, but Sujath enjoyed heckling his bronze Yengarth more than any other member of their class. Not that that mattered much for their first mating flight—they were likely to be caught by an experienced wingrider. Cybris felt her face grow hot as she thought about the only experienced wingrider she knew personally — bluerider V’dalin. She wasn’t sure if she *liked* him, as Sapherlin put it so bluntly, but he was handsome and sympathetic. Cybris’ attraction to him was obvious even to her, but she wasn’t sure how to describe that attraction. One thing was certain: his blue Benturinth was the kind of dragon — the blue kind — that Sujath tolerated.

“Okay then, blueriders,” Sapherlin said, oiling her rag again and rubbing at a scuffed spot on her flight harness, “H’riro? S’var?”

“S’var is sweet, and Sujath loves Duhonth. But T’syr is in that picture. Who knows if S’var even *likes* girls,” Cybris said. “And H’riro, I think he likes *you* more.”

Sapherlin laughed and blushed. “I think he would be happy to bed *both* of us.”

“At the same *time*,” Cybris agreed, grinning.

“So B’shan, H’riro and S’var, if he didn’t have his nose in T’syr,” Sapherlin said, counting on her fingers. “And we might as well throw the rest of the blueriders into the pot too—D’ghal, R’lander, K’senal... plenty of strapping young men to choose from, Cybris!”

Cybris groaned. Sapherlin was *right*, and Cybris didn’t want to wait to lose her virginity until Sujath was close to rising. Now would be the perfect time—the initial flurry after having the ‘ban’ lifted had passed. She also knew she wasn’t bad-looking, and thought that some of the men had been watching her appreciatively when she swam. Yes, she was too tall, but her breasts had grown a *little* in the past few months. If Sapherlin’s frequent hints were any judge, then this should have been easy. The problem wasn’t that her fellow weyrlings would be unwilling, it was Sujath. Though Cybris’ control over her had improved, Sujath’s attitude had not. With Cybris’ success Sujath challenged her less, but she was still possessive and unusually involved in everything Cybris did. Her small experiments—kissing and fondling for the most part—made her jumpy because Sujath was always poking her nose in *forcefully*. If she got nervous or excited at all, Sujath would be there in her mind clamoring for attention. ‘All the more reason to get used to it now,’ Cybris thought. She would just have to deal with Sujath’s possessiveness, even if it meant her not enjoying her first experience to its fullest.

“You’re worrying again,” Sapherlin said, still cheerful.

“About Sujath pestering me,” Cybris explained. Sapherlin nodded; she knew the depth of Cybris’ battles with her dragon more than anyone except perhaps Weyrlingsecond Shahara.

"Maybe I can help," Sapherlin suggested. "Lorsenth and Sujath always eat together on restdays, and I could get them to go up and sun—you know how sleepy and dull they get. Plus, I could keep Lorsenth talking to her and distracting her."

Cybris nodded, mulling the idea over. Maybe then Sujath could just *watch* her go to bed, and not get so possessive or involved. It was worth a try. "That would be great," Cybris agreed.

"All you need is time to get his pants off," Sapherlin teased. "After that I doubt she could pull you away no matter how insistent she is!"



2860.10.14

Cybris felt purposeful. It was a rest day and Lorsenth and Sujath had just fed. She could feel her dragon circling lazily above the Weyr, using the thermals to lift her. Soon she would settle down with her companion to bask in the sun. Cybris buzzed with nervous determination as she jogged towards her cot. She had agreed to meet the other weyrings in her class down at the weyring beach, but she wanted to change first. 'Something pretty,' Cybris thought, grinning. Sapherlin had agreed—put on her nicest skirt, her earrings—never mind that she was going swimming and would be naked shortly. According to Sapherlin, undressing a bed partner was part of the fun of it all.

She almost ran right into someone hurrying past, and found herself facing a smiling B'shan. He was shirtless and clearly on his way to meet the rest of their class on the beach with a ball in hand.

"Cybris! Aren't you going down to swim?" B'shan asked cheerfully.

"I, er, was going to go change first," Cybris said, gesturing at her breeches and shirt, which were speckled with blood from Sujath's enthusiastic feeding. 'Oh shells, he's still smiling,' Cybris thought, admiring his solid build. Was it just her or had he stepped closer to her? No, now he had a warm hand on her elbow, she was definitely *not* imagining it.

"How about I wait for you and we can go down together?" B'shan said.

"Yes, I'd like that," Cybris said. What was she supposed to say to see if he would be interested? 'Shells, I am bad at this', she thought. Together they walked towards the cot she shared with Sapherlin. Cybris knew her friend would be down at the beach—she had already discussed the situation with Sapherlin and her friend would leave the cot to her today. Out of habit she checked on Sujath, but her dragon, as Sapherlin had predicted, was half-asleep and enjoying the weather next to Lorsenth. They reached Cybris' cot and with a nervous twinge in her stomach she turned to the bronzerider. "B'shan, I'd really like it if you would come in for a little while and..." why did she have to blush like the inexperienced girl she was *now*?

But B'shan was still smiling, comfortable as a weyrbred should be. "I'd love to, Cybris," he laid a soft hand on her hip. "Just a guess, but from the way you ask is this your first...?"

"Yes," Cybris returning his smile as best she could, "it would be my first time." They were inside her cot near her bed now, though Cybris couldn't even remember slipping inside and latching the door behind them.

B'shan took her in his arms gently, "Are you sure? I'm sorry, I have to check."

"Of course!" Cybris said, embarrassed. "It was lucky I ran into you when I did—I thought I would have to drag you away from playing ball on the beach." That wasn't entirely true—B'shan was one of her top choices, but not her only choice. His laugh in answer was deep and made her heart lift in delight. Now his touch was lighting fires in her that she had never felt before. And even though she *was* nervous, she was far from frightened. She found it odd, that when it came down to it she actually wanted to go to bed with someone for reasons other than protecting Sujath. 'I guess I'm not a very good holder after all', Cybris thought as B'shan kissed her. She was right to be attracted to him—he was exactly what she needed: someone who was experienced, but kind enough to go slow. She forgot all about Sujath and Sapherlin as his kisses deepened and his fingers unwound the ties on her shirt.

Before she knew it she was on her back in bed with her bare feet on the floor, B'shan leaning over her, his kisses deepening as his calloused hands caressed her breasts. "Mmm, you are beautiful, Cybris." She didn't bother answering and instead tilted her head up to catch his lips in hers again. Her nervousness was fading—'this feels too good to be wrong,' she thought. Cybris' fingers found the knot of his breeches and she hurried to untie them. His steadier hands helped her along, and she closed her eyes, arching into his bare chest as his breeches slipped off his hips...

WHAM!

With a crash the cot door banged open, the hinges bent, the latch broken and clattering to the floor. Sujath's head thrust into the cramped room, with her typical querying half chirp, half growl. *What's happening? What are you doing? What is he doing? Is he hurting you? What are you doing?*

B'shan yelped in surprise and gave a start. His breeches tangled around his ankles and he fell backwards onto his bare backside.

Cybris leapt up, still feeling hot and detached from B'shan's kisses. She was frozen for a moment between the choice of helping him up to gush apologies and yelling at Sujath, who was now stretching her nose in B'shan's direction in curious defensiveness. Even though Sujath was a small dragon, there was no way her shoulders would fit through the narrow frame. That didn't mean she wouldn't try, though. "Sujath, go away!" Cybris yelled, poking her green's nose.

Sujath grumbled, and Cybris exerted her will until the dragon withdrew her head from the room—scraping her neckridge against the doorframe and making the lopsided door shudder as she stepped back. She didn't leave altogether, though; she still watched with a baleful eye through the ruined doorway.

This is slow and stupid, Sujath pouted. Cybris ignored her. Instead she offered B'shan a hand, her cheeks burning with embarrassment.

He leveled himself up, balancing on her while he rubbed his back, wincing in pain. As soon as he had steadied himself, B'shan grabbed his breeches and pulled them on again. Cybris felt her heart sink—the romantic moment had passed.

B'shan grinned sheepishly at her. “Er, I don't think I've been so surprised in my life,” he admitted. “My heart is going that fast. Is she upset?”

“No more than usual,” Cybris growled, grabbing her own shirt from the bed. “I'm serious, Sujath, get out of here.”

I wanted to see what he was doing to you, Sujath complained. ***You felt strange. It was not good. And I need oiling now.***

“It was good, Sujath!” Cybris said, exasperated. When B'shan chuckled, she blushed again. “Go back to sunning yourself with Lorseuth, right *now*.” She felt Sujath's internal objections as the green took off. She turned to see that B'shan had the glazed over look on his face that told her he was speaking to his own dragon, Ateith.

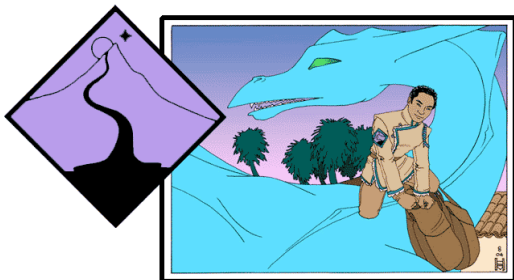
“He's wondering why I was surprised,” B'shan said, in answer to her look. “I know dragons are curious about this kind of thing — Ateith was — but she takes it to the next level, doesn't she?”

Cybris grimaced. “Just don't let Ateith start bossing Sujath around,” Cybris said. “Do that and she will never let me near you again.” ‘If he wants to be near me again,’ Cybris thought. Her face would probably burn with shame forever. “I'm sorry, I just... lost track of things.”

“Happens to the best of us,” B'shan said, though she caught him glancing towards the door. Cybris suspected he was thinking of running out and never meeting her eyes again. “We should probably get down to the beach,” he said. Perhaps seeing the poorly disguised look on her face, he added, “Another time, greenrider? Let Sujath know that I don't mind if she watches.” He kissed her and left, rubbing his lower back as he went.

I think you should oil me soon, Sujath said bossily.

Cybris sighed. Sapherlin would laugh herself sick.



Kadanzer Weyr

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