

# Meet Eldranth Foalen

Author : bluseas

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**Image:** *Location of the LI'Ellendryn within the Milky Way Galaxy.*

I decided a while back that I should write my science fiction stories under a pseudonym, partly to keep my fiction and nonfiction writing separate, but also, who is going to buy a book by Barb Faggetter (other than her friends)?? It's just one of those names ... so if I have to struggle with the weird name problem, why not just make one up that is completely free of any baggage. So, meet Eldranth Foalen, one of the main characters in my novel.

*If someone had asked me a hundred years ago whether or not I might consider writing a book in Terran English, I would have just stared at them as though they'd been struck by some form of temporary insanity. What in any of the Known Universes would motivate me to embark on such a project? Of course, that was before Dri talked me into it ... my golden-haired child whose blue eyes could always crack my resolve, and still do.*

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*It was nearly midsummer, and the days were long and warm. I was sitting on the porch that wrapped around our family home, enjoying the cooling breeze as the day was coming to its end. Overhead, the sky was like the inside of a blue porcelain bowl, with the sun hovering close to the horizon, and one of the moons showing as a faint crescent. Looking downhill from the house, I could see the green pastures where various herd animals grazed, and I remembered the work that went into clearing the land and making our small farm self-sustaining. My muscles ached sympathetically with my reminiscences, but I was happy with our accomplishments. In the farthest pasture, I could see a family of dynqueralion socializing, and felt a rush of joy as I was reminded that these intelligent and sensitive creatures now shared this world with us.*

*Inside the house, I could hear Dari and Ceara, their voices rising and falling in animated conversation, and in my heart, I could feel the intensely strong bonds that held the three of us together. A third voice, familiar but not heard so often in our home, was woven in and around the music of my anyncaras' speech. Farrwyn, our best friend, was there, contributing his bass notes to Dari's tenor and Ceara's contralto. He and Dri had recently returned from an assignment, and our family felt full and complete. I closed my eyes and let contentment swirl through me.*

*Soft steps behind me brought my thoughts back to the surface, and my eyes flicked open. Ah yes ... Dri. Wherever Farrwyn was, Dri was never far away. The two were inseparable, as inseparable as Dari and I. I chuckled, asking, "Tired of the conversation already?"*

*I heard a snort, and felt the bench creak as Dri settled down beside me. "No, I just wanted to talk with you for awhile," Dri's melodic tenor voice answered back, a singer's voice. My child, I thought warmly, and then, like a glimmer of sunlight, my mind quickly added, my friend. In truth, Dri was much more a friend to me these days than my beloved child. Although none of us would*

*ever suffer the ravages of aging, Dri was no longer young, even by Ellendrian standards. Indeed, he was long grown, strong and capable in his own right, partnered, and a parent of a grown child himself.*

*“So, what’s on your mind?” I inquired, glancing sideways at Dri as he settled himself on the bench, leaning back against the sun-warmed wall of the house, booted feet stretched out before him. The red streaks in his sun-gold hair caught the warm tints of the nearly setting sun. He turned to face me, his cerulean eyes giving me a feigned look of surprise, his expressive eyebrows, a gift from his grandmother, held high and questioning. I cut him off before he could play me along any further, “You’ve been pondering something all day. Don’t think that I’ve missed that look. And I’m starting to think that whatever it is you’re thinking, it has something to do with me.”*

*“Hmmp,” Dri snorted. “I never could fool you three.” He was quiet for a few breaths, then slowly brought forth his cogitations. “Farrwyn and I’ve been talking about the past a bit. Our family’s been through quite a series of adventures,” Dri shook his head, and I shared his feelings of almost disbelief. We had been through a lot ... too much, in fact. Seemingly off on another thought, Dri asked, “You remember when you looked up the history for Turien, Killaryn, and Danaldri in the archives on Ellendria?”*

*I nodded, adding, “Farrwyn asked me to do that long before you were born, I think mostly to convince me that they existed.”*

*“There wasn’t much information on them, was there?”*

*I shook my head slightly, “No. Gryffyth might have destroyed some of the records, but there probably hadn’t been much recorded in the first place.”*

*“That’s kind of what I thought, too,” Dri confirmed. “You know, if it wasn’t for Farrwyn, we’d never have known what happened to them, or been able to deal with Gryffyth,” Dri paused, giving me a chance to comment, but I remained silent, waiting to see where he was headed with that thought. “Farrwyn thinks it would be wise to make a detailed recording of the events that we’ve been through.” Again, there was another heavy moment of silence. “I don’t know if what we’ve done will be important to people in the future,” Dri continued slowly, “but if it is, I’d like them to have more than a couple brief lines in an archival record in order to recreate that history.”*

*“You have a point there,” I chuckled, thinking of how little we’d known about what we were getting ourselves into, back at the beginning. “And your suggestion is?” I prompted.*

*“Well, I thought that since you are a trained Recorder,” Dri hesitated momentarily, then plunged on, “maybe you could record our story.” He smiled, and I felt faintly like I was in an arm-lock with some torsion being applied.*

*“Why me?” I questioned. “After all, you’re the Bard. If there’s a story to be told, I’m sure you’re the best one to do it.”*

*Dri shook his head, somewhat sadly. “No,” he dropped his eyes, and the feeling of being pressured faded away. Clearly Dri had thought this over, and if he’d felt that the task belonged to him, his sense of duty would have held him to it. “You’ve lived through more of the story than I have. I just showed up for the last few chapters,” he laughed softly. “It would be best if you or Dari did it.”*

*“We weren’t there for all of it, either,” I reminded Dri as I considered what he was proposing. None of us could really tell the whole story – pieces of it belonged to each of us. But maybe I could cobble all the pieces together into a simulacrum of the whole. Taking that idea a bit further, I suggested, “I don’t think I could accurately record the entire story, but maybe if each of you wrote your own pieces, I could act as an editor and put them all together.”*

*“Hmmp,” Dri gave another of his dry snorts. “That may be harder than you think. Even after all these years, I’m not sure I could write about that last bit with Gryffyth. I still can’t think about it without giving myself nightmares.” Dri’s eyes turned dark, and I knew he was remembering a struggle for survival, the meaning of true evil, the reality of violence and death. I reached out and put my hand on his arm, an attempt at comfort. He smiled at me limply, accepting my fatherly love while obviously trying to pull himself away from the dark precipice of his thoughts.*

*“If Farrwyn really thinks that this is important, then I’ll do my best,” I conceded. I trusted Farrwyn, and I knew he never suggested something difficult unless there was a very good reason.*

*Dri nodded, “I’ll talk to the others, and see if I can convince everyone to work on recording their own parts.” He looked as though he might jump up immediately, but then he paused, his eyes lighting up as something else entered his mind. “Do you think you can write the record out in English?”*

*“You mean Terran English?” I exclaimed. Dri nodded. “Why?” I asked.*

*“So much of the story revolves around things that happened on Terra,” Dri answered slowly. “Someday, Terra will be brought back into contact with the rest of the peoples of the LI’Ellendryn. It would be good to have a story in one of their native languages which shows that they have been a part of the history of the LI’Ellendryn all along.” The sunlight came back into Dri’s face, and he smiled brightly at me, the kind of smile that tugs at a parent’s heart. “Besides, we’re all fluent in Terran English,” he added.*

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*And so this is our story, from the day that Farrwyn, Dari, and I decided to fight against the threat of*

*extinction that faced our people to the time when my grandchild, Arrwen, was born. The story is not mine alone, but told in the voices of the people who lived through the events – Farrwyn, Allandrion, Ceara, and Eldari. Although I have added my own pieces to a few of the chapters, my main contribution to this work has been to cajole, beg, coerce, and harangue my family into writing about the things they remember, and on occasion, assist those whose parts have been too difficult and heart-rending to easily put into words.*

*As Dri requested, I have written the original work in Terran English. This has been somewhat challenging, as the first part of the story took place long before Dari and I had ever been on Terra, and the language that we spoke in those days was Ellendri. Terran English is actually a polyglot of native Terran languages, and is filled with idioms and slang, many of which are only valid and understandable for a single Terran generation. Furthermore, there are a number of concepts in Ellendri which are not directly translatable to English. In the parts of the manuscript covering our early years, I have tried to faithfully recreate the essence of our life style, language, and culture as it existed on Ellendria without resorting to terminology that is clearly of Terran origin. In places, this has made the writing feel somewhat stiff and stilted, and for this, I apologize. In other sections, I have regrettably resorted to Terran idioms, even though none of us knew them at the time during which that portion of the story occurred. To those who find this unrealistic, I can only say that this was the best I could do with my limited abilities. For those who want to see the manuscript translated into Ellendri, I can happily say that this is a work in progress.*

*Finally, I would like to point out that this work is not a complete description of all of the events in which our family was involved during the time period defined above; rather, it is a compilation of the events that our family felt were the ones that most needed to be told. A total description of all the things that the five of us have done over that time frame would fill many volumes, and probably bore any potential readers to tears (another Terran English idiom).*

*My thanks to any and all who read this. If you walk away from the experience feeling even the least bit wiser, then I think that my work will have been well worthwhile.*

*Eldranth Foalen*