

Sample Copyedit (Changes Accepted) – Excerpt from *Runewrought*, Chapter 1 (Stephens)

Hooves rumbled against the earthen soil and kicked up rainwater from the puddles around it. Angry gray clouds groaned above. The path ahead would soon be flooded, but the equine traversed on at full speed, guided by the tight grip of a set of fingers interwoven in his ebony mane. Snorting and whinnying, the draft horse came across a large tree trunk that had fallen over the path from the storm. He wanted to stop, but his rider would not allow it. They soared over the obstacle without a moment's hesitation, landing swiftly on the other side and parading forward.

"We're almost there," the young woman atop his back cooed. She removed one hand from his mane and stroked his neck. "Faster, Hamlet."

Hamlet was quick to obey. Solace was soon coming. They had taken this route many times before, but on this instance, they were hindered by the pouring rain and the underbrush that had been tossed around from the heavy winds. The woman's brown hair blew in her face, but she did not lose focus. Her heart thudded in her chest faster than Hamlet's hooves against the soil that soon turned into cobblestone. Just as promised, they had arrived.

Hillsborough was a dainty little town situated between an array of hills. There was almost nothing around it except for the forest and the neighboring New York colony. The coast was miles and miles away, but you could still smell the salt from the seawater among the streets. Most buildings looked the same, being wood and thatch structures lining the few streets that there were. The rest of the paths were all dirt, and down one of them was exactly where this girl and her horse were headed.

Yes, the town was small, but that did not mean it was a tight-knit community. Sure, everybody knew almost everybody, but they were not family. Instead, the townspeople preferred being nothing more than colleagues. Every day was the same: the sun came up, everyone who was old enough and able-bodied worked to sustain the village, and the sun came down. Eventually, everyone would turn in for the night—the men, that was. The women stayed inside all day caring for the children and tending the house. No one wanted anything more. No one wanted anything less.

That was the case for most people, at least.