

Dragon Changes 12: The Final Battle

By

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"Forward one to team two," whispered a man hidden within a tight group of trees. His voice had a no-nonsense military tone. The man's camouflaged uniform blended in with his thinly forested surroundings.

"Go ahead forward one," responded a female voice over the man's radio.

"I'm in position," answered the man while he lay on his stomach. Before him was a fifty caliber sniper rifle. Its long black menacing barrel jutted out from a bush he lay behind. A long scope sat atop the weapon.

"What do you see sergeant," requested the woman.

"Maam, I see a small grouping of those humanoid dragon things," the Sergeant reported.

Within his scope he could see four menacing looking beings. They were patrolling along a county road outside a forest a half a mile away. Each colorful being stood about seven feet tall and were human shaped dragons. Their menacing horned lizard heads continually searched. Their wings were tucked against their backs, tails lazily moving with each step, and each carried an ax or sword ready for use. Yet their clawed hands and dragon pawed feet seemed more than enough to cause a lot of damage.

"You mean the half-dragons," corrected the woman.

"Yes them," responded the Sergeant. "I count four moving south."

"Are they far enough away from the main group?"

"Yes maam, about five miles away from the Salt Lake city internment camp."

"Any dragons overhead," she prompted him.

"No maam, the sky is clear."

"Very good, start recording and begin the test," she ordered him over the radio.

"Yes maam," he responded before connecting a cable from a video camera to the scope. After that he made sure the device was recording. Finally he peered through the scope and sighted the half-dragon closest to him.

At the beginning of the war, the Sergeant thought they were all the same. The only obvious differences being their scale color and amount of horns. Yet with time he began to notice subtle differences. While each stood about seven feet tall and appeared rather menacing, he learned to tell who was male and female. Though their sexual characteristics were far more subdued then when they had been human.

Take for example the one the Sergeant was currently targeting. He could tell the blue and purple colored being was female. She had a slightly bigger chest then her male compatriots. Beyond that, both males and females were the same between their legs. Half-dragon male sexual organs were now inside their bodies instead of swinging free like humans.

Then something else began creeping into the military man's mind, who was she? Who had that woman been before Caistine had converted her into a half-dragon? Had she been a mother, a college student, maybe even a soldier like himself.

It sincerely pained him to be targeting someone who had no choice over what had happened to her. Yet the Sergeant knew that half-dragon was enthralled by Caistine. That the woman had no choice over what she became and was doing.

Carefully clearing his mind of his thoughts, he took aim. The sniper aimed at her head to put the transformed woman out of her misery. That way it would be quick and painless.

Briefly he saw the half-dragon peer towards his hiding spot. Yet her golden yellow dragon generally peered at the forest. Then with a soft squeeze of his trigger finger, his powerful rifle roared to life. A thick heavy streamlined bullet raced towards the being. Within a second it slammed into the her forehead throwing the half-dragon to the ground. The other three quickly reacted by hurriedly searched for where the bullet came from.

Amazedly before the sniper's eyes, the female sat up. Where the bullet impacted was a small depression, but no blood or open wound. She hurriedly got to her feet and began pointing towards the man's hiding spot. The four half-dragons quickly spread their wings and sped towards the sniper.

The Sergeant knew he was in trouble. He stopped recording and hurriedly uploaded what his video. While he did that, he grabbed his rifle, jumped up, and ran away as fast as he could.

In less than a second, the half-dragons landed before forest. Upon glancing the running human, they chased after him. Each smashed anything that got in their way and darted around what they could not destroy.

Finally the female half-dragon saw an opening and launched herself. She leaped the distance and landed atop the sergeant's back slamming him to the ground. The half-dragon flung him around and swung a clawed hand out ripping the man's gun out of his hand. So enraged by what the man tried to do to her, she reached down and grabbed his head.

"Stop Mary," called out one of the male dragons. His voice was deep and beast like.

"But Ryan, he tried to kill me," pleaded the enraged female. Her voice sounded a bit higher than the males. Yet it still had a deep quality to it.

"I know, but she said not to kill them," responded Ryan.

"Mistress said to bring every human we find to her," chipped in another male.

"I know Jack, but can't I just this once?," she pleaded

"No, Caistine's commands are final," spoke Ryan resolutely.

"I understand," Mary relented releasing her hold on the man's head. Yet she still kept a clawed dragon foot atop him.

"Jack, take the human back to Caistine, then hurry back," ordered Ryan.

The red and black half-dragon nodded and stomped over to the sniper. When Mary lifted her foot, he reached down and grabbed the man by his clothes. The Sergeant tried to struggle but the half-dragon's grip was too much.

After that the group worked their way back out of the forest. Jack briefly hugged the man with both arms, stretched his great wings, and then leapt up into the air. Within moments the two were high up in the air flying back towards what had been Salt Lake city.

From high in the air, the Sergeant could see what had become of his city. Just about every building, including the capital, had been smashed. On top of that, numerous great dragons of various forms flew above the devastation, while down below were even more half-dragons patrolling. He could also see off to the side was a large fenced in area. Inside were thousands of people exposed to the elements.

However, instead of depositing the human within the internment camp, Jack flew south a bit. Yet despite the utter devastation, one building had been spared, the great Mormon temple. He could see how the dragons had cleaned as much of the destruction away from the temple. Plus they also removed all the original Mormon statues and crosses as well.

Once upon the ground, Jack carried the sniper into the temple. The soldier saw how it's interior had been gutted. Gone were the rows of benches for the parishioners, statues to the saints, and most of the room's other adornments. Instead the main space was now a vast throne room.

As Jack walked through the space, the sniper glanced small gangs of enslaved humans working. They seem to be painting and carving the walls with numerous dragon scenes. Each slave gang had a half-dragon overseer.

Jack crossed over to the throne, dumped the sniper heavily to the ground, and then kneeled before Caistine. To the sergeant, the woman appeared to be a strikingly beautiful female in her mid-thirties. The revealing clothes she wore did little to hide her beauty. Yet despite her appealing human appearance, she sported long black dragon horns sprouting out of her temples. Each was tipped with gold. Emerging from her back was a set of large black wings. Curving from her behind was a long sinuous tail tepidly moving back and forth. While her exposed feet and lower legs were black scaled dragon three toed paws.

"What do you have," she casually requested of Jack.

"My lady, this human shot a member of my scouting party," Jack studiously reported.

"Oh, what with one of those peashooters you call guns?"

"No my lady, he had a sniper's rifle."

"A what?"

"A gun that can shoot accurately long range. He was also trying to be unseen."

"What for," she directed towards the Sergeant.

"I'll never tell a freak like you," he defiantly spat back.

"Oh really? I can fix that attitude right now," Caistine playfully challenged him. She got up from her thrown and crossed the distance between them. Her claws lightly clacked against the hard marble floor. Squatting down to his level, "don't worry this will only hurt for a moment. Then afterword you can tell me all about what you were doing."

With that she pressed a finger against his forehead. Immediately the man screamed with pain. Multiple things happened to him. The Sergeant's clothes ripped apart as his body grew larger. As that happened, his head pushed out and reformed into a dragon head. Grunting in pain, a large pair of wings burst out of his back. Plus a long sinuous tail grew out of his rear end. Even his feet reformed into dragon paws. Finally scales grew all over his body finishing up his transformation. The Sergeant was now a seven foot tall gold and green half-dragon.

The newly transformed half-dragon fell to his knees and bowed to Caistine. "What is thy bidding my master," the Sergeant spoke in his new deep inhuman voice.

"Tell me what you were doing in that forest," Caistine ordered him.

With that he began telling her everything he knew. He informed her that his attack was an experiment to see if a fifty caliber bullet would hurt them. That the human military was trying to find ways to defeat her dragons. Yet each attempt failed to harm her minions.

That last bit caused Caistine to grin. She had easily overwhelmed everyone she encountered. Yet unlike her home planet which was destroyed, Caistine planned on taking her time. That way her victory would be complete and everlasting.

Afterword she assigned the Sergeant to a scouting party. Then she sat back on her throne. There she absentmindedly contemplated the slaves decorating her palace. Yet her mind was processing the information she had just learned.

Flying across the vast Idaho landscape were two dragons. The two lightly flapped their great wings and studied the ground below them. Despite their similar sizes, both huge dragons were quite dissimilar. On the right was a great blue dragon. It's main body was like the other with a pair of wings, four limbs, and a single tail. Yet unlike the other, this blue dragon had three heads. Each contained not one but two jaws. While the dragon used one head to focus on where it was flying, it used its other two heads to watch the ground.

Meanwhile the second green dragon to the blue one's left, had a similar main body. Yet unlike the blue's three heads, this one had only two heads with four eyes each. Plus, while one was focused on flying the other seemed to be searching as well.

The blue dragon aimed one head to the green and let out a barking roar. The green looked over and saw the blue gesturing with one forelimb. It was suggesting they land. The green let out an agreeing roar out both mouths nearly simultaneously.

Both dragons angled themselves toward a wide open farm field. Landing, the two walked towards each other before laying their main bodies down. The blue dragon opened up his upper center mouth and began disgorging a human torso at the end of a fleshy tendril. It looked like a teenage boy. As soon as it was fully extended, the torso came alive and faced the green dragon.

Unlike the blue dragon, the green swung both of its heads towards the blue. They each opened their mouths and pushed out human torsos as well. The torso on the left was also a teenage boy. While the torso on the right was a teenage girl. Both seemed of the same age and were quite similar.

"I don't know Brad, what'd you see," questioned the female torso.

"I god damn don't know Zoey," swore the blue dragon's torso. "I fucking hate what Caistine is forcing us to do."

"I know, I know," agreed the green dragon's female torso.

"Did you see what she did to Oni," asked the green dragon's male torso.

"No Tailor, what'd she do," Brad question.

"Mistress horribly tortured her," softly responded Tailor.

"I've never heard someone scream like that," added Zoey.

"Why'd Oni get punished," Brad replied.

"She refused to eat a group of people," simply stated Zoey.

"God damn it," swore Brad. "I wish there was a way we could break her hold on us."

"We completely agree," responded Zoey gesturing to Tailor.

"I'm glad we haven't found any humans today. I sure as hell don't want to eat them," stated Tailor.

"I know, but that's what she commanded," sighed Brad.

"Honestly, where'd she come from anyway?"

"I heard a few half-dragons gossiping. They say she came from another dimension or something," answered Zoey.

"Those thing's creep me out," Tailor commented referring to the half-dragons. His shared body shuddered for a moment.

"I know, I can't believe how brainwashed those unfortunate people are," Zoey added.

"Wait," responded Brad as he raised one of his dragon heads to peer off in the distance. "There's something on that abandoned interstate we're following."

"What's it look like," questioned Zoey.

"A car."

"Damn, I was hoping we wouldn't encounter anyone," she sighed.

"Agreed," responded her twin brother. All three felt a pressure in their heads. Caistine's order was once again being forced upon them. Each reluctantly pulled their torsos inside their heads. Yet instead of leaping up into the air, the two began bounding across the landscape. The people in the car abruptly saw the big dragons running towards them and hurriedly tried to turn around. However by the time the car was heading in a different direction, the pair had caught up to it.

Brad lashed a paw out slapping the car off the road. It flipped through the air like a kicked rock. Then with a heavy thud it slammed onto a nearby field in a crumpled heap.

Quickly both dragons bounded over and used their big paws to pull apart the vehicle. In moments Brad had uncovered two occupants within the torn car, an older man and woman. Under Caistine's command Brad prepared to eat the two. While he hated doing it, the blue dragon was compelled to follow her order. He knew disobeying would bring intense pain.

While Brad hesitated for a moment, the woman regained consciousness and looked up to see Brad's center head hovering directly over the wreck. Both jaws were open and drips of slobber fell to the ground. Off to the side the green dragon kept a look out. Neither wanted to do the deed.

"Brad is that you," spoke the woman weakly. She squinted her eyes and tried to focus on the dragon above him. "It is you," she hurriedly exclaimed.

Her voice registered something in his mind causing Brad to pause. He was unsure what to do. On the one hand he needed to comply with Caistine's orders. Yet as he closely peered at her,

he recognized the woman as his mother. A woman by the name of Julie. Peering at the man, Brad identified him as Edwards. A scientist that worked with his mother back in Montana.

Seeing Brad hesitate, the green dragon quietly moved closer then pushed out both torsos. They peered closely at the two humans and tried to figure out why the blue dragon had not eaten them as they were ordered. Neither twin recognized the two.

"Brad what is it," called out Zoey.

"You know if you disobey Caistine you'll be punished," urged Tailor.

Their voices caused Brad to open his upper jaw wider and pushed out his torso. Once fully extended, he stared into his mothers face. "She's my mother," he hastily called out to the twins.

"Oh my god," the twins exclaimed nearly in unison.

"I don't know if I can comply," he pleaded, a tear dripped from his eye. Pain began building in his mind.

"But, if you don't," Tailor softly spoke.

"Please son, you wouldn't..."

"But mom, she controls me. If I don't I will be horribly punished," he whined. His eyes were pleading with her. The painful pressure continued to build. "I can't disobey."

"But I'm your mother," Julie begged.

"I'm so sorry," Brad sorrowfully responded, tears began streaming down his cheeks. He stared into his mother's eyes with his own human eyes. Off to the side Brad shifted one of his heads to hover over her. Both of its jaws were open allowing even more drool to drip all over the car.

Suddenly out of nowhere a loud bright pink bolt of energy slammed into Brad's human torso. Unlike human weapons, this bright bolt effected the blue dragon causing him to collapse to the ground. The head that had been hovering over the car slammed into the dirt beside the wreck. Brad's human torso slumped to the ground unconscious.

"What the," urgently yelled Zoey as the green dragon turned to see where the pink energy bolt had come. Yet suddenly two more bolts lanced out of nowhere and slammed into the green dragon's human torsos. They suddenly dropped to the ground just as unconscious as Brad.

Off to the side appeared an elderly looking man. He wore white flowing robes. His long pure white hair and beard blew

about in the constant breeze. In his hand was a long gnarled looking wooden staff.

Upon seeing the two dragons unconscious, the man crossed the distance to the crash. "Are you two alright," he asked in a concerned grandfatherly voice. He laid his staff against the broken car and leaned in to check on Julie.

"Ah, um, thank you. He was, um, is my son," she replied gesturing to the unconscious blue dragon. The man in white helped her out of the wreck and pressed a finger to her forehead. A soft pink glow diffused throughout her. Within moments most of her injuries were healed and she climbed out.

The man worked his way over to Edward and checked on him. The scientist was deeply hurt with blood gushing from numerous wounds. Seeing that, the man hurriedly pressed a finger and pumped in more of his energy into Edwards. Rapidly a large portion of Edward's wounds began to heal.

Stepping back a bit, the man reached a hand out and caused Edward to levitate out of the car. Softly he moved the unconscious man over to the side and laid him on the ground. "He will still need some time to heal before he will be able to move. My name's Ianril, and your name is," the man asked Julie. She quickly told him her name. "Sadly I've been on this planet for a month and yet my sister has had nearly a year to conquer this land."

"Your sister," Julie asked as she approached her sleeping son. She knelt down and caressed his human cheek. A tear dripped down her cheek as she pondered what had happened to him.

"Yes Caistine is my sister. She caused all of this," he said gesturing to the two sleeping dragons.

"But why," Julie hurriedly asked as she cradled her son's sleeping torso. His mother softly caressed his slobber soaked hair. "Where did you two come from?"

"A place called Zar'Noosh," Ianril simply answered as he knelt. He was examining the fleshy tendril connecting Brad's human torso to his dragon mouth.

"Where's that?"

"It was a place not of this realm as best as I can discern," the old man answered while examine her son.

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"This planet is Earth right," he asked as he laid a gentle hand on Julie's forehead then another on her son.

"Yes?"

"Then Zar'Noosh was a planet similar to this on a different dimensional plane."

"How can that be? I mean you're human?"

"True I am human, but I am not of this planet. Unlike this place with all it's wonderful gadgets," he spoke gesturing to the car wreck. "Zar'Noosh was full of magic."

"Was that what you used on my son and the others?"

"Yes and that's what transformed him into a dragon. My sister and I were descended from a long line of rulers. Our father, King Ingrill the third, had ruled a vast kingdom across the Batternoy continent." Ianril explained as he got up.

He gestured for Julie to follow him. She gently laid her son's sleeping head down on the ground and then followed the magician across to the twins. There he kneeled down and began to examine Zoey.

"Zamberia, which both of us grew up in, had been a peaceful kingdom with many people living inside it. Despite not being next in line to the throne, my sister coveted power. It went along with her choice in magic," explained the man as his hand briefly glowed pink. The glow then diffused into Zoey's head. "That need for power caused her to assassinate my father and older brother. Finally she nearly did the same with me."

Ianril got up and crossed the distance between the twins and examined Tailor. "Afterword she ascended the throne and began to dominate the kingdom. A civil war broke out between her and I. Over the years she committed numerous cruel acts on her subjects."

"What caused you two to come here and how is that related to my son?"

"Well, miss?"

"Julie."

"Miss Julie."

"No, just Julie."

"I'm sorry. Well Julie, my sister's main branch of magic is draconic. It's an avenue of magic explored by those obsessed with power. She used that magic not only to control my world's natural born dragons, but to modify her subjects into half-dragons. Yet that was not enough. I had done my best to stop her from going further. However she came up with a spell that

could transform people into dragons like your son and these twins."

"Still how'd that spell and you two get here," Julie inquired as she watched him peer into Tailor's human mouth.

"Direct to the point I see," he replied with a soft smile. "During one massive battle, Caistine was trying to transform all of my fighters. Yet she had to draw a staggering amount of power from the land to achieve it. I tried to stop her, yet instead her spell went out of control and tore open a portal to Earth. The tare first sucked in her spell. I believe it diffused throughout Earth transforming people like your son into dragons."

Ianril paused to peer at the land around him. "Yet she drew so much magic from Zar'Noosh that it began to destroy itself. Upon seeing that, Caistine escaped through the portal. I followed her soon after to stop her."

"And Zar'Noosh?"

"I believe it's gone," Ianril regretfully answered.

"I'm sorry to hear that."

"Before the war, that planet had been beautiful. As gorgeous as Earth. Yet we both wrecked it in our attempts to destroy each other."

"Oh. Then um, ah, if what had transformed Brad was a spell, could there be a way to change him back to a human?"

Ianril sighed and paused to ponder Julie. Briefly he laid a fatherly hand atop the sleeping teenager beside him.

"This is the first time I've been able to examine these new dragons up close. Yet from what I can tell, their transformations are permanent. About the only thing I can do is to remove whatever mental control she has over them."

"Then..."

"Then, they won't be under Caistine's power. She likes to force her subjects to do things instead of inspiring loyalty. If your son had not complied with her order to eat every human he encountered, he would've likely suffered greatly."

"Oh my god," exclaimed Julie horrified at what Ianril's sister had done to him. "If I get my hands on her!"

"That would be a lot tougher then you think," he replied as he began concentrating on Tailor's human head. Julie heard him mumble something under his breath. It sounded nothing like any language on Earth.

After a couple moments both of his hands began to glow pink. Then he gently laid them atop Tailor's head. The glow diffused into the teenager's torso and out into the green dragon. With a gesture for Julie to follow him, Ianril got up and crossed back over to Zoey. There he did the same thing for her. Finally the two went over to Brad and repeated it one more time.

"I have cleared Caistine's control from these two dragons." Ianril crossed over to the car and slumped down against it. At that moment he truly looked like an old man. Julie sat beside her son and cradled his head again.

"Thank you," Julie gratefully responded. "But you said defeating her would be much tougher than we think?"

Ianril did not respond as he briefly peered off in the distance. "She has all the same magical protections as the other dragons and more. I believe no Earthly human weapon will be able to harm her."

"Then how can any of us stop her if our weapons are useless?"

"I believe the solution will involve magic if we are ever going to be successful against her," stated Ianril as he pondered Brad.

After some time, the teenager's human eyes began to flutter open. They were accompanied by all his other dragon eyes opening and his tail shifting. Softly he looked up to see his mother cradling him in his lap.

"Mom..." he asked in a weak voice.

"Son it's alright," she motherly assured him.

"What happened?"

"You were under the control of Caistine," she softly informed him.

"Wait what," Brad quickly exclaimed as he lifted his torso off her lap. "If she finds out..."

"Don't worry," Ianril fatherly informed him. "She has no hold over you anymore."

Brad didn't say anything right away. It looked like he was trying to sense something. "You're right, I can't feel her anymore," he replied with a bit of awe. "For the first time in a long while I'm free!"

That caused Julie to lean in and hug her son's torso.

"I've removed all of her control over you."

"Um, thank you, ah..."

"Ianril."

"You're Ianril? I overheard Caistine gloating that you weren't here."

"I bet," the old man replied with a soft smirk.

Moving around his two other heads, Brad abruptly realized he was still a dragon. "Um ah, is there a way I can become human again?"

Ianril softly shook his head. "I'm afraid not my son. I have the power to remove mind controls and place powerful wards on people. Yet undoing transformation magic is far beyond mine or anyone else's power. Even Caistine would not be able to undue her own magic."

"So I'm stuck like this the rest of my life?"

The old man simply nodded. "I'm sorry..."

That caused Brad to break down and cry into his mother's cradling arms. "She forced me to do all sorts of horrible things. Kill and eat so many people. Even destroy cities. I didn't want to, but I could not disobey," he sobbed deeply.

"We're so sorry we tried to kill you," regretfully responded Zoey from behind them. So focused on Brad's grief, they had not noticed the twins waking up and moving closer.

"Come here," Julie motherly spoke while gesturing for the pair to come closer. With that the twins moved their human torsos in as well.

Ianril respectfully waited while Julie and the dragons grieved over what his sister had done to them. Finally he asked the dragons, "does Caistine know you both are here?"

"Not directly," answered Tailor sitting up from Julie's hug. "It's more like we knew where she was."

"So then why were you flying out here," Ianril probed.

"A lieutenant had ordered us to patrol this quadrant and eat any human we encounter," answered Zoey.

"If we disobeyed, we would be punished horribly like Oni," chipped in Brad.

"Wait! What happened to Oni," urgently interjected Julie.

"She disobeyed an order to eat a group of children caught in one of the pens. Caistine found out and subjected her to excruciating pain. Her roars and screams could be heard for miles around. Afterward she threatened to have Oni's torso

ripped out of her mouth," Zoey explained while the twin's shared body shuddered for a moment.

"What would that do to you," innocently pressed Julie.

"No one is sure, some think it would turn us into beasts," guessed Tailor.

"I believe your minds are contained within your human heads. Though I think a more accurate description would be your human essences. When you pull in your torsos, do you feel like your minds are shifting," Ianril asked the dragons.

"Yes," answered Brad.

"That sensation you feel is your human essence shifting to and from your human torsos. I hesitate to guess, but I think the act of removing your torso would eliminate your human essence. Thus only a shell of a beast would be left behind. Now what about these lieutenants of hers," he asked changing the subject.

"When Caistine gathered us, she pulled out all the malcontent dragons. They were the ones who liked to eat humans and do horrible things," Zoey chipped in. "She made them her lieutenants. Each eagerly obeys her orders and then bosses us around."

"Yea, when Caistine ordered us to attack Salt Lake City, she let her Lieutenants run the battle. They told us to eat every human we came across. Even if it meant spitting them back out. Others were ordered to drop humans from great heights just so those mal-contents could see them bounce," added Brad in a horrified tone.

"Bastards," swore Julie. "Beyond magic, is there anything else you can do?"

Ianril did not respond right away. "I think the only way to stop this is to, well, kill my sister. With her gone, all the dragons will be free of her control."

"Including the half-dragons," asked Zoey.

"Them too," added Ianril.

"Do you have any idea of how to do that," Julie spoke.

"I think the only option is for me to confront her directly. We'll wait till that man wakes up. Then I'll get you two to safety," Ianril instructed gesturing to Julie and Edwards.

"But I think we should come and help," protested Julie.

"If you go, there's a strong chance Caistine will transform you both into half-dragons," calmly answered Ianril. "And I want you three," he gestured to the two dragons. "To protect these two."

"Alright," sighed Julie. The others simply nodded.

Caistine was thrilled about her time on Earth. When she first arrived, she had been a bit disoriented. Yet after a little probing and exploration, she learned how everything was. Then with the knowledge that her dragon's were already transformed due to a quirk of the magical portal, she began her conquest. Caistine figured that for every couple seconds the portal was open a month went past on Earth. Thus between the time her spell went through before she did, over a year had passed. More than enough time for her to have a nice sizable army of transformed dragons.

After that Caistine went about conquering one human city after another. Soon she had entire states under her control. Within each she corralled the remaining humans. Some she transformed into half-dragons, her most loyal servants. A few she used as slave labor to build her empire and palace. The rest she treated as dragon chow.

That last point caused Caistine to chuckle at a memory she pondered while she sat on her throne. It involved a current group of slaves carving a wall in her palace. Within that group were a few politicians.

When she first started attacking Salt Lake City, some politicians came to her with a white flag. They wanted to try and get her to stop attacking. Yet she abruptly had the whole lot fed to her dragons.

Next came a few more politicians who thought they could ride her coattails and gain power. Each promised to show her how this planet worked. Listening to their conniving speech reminded her of her old planet. She briefly let them blather away. Each eagerly said they could help her. In the end, she had some turned into half-dragons. Other's she enslaved and were now working on her palace.

While Caistine pondered those sniveling humans, she looked over at one of her retainer half-dragons. The male, like all

the others, stood seven feet tall. He wore little clothing other than to clothe his lower region. That exposed his yellow and blue scaled muscled frame. His green dragon eyes were obediently staring at nothing.

Before being transformed into a half-dragon, the male had been a senator and a war hero. He had promised to help her achieve her goals as long as she helped him defeat his enemies. In the end she agreed, promptly turned him into one of her servants, and then had him attack his old country. Afterward he served as one of the main guards obediently protecting her.

Becoming bored with her memories, Caistine stood up and stepped down from her throne. Behind her came two honor guard half-dragons including the ex-senator. Crossing the vast open hall that had been a worshiping space, she entered a side room. Inside she found what looked like a giant mahogany conference table sitting in the middle of an otherwise empty room. Upon it was a constantly updating illusion she created.

With a wave of a hand, Caistine caused the illusion to zoom out and show her the entire planet. She briefly pondered renaming the globe as soon as she conquered it all. Earth was an ok name, but she wanted something more personal.

Then with a flick of a hand she zoomed into the continent she stood upon. Currently she fully controlled the Rocky Mountains. Plus her forces had recently consolidated her hold over the entire west coast.

Yet now she had them working their way east. At the rate they were moving, she expected them to be on the other side by the end of the year. Then she would direct them north and finally south to conquer all of the land on this side of the planet.

"Senator O'Neal," she playfully called out to the yellow and blue half-dragon.

The man obediently walked forward. "Yes my mistress?"

"Which one of these states did you represent?"

"I was from Virginia."

"Where's that?"

"Here my lady," the half-dragon reached over and used a clawed finger to point out his old home along the east coast.

"And someone mentioned a place called the bible belt, where's that?"

"Right here mistress," he spoke gesturing to the southeastern states.

"How much trouble will they pose to us?"

"Not much my lady."

"Very good," she said dismissing him. Afterward she pondered how she was going to move her forces.

Ianril needed to figure out a way to sneak into his sister's palace to confront her. Back on Zar'Noosh she had erected numerous magical barriers to block his forces from battling her directly. However he astutely figured she did not know he was on Earth. Thus she would not bother to assemble her protection barriers. Especially if she thought Earth could not hurt her.

Because of that Ianril chose the more discrete option of sneaking close to her. First he teleported himself a bit closer to Salt Lake City. Then he casted two spells upon himself. One allowed him to fly while the other was an illusion to make him look like a pink and white half-dragon. When he flew, his illusion self flapped its wings in response.

High up in the air during night, Ianril could see the destruction Caistine had wrought to the land. He saw the pens full of scared and humiliated people. The mage witnessed the brainwashed half-dragons as they went about their tasks.

Then the disguised mage saw Caistine's great palace. Briefly he flitted around the giant building to see if there was a better way inside beside the main entrance. Then he spied an opening on the main roof by some stone spires. Making sure he wasn't noticed, he flitted over to the place and touched down.

Due to the sloping portion of the roof, Ianril had to carefully climb up a bit to the arched opening. Inside he found a locked metal door. Quickly he dispelled his concealing illusion. Then with a little bit of magic he easily opened the portal and went inside. After descending down a tight flight of stairs Ianril found himself in the upper reaches of what had been the temple's main worship space. He ducked close to a stone railing to peer at the vast open space before him.

He could see how at one point there had been rows of benches arrayed around the main worship area. Yet all there was

now was a throne upon a raised dais. Though it was rather empty, he glanced signs that her slaves had been there recently.

Abruptly from below he heard Caistine's voice, "who's there? There's no need to hide from me, I can feel your powerful magical essence." Her voice had a haughty arrogant quality to it.

Ianril sighed and stood up. That was one thing he had forgotten. One that a white mage like him could never do.

"You are right my sister, there is someone here," he calmly called out.

"Ianril! How did you survive the destruction of Zar'Noosh?" She yelled while rushing into the main space searching for him.

"The same way as you. But rest assured I shall not allow you to do to this planet what you did to ours." Ianril spoke as he lightly descended to the main floor using his flight spell. Then with a flick of his staff, he quickly erected a few magical barriers around himself.

"Too late," gloated Caistine. "I've already started and there's no way you can stop me. Guards," she yelled out.

From deep within the space rushed out numerous half-dragons. They ran as fast as they could towards the old mage. Each brandished a sword, axe, or pole arm.

Ianril chose to deal with them as minimally as he could. Thus with a wide arcing swing of his staff, a great breeze flung them far away. Then with a twist and clench of his fist, a glowing pink ball flew out and rushed through each prone half-dragon. They began shuddering before collapsing to the floor unconscious.

"Now as you were saying," Ianril calmly stated turning to his sister.

With a great flap of her wings, Caistine jumped up in the air and flew to a balcony above her. Once her dragon paws touched the stone, she whipped out her staff and aimed it at her brother. A blue lightning lanced out of the staff straight towards him. Immediately Ianril raised his staff and intercepted the spell channeling it to the ground.

The male mage decided to take a page from Caistine's book. He raised his staff and began to chant. Within seconds stone people began to pull themselves out of the great marble floor. Each left a depression from where they emerged. Before long

there were close to fifty of those conjured stone things working their way towards Caistine.

The first few who reached her, the dragon mage blasted apart with magical blue bolts. Yet more kept pouring in causing her to leap up in the air away from their reaching stone hands. They then began throwing stones they ripped from the walls at the flapping mage.

"Come to me," Caistine called out with an unearthly voice.

Within moments the space's great windows began blowing inward as even more half-dragons burst into the space. Each saw the stone figures harrying their leader. With a gesture from Caistine those transformed people rushed to fight Ianril's conjured army.

Then out of nowhere a giant purple dragon came bursting through a wall. It had smashed a large hole that caused a bit of the temple to collapse. Yet the space still seemed semi intact.

The dragon's scales were different hues of purple scales. It touched down on the floor with its bird shaped legs. Both of the dragon's two arms were actually necks with heads at their ends.

"Kill him Regan," commanded Caistine.

Ianril thought he saw some hesitation in the dragon's eyes. Yet with a flick of Caistine's wrist, Regan's eyes glazed over and she turned to face the mage in white. She aimed all three of her heads at him and let out loud challenging roars. Just with her howl alone caused small stones to fly towards him.

"I can see you don't really want to fight me," he calmly called out despite the disparity of the situation.

Egged on by Caistine, Regan advanced towards Ianril who stood defiantly before the dragon. He briefly noticed his conjured stone army was fairing decently and twitched his staff raising a few more to fight the half-dragons. Then he turned his attention back towards Regan who was trying to maneuver her big body in the semi-confining collapsing space.

With a frustrated roar, Regan dashed her neck arms upward trying to make more room for herself. That caused the roof to blast outwards. Satisfied she had enough room, with Caistine still egging her on, Regan rushed towards him. Yet the crafty mage aimed his staff at her center head, mumbled something, and fired off a pink bolt. It slammed into Regan with the same

strength as a full grown dragon. The bolt's momentum flung the dragon across the space destroying the back wall. A few half-dragons were able to flap out of Regan's way.

Climbing out from where she landed, Regan tried to fly out of there. Yet with all the rubble of the collapsing temple around her, she was boxed in. Struggling to get to her clawed feet, she used her neck arms to push herself upright. Then with forced determination, she began working her way back to Ianril.

The mage knew a few ways to defeat Regan. Yet each meant killing her and he was loathe to do that to an unwilling participant. Then a crafty solution came to him.

Ianril concentrated for a moment. He planned on combining two spells into one. Something only a mage of his caliber could do. Then once he had built up enough magic, he formed a bright pink ball before him. Finally with a wave of his staff, he sent the ball towards Regan.

The thing shot out and slammed into her center mass. It's momentum was enough to fling her back again. Then the magic behind it quickly diffused into her. Within moments the entire purple dragon glowed pink. Regan fell unconscious when the glow subsided.

"You can keep calling all of the innocent humans you've transformed Caistine. Yet in the end you'll still have to face me!"

"Why can't you just die," screamed Caistine as she used her wings to speed towards him. Landing on the rubble strewn floor, she used her clawed feet to get a firm purchase. Then she swung her staff out at her brother. As it arced through the air, it left a blue glow behind it.

Suddenly Ianril raised his own staff blocking her strike. A large amount of blue and pink sparks leapt out from where the two hit each other. The old mage then answered by shoving his palm out at his sister. A small pink arrow flew out and slammed into his sister flinging her away.

Ianril then magically leapt up into the air. Yet instead of landing atop his prone sister, the mage slammed his staff into the ground beside her. At the sight erupted a loud blast of pink magic flinging her further away.

Caistine had the prescience of mind to spread her wings and flap up into the air. Despite her battered body, the dragon mage turned around and began raining blue bolts down at her

brother. He quickly erected a bubble barrier around him. Her bolts harmlessly bounced off the hard glowing sphere.

While he endured her endless onslaught of bolts, an idea appeared to Ianril. He decided to use her own weapon against her. With that he faced the still unconscious Regan.

The mage knew her mind was now free of Caistine's control by what he did earlier. Yet he now began to buttress her magical protections against Caistine. Finally he placed a ward on her mind to keep it from being retaken by his sister.

That last bit of magic caused Regan to wake up. Because he had been concentrating on the dragon so much, Ianril's protection sphere briefly faltered. That allowed a bolt from Caistine to slam into the old man flinging him to the floor.

Regan came awake and quickly realized her mind was clear. Caistine had no control over her anymore. Upon that realization, she let out a joyous roar, then the once scientist pushed herself out from the rubble she lay in.

Briefly she peered about for the man Caistine had forced her to fight. She soon saw him laying on the floor unconscious and bleeding. Caistine flew above him gloating.

Yet with nothing stopping her, Regan decided to take her revenge out on the person who had caused her so much pain. With a loud challenging roar, Regan lanced a neck arm out at the dragon mage.

Caistine abruptly realized Regan was going after her and quickly flew away from the onrushing head. Then she whipped around and aimed her staff at the dragon. The mage fired off a loud blue bolt at Regan. Yet the magical protection Ianril had cast upon the dragon caused Caistine's attack to harmlessly dissipate.

Hurriedly Caistine then tried to recapture Regan's mind. Yet she encountered some sort of block. Within moments she recognized it as the same bit of magic Ianril had cast upon the humans back on Zar'Noosh. Caistine abruptly grasped the dragon was not under her control.

Regan pushed herself to her feet and advanced towards Caistine. The flying mage flapped her wings hard and zoomed high up into the air. The dragon pursued and climbed out of the rubble enough that she could use her own vast wings.

The dragon soared as fast as she could after the mage. As she flew, Regan batted away any half-dragon that tried to stop

her. Along the way, she also rammed into one of Caistine's lieutenants before he could do anything to her.

The disparity between mage and dragon allowed Regan to catch up to Caistine. The smaller nimble woman tried darting to the side, yet the dragon twisted and followed. Then with a wild swing, Regan swung her right neck arm around. Its jaws were eagerly wide open. Using that head's eyes to aim, she soon caught Caistine in its mouth. Unceremoniously Regan chomped down and swallowed.

As soon as Caistine died, all the half-dragons stopped harrying Regan. Each ceased flapping their wings and fell to the ground unconscious. Even the ones who were guarding the humans fell to the ground. Then after a while they each began to wake up shaking their heads clear. They abruptly realized they were free from Caistine's mind control.

All around the world, the dragons abruptly felt Caistine's prescience leave their minds. Whatever control she had over them disappeared allowing them to stop attacking. Those few who had eagerly followed Caistine abruptly found themselves outnumbered. The other dragons distinctly remembered what the malcontents did to them. The once lieutenants immediately felt retribution.

Back at the destroyed Salt Lake city temple, Regan and the half-dragons carefully made their way through the rubble. One of the female half-dragons called out causing the others to come. Upon touching down, Regan extended her human torso and leaned in to peer at what the half-dragon had found.

"I don't think he'll make it," responded the half-dragon in a feminine bestial voice. She was kneeling and using her scaly clawed hands to move his clothes aside to peer at his injuries. "He's got multiple internal injuries," she spoke authoritatively while feeling his stomach.

"Do you think we could," Regan inferred.

"I've seen this before. I would not be surprised if his back was broken. A man his age being slammed into a pile of rubble is usually fatal. Plus I've got none of my medical equipment here," the female half-dragon regretfully summed up.

"Do you know who he is," asked another half-dragon.

"I think Caistine mentioned he had been her brother?"

"That horrid woman had a brother," questioned Regan.

"I overheard her say that," spoke a yellow and blue half-dragon who had been the United States senator.

"Oh," responded a few.

The female half-dragon who had medical training leaned in to check Ianril's pulse. Then she laid her head near his mouth. Afterword she solemnly sat up, "he's dead."

"Damn," the senator swore.

"I think we should move him," Regan proposed to the others. The once medical professional leaned in and picked up the frail beaten body and helped carry it out of the rubble.

With the help of a few dragons, they dug him a deep grave away from the destroyed city. There they buried Ianril's body. Afterword numerous dragons and half-dragons mourned the man who set them free.

As soon as the dragon's ceased fighting throughout the world, the human forces rushed in. They quickly reclaimed the devastated land that the dragon mage took. Before long most of the west coast of the United States of America was one huge militarized zone.

The American military then freed the human prisoners and slaves. Then they rounded up all the half-dragons and placed them into makeshift camps. Finally while the dragons were escorted to empty areas in the west. There the human forces used fighter jets and helicopters to keep control of the dragons. Each willingly accepted it realizing their part in the devastation.

Over time the dragons repeatedly explained what had happened to them. How they were forced to do what they did. What helped their cause was that Caistine had made no attempt to hide herself. Thus she had been known far and wide around the world as the master over all the dragons.

Afterword, Caistine's passive spell which had transformed humans into dragons, was still semi active. Because of that people still occasionally transformed into dragons, abet at lower numbers than before. Also for some unknown reason, a bit of the magic spell now began to change some into half-dragons as well.

The world was slowly coming to terms with all the things Caistine did. Many felt a burning hatred towards the dragons. The United Nations convened an investigation and found that most of the dragons were innocent. At some point each dragon was

interviewed. Those who eagerly participated with the dragon mage were punished as best as the humans could do. Some were chained while others were caged. Yet beyond that little else could be done.

Over time most of the destroyed cities were rebuilt. Though many would never regain the full splendor they had before Caistine's attack. Somewhere along the way someone erected a monument over Ianril's grave. Years later it would become a shrine to the man who had saved Earth.

For a long time few nations were in a forgiving mood. New laws were passed restricting the dragon's movement. They were free of the mountains and could fly wherever they wanted. Yet these new restrictions kept them from flying over cities and towns. Plus a variety of countries banned them altogether from even entering their borders. Even spots within America, most notably the southeastern states, barred them entirely. Also the dragons were restricted to what they could eat. Many of the cattle and bison they so loved to eat were now jealously guarded. Finally each dragon was required to be fitted with a GPS transmitter that allowed the humans to track them wherever they went.

The half-dragons on the other hand felt a different and more personal sort of prejudice. Many tried to return back to their old lives. Yet their monstrous draconic appearances was a daily reminder of what had happened. Each directly felt the hate projected towards Caistine. Countries and states passed laws restricting their movement and barred them from working many professions. Many endured it stoically. While others left human society altogether and formed their own communities beside the full dragons. Many of these settlements were closed to humans.

The dragons chose to go back to the mountains. There those rocky peaks became their refuge. With the help of the half-dragons, they cultivated their own food by raising herds of large animals. Plus the dragons formed their own society. Something to help them cope with humanity's hatred towards them. Even dragonball came back, though it was not televised anymore and few humans came to see the matches.

Meanwhile new avenues of research began to form. Some were formal while others were more informal. Yet each was trying to research the magic that Caistine and Ianril had used. A few

were funded by the military while others were from the mystical community.

Along with that, various anti-dragon groups were either formed or became stronger. Most simply kept an eye on the dragons and half-dragons for any sign they might rebel. Others were more militaristic and vengeful. These people wanted to kill the dragons and half-dragons despite their magical protections.

Because of that, the dragons had to be careful around humans. Those vengeful groups could pop up and attack at any moment. Especially as the law tended to side with the humans over the dragons despite their innocence.

In the end it would take a long time for Earth to heal from the devastation Caistine had wrought. Many decades would pass before life began to settle down. Yet no one would forget what had happened. Nor would the planet ever be like it had been before the dragons or Caistine had appeared.