

It was a night like all others and all through the tower experiments were strewn that thrummed with magical power. The wards were hung by the doors with care, to ward off bandits with no place there. The wizard was restlessly sleeping in bed, while prophetic visions rampaged through his head. The gray dragon in his cage heard no wings flap, too absorbed in his dozing, early morning nap. When across the lab arose such a clatter, the gray drake sprang wide awake to see what was the matter. Glancing to the window he recognized the red flash, as a fellow drake landed on a table with a destructive crash. The waning moon's light was enough to just show the red drake standing above broken beakers below. When the gray drake saw who had appeared his lips curled back as he contemptuously sneered. The little red drake as devious as sin could only be the troublemaker known as Dragonien.

The gray drake was suddenly wide awake, head perked up and eyes alert. Dragonien had visited several times before, a wild drake that roamed the area near the tower. Occasionally he snuck in to snatch a bit of food or simply out of boredom and a desire to explore the tower in the middle of his hunting ground. Like himself the red drake was a dragon, which meant they both had a high affinity and sensitivity to magic. Something like the wizard's tower, constant in the middle of some kind of experiment or grand casting would have been a constantly shifting beacon of ethereal energy to draw the little Drake's attention. Which is why Andre liked it here, and why he got so overprotective of what he saw as his turf, both because this was his tower as far as he was concerned, and because every time Dragonien showed up something got broken or snatched away and he always took the blame.

Huffing in annoyance, Andre nudged a forepaw against the side of his cage's door for a few moments. After a couple of tries he finally got his claws angled in the right way to catch on the latch that held it closed and lifted it up to let the door lazily swing itself open. He had figured out how to escape the little cage the wizard kept him in a long time ago but the wizard had still yet to figure that out. Not that he really got out of his cage that often to cause chaos, so the wizard had little incentive to put him under extra screen.

By the time Andre had gotten his cage door open, his fellow cat sized drake had already walked his way to the other side of the Alchemy table beneath the open battlement window, knocking over a few more beakers and glasses in the process. His nostrils flared repeatedly as he sniffed along the top of the table, searching for whatever strange tint of magic or scent of food had drawn the troublemaker in this time. Andre, for his part, was not content to just let the little red drake have his way this time, lest he get another scolding from the wizard for Dragonien's inevitable collateral damage. With a quick hop, augmented by a flap of his briefly spread wings, the gray drake hopped himself up onto the table with Dragonien. Dragonien either didn't seem to notice, or at least not mind, the presence of the other dragon near him until he heard Andre give a quiet growl of warning and challenge. That got his head to perk up.

The red drake's head whipped around towards the challenging sound, wings flaring a bit as if reflexively trying to make him look bigger. Not that he needed too do so. To Andre's sudden nervousness, he noticed that Dragonien was bigger than the last time he had seen him both in overall size and musculature, not that it was surprising when you thought about it. Andre spent his days comfy and well fed in the safety of the wizard's care so while he still moved around enough to not atrophy he clearly had just as much paunch to his stomach as he did muscle. Dragonien, on the other hand, was a wild drake. He lived outside the tower, hunting and fighting for his meals. While he might have not been quite a swell fed as he would have liked, his body had built itself out of the primarily meat based

diet of a predator to be lean and powerful. So with those several extra pounds of muscle, not hidden by any excess bodyfat, and the additional inch or so of height at the shoulder over Andre, the gray dragon wasn't quite as confident as he had been when he first hopped up on the table. Regardless of the size difference and damaged confidence Andre was too prideful to let any of it show and instead puffed out his own chest and wings to try to match the feigned extra size Dragonien had done as well. This was still his house, after all.

As the larger red drake approached he made a bit of a show of looking the gray dragon over. He shook his neck a bit to make the thick tufts of black hair rustle along the length of his spine as if prideful of his own mane and Andre's lack of one. The gray drake's wings seemed a bit thicker and larger than his own, and his predator's instincts filed that way as a sign that even with Andre's less than perfectly athletic build he might still be a challenge when it came to flying. Other than that and the clear size differences the two were very similar. Both of them were a scaleless variety of drake, lighter and more agile thanks to their smooth hide in place of armored scales not weighing them down as much. He knew the gray drake, for all his pampered lifestyle and look, still had a good bit of fight in him and had learned several tussles ago not to dismiss him as some ineffectual house pet.

The two started to slowly circle one another on top of the alchemy table, never losing eye to eye contact as they did so. Claws made faint scraping sounds ever so often when they would grip and dig in to the wooden tabletop as if in preparation of a pounce, only to relax their hold and take another step instead. Occasionally the faint tinkling of glass cracking would be heard as one of them would step on one of the glass shards already littering the tabletop from the damage Dragonien's landing had done, and each time the sound nearly set the two off on one another. Finally, when a loud clunk of a wind up clock's hour hand moving over to the four caused Dragonien's head to snap towards the unexpected sound for a split second, Andre took the opening and pounced!

Were there anyone watching their fight would look like little more than a blur of red and gray rolling and tumbling across the ground in an incoherent blur. Claws flashed, teeth gleamed, tails whipped as the two rolled back and forth across the table top. There was no true killing intent in their fight as both saw the other less as prey and more as a rival challenging for territory, but that didn't stop them from using the weapons nature had given them to their fullest. Teeth clamped down on Dragonien's neck, only to be jerked away before they could sink in as Andre's body twisted to pull back from a claw swipe to his belly. A gray tail smacked against the side of Dragonien's face hard enough to daze him for a moment, only to have his shoulder slam into Andre's chest and knock the wind out of him. Small scrapes and scratches appeared here or there but between their near even match of fighting and the toughness of both of their hides very little blood was actually spilled.

The fight seemed to drag on for minutes before Dragonien finally was able to pin Andre beneath his superior weight and strength. It didn't help him, however as Andre used the opportunity to brace his hind legs underneath Dragonien's belly and kick with all he was worth, launching the red drake into the air and across the tabletop! A sharp clattering of glass on metal was heard and Andre winced in concern as his head popped up to see where he had thrown Dragonien too. Thankfully, he hadn't broken anything with his impromptu throwing of the red drake. Instead, Dragonien had landed against the metal base of a large, oddly shaped piece of glass alchemy equipment. Underneath it a small candle had been burning to heat the liquid inside but, thankfully, had gone out when Dragonien hit it so there was no risk of anything getting set on fire. The problem was that the red drake's impact on its metal frame had caused it to crack the glass about halfway up the side and now a liberal trickle of the strangely sweet smelling purple liquid from inside was now pouring down all over the prone form of Dragonien.

Slowly the red drake stirred, clearly having had his bell rung quite hard by the impact with the tabletop. The feeling of warm liquid splattering across his torso, neck and face helped rouse him from his daze, however and he slowly pushed himself back up to his feet. His neck spasmed and he coughed a few times, small puffs of smoke escaping each time as some of the liquid got in his mouth, its taste so sharp and tangy that he nearly gagged on it. Oddly enough there wasn't much of a mess on the tabletop, the liquid rapidly stopped pouring out after the amount had gotten below where the crack in the bottle was. What was odd about that, though, was that save for bits that had fallen directly on the table there was no other excess liquid. All of it that had splattered onto Dragonien seemed to have simply vanished. Or, more accurately as Andre watched a last few drops drip down onto Dragonien's flank, seem to absorb directly in to his skin.

Eager to renew the fight now that Andre saw an advantage in Dragonien's dazed state, he charged at the intruding red dragon once more. Dragonien's sluggish reaction time wasn't up to dodging out of the way of the gray drake's pounce and he soon found himself flattened onto his back with Andre's jaw clamped around the middle of his neck. As Dragonien stiffened in response to the precarious situation he suddenly found himself in that's when things started to get weird. Andre felt his teeth start to press tighter against Dragonien's neck to the point that his teeth started to leave tiny pinprick holes. This confused Andre greatly, as he was not trying to bite down at all. If anything he was keeping his jaws open wider than before to keep the hold threatening rather than lethal, and even then he could feel the taunt muscle and hide of Dragonien's neck straining against his teeth. Confused, Andre angled his head around slightly, adjusting his jaw on Dragonien's neck so he could look down more easily at his captive. That's when he saw what was happening.

He could see the tabletop around Dragonien's shoulders seeming to recede beneath the red hide. Only then did he notice his hind legs, which were straddling Dragonien's haunches, were having to spread and readjust their stance every few seconds as the red dragon's hips and rump pushed against the inside of Andre's legs. When it finally clicked in his head his jaw released Dragonien's neck out of sheer confusion, which was a stroke of luck as even with his jaw then spread all the way open Dragonien's neck had been filling his maw to the brim. Andre didn't understand how or why, but Dragonien... was bigger. And he was still growing.

As confusion turned to concern, Andre stumbled off of his position straddling the red drake. Backing away from Dragonien, he saw his counterpart seemed just as confused as he was. Still a bit sluggish from the impact to his head earlier, Dragonien slowly rolled himself up on to his feet... and rose... and rose. By the time he was fully standing upright, Andre was looking up at a drake nearly twice as big as he was! And the worst part was he could see Dragonien's body seeming to be shuddering ever so slightly every second or so, and each time it did it seemed to spread out just a bit further in every direction.

Dragonien, for his part, was just as confused as Andre if not even more so. His new lofty perception made his head a bit dizzy from the vertigo of suddenly seeing from so much higher up. Everything looked smaller and its changed scale was messing with his mental picture of the room he had been in. Suddenly he remembered he had been tussling with the gray house pet dragon and his head whipped back and forth looking for him. When he heard a light scratch of claws on wood he finally thought to look down... and then a very wide, predatory grin slowly spread across his muzzle. He may not have any idea what was going on or why it was happening but what he did know is that his challenger now looked like far less of a challenge than he had minutes ago. Slowly he raised his right forepaw, carefully testing how the whole limb felt both heavier and more powerful at the same time, and took a step towards Andre. A step that had wildly misjudged the width of his new stance and landed

on empty air off the edge of the table. With a yelp of surprise and confusion that was much louder and deeper than anything either of them had heard from Dragonien before, he lost his balance and tumbled down off the edge of the table with a crash of something heavy hitting the stone floor below.

After that the room seemed to go silent for several long seconds. Andre nervously started to edge his way towards the edge of the table, still confused about what exactly was going on. Just as he was almost to the edge and about to peak over it, a soft whooshing of air blew across him as an all too familiar face rose up into view. Dragonien's muzzle hovered in front of him, magnified several times in size and staring down at him in amusement and glee. A glance further over the edge showed Andre what he had feared, that Dragonien was now standing flat on the floor yet had grown large enough his head could easily rise up over the height of the table. He had to be the size of one of those hounds the hunters that sometimes visited brought with them! Easily several times the size of Andre himself and, to the gray drake's still building concern, still visibly growing! If anything it looked like Dragonien was growing faster now, those little shudders seeming to be happening more frequently and violently. Within moments his head didn't even have to fully extend to see over the table anymore, and only a few seconds after that Andre saw his shoulders rising up to be level with the table. Forget one of the hunting hounds, Dragonien was now nearly the size of a small bear!

Fear finally won out, and Andre turned to run. He scrambled his way across the table even as he felt the looming presence of Dragonien rising higher and higher behind him. He dared to take a look back over his shoulder only for the distraction to cause him to step in one of the leftover puddles of that purple liquid from earlier and trip forward. This time the metal frame holding up the large glass container buckled under Andre's impact and the whole thing crashed down around him. The glass hit the tabletop and simply exploded, leaving a shower of that purple juice splashing across the tabletop and the little gray drake.

The sound snapped Dragonien from his seeming power-drunken stupor and he snapped his head towards its source. When he saw Andre sprawled out on the tabletop that grin returned. One of his forepaws raised up above the table, which now was only at mid shoulder height, and placed the huge appendage atop the little gray drake. The now comparatively tiny drake fit almost entirely under Dragonien's heavy mitt and, even though he could feel Andre struggling, the resistance was almost laughably ineffective. That is, until he felt Andre's body shudder underneath his paw.

Despite his valiant resistance earlier, Andre had been ultimately losing the fight between him and Dragonien, and he had many more scratches and bite marks to show for it. When the bottle of purple liquid had crashed down on top of him a few bits of glass had given him a few new small cuts, and much more of the liquid had gotten directly into his bloodstream though those various minor wounds. All of this culminated into it's effects starting to take effect much more quickly.

As Dragonien's forepaw curled around Andre, he felt the gray drake's body shudder and then stubbornly shove outwards in all directions. Dragonien could actually feel his digits get spread apart as Andre's body nearly doubled in size in the span of just a couple of seconds. Growling in annoyance, Dragonien shoved his forelimb harder down on top of Andre, as if trying to hold him down, hold his growth down. But Andre's body seemed to have no inclination to obey. Confused and concerned that, despite him able to easily feel his own growth not only continuing but still speeding up, Andre was starting to rapidly catch up with him, Dragonien decided to try dealing with it the same way a child might deal with being told to clean their room but not wanting to do it properly. He shoved Andre across the table, and pushed him out of the window. Out of sight, out of mind.