

## Chapter 11: A Beginner's Guide to Magic and Archery

Thanks to white dragon magic, Kathia was released from the hospital and was feeling better than yesterday. But she was not ready to go back to dragon-hunting yet, because she needed to a better weapon to combat the beasts more efficiently. That better weapon was magic. The redhead went outside to find dragons reshaping the city's former self into what looked like a medieval town. Tall buildings were taken down in size to look like typical-looking middle age shops. The only largest thing she could see this mockery of a city was big fat castle. Light poles reverted back into their retro appearances. Roads that were once wide with multiple lanes had now been reduced and narrowed down to two or three lanes; even the traffic lights were gone as well, so the cars had to be directed by the traffic guard. These two things together had slowed down the traffic. The pedestrians and dragons with their huge sizes trying to walk across, certainly did not help the situation.

Some of the humans didn't seem to mind the change, but Kathia took it personally as an insult. It felt like the dragons were mocking the human race and telling them that they should live back in the medieval ages, now that they had no tech to control the dragons with. Not only that, if the dragons felt like rebuilding the city would make up for all the human lives lost, then they were dead wrong. Nothing they did would ever bring back her family. "Grrr! Damn lizards! If I could fight, I would stab one of those beasts right now," she murmured to herself angrily. She walked off to go look for a mage who would teach her some magic. But after walking through two streets, the girl encountered a bookstore with a poster at the window advertising the recent release of the newest kind of books, spell books. Now having another and more convenient way to learn magic, she smiled and said to herself, "You know what? I don't even need anyone's help. I can just get a tome and teach myself magic." With that, she went into the bookstore and went to the section where the magic books were displayed. She took up the beginner's guide since she was pretty much inexperienced at using magic herself. Then she went to the cashier and purchased the book. Now having a list of magical weapons to use against dragons, Kathia left the bookstore and went to go look for a place where she can begin practicing her spell. "Now where would I want to go?" she asked herself.

Suddenly, she was slammed into from behind by another person. The tome almost jumped off her arm, but the girl managed to keep a firm hold on her book. As she recovered from the painful surprise, that person yelled, "Hey watch it!"

The redhead turned around with an equally angry look on her face and yelled, "Me?! Why don't YOU watch where you're going? You're the one who walked into me from behind. What are you, blind?" No way was she at fault here because of this angry guy's action.

The girl's retort only served to piss the tall, muscular black man off more than he already was. "No, but you must be dumb to be just standing in the middle of the bloody street," he snapped again.

"What?!" Kathia screamed angrily at the insult.

Then another man came to her defense by telling the black guy, "Hey guy, the lady's right; you bumped into her. So let's all just-"

"Cram it, this ain't your business," the man continued to lash out. But immediately, he began to calm down and his expression of anger changed to that of regret. He took a breath and made an apology, "Sorry, I'm just frustrated."

Kathia forgave the guy and made a guess on what was going through his mind. "So you had a bad day, eh? I don't suppose you're just as mad as I am about these blasted dragons taking over our city," she said with a hand on her hip. It only made sense, because earlier, she had walked by a couple of people in the bookstore murmuring their distrust of the dragons remodeling their city after their rampage and killing people.

The man replied in a hushed one, "Tch! Got that right. I don't like it. First, they burn our homes to the ground and now we're supposed to trust them? They're just trying to do to us what we did to them. Everyone's just too blind to see it."

Kathia nodded in agreement about the seemingly ignorance of the human citizens. She was about to say "Yeah, if you ask me, we should all grab whatever weapon we have and chase them out of our city. They don't deserve to live alongside us after what they did!" But before any one of those words would come out, the man heaved a disappointed sigh and asked, "Look, sorry bout just now, but do you know where I can find a place that sells whetstones and fetching?"

The girl answered, "I don't know; beats me. It seems like the whole city's been rearranged since the reconstruction. The familiar places I go to don't seem to be there anymore. They're probably somewhere else now." Then she muttered her annoyance, "Damn those dragons." She spoke again in her normal volume, "We can go look around for it, if you want."

The man nodded at the offer. "Sounds like a plan."

Suddenly the sky grew dark with storm clouds hanging over Windfall and rain started to fall, wetting all the people outside who were unprepared for the abrupt weather change. "Oh shoot!" Kathia cried as she hastily held the spell book upside down and tightly to herself to avoid getting the pages soaked before she could read them. "Come on, let's get inside!" she said as she rushed back to the bookstore with the man following after her to take shelter inside. Her clothes, skin, and hair had been pelted with raindrops, which Kathia considered to be an annoyance as she didn't like being wet unless she was swimming or washing. She stayed inside the building and waited for the thunder storm to stop. Pretty soon, it stopped, but then it went back to drizzling and gradually increase to harder rain. The girl sighed and said, "It looks like it's going to take a while before the rain stops."

But in the meantime, this would give Kathia time to read her spell book. She left the man's side and

stood by an empty aisle and opened her book to the first pages. She skipped the copyright section and started off with the introduction to magic. Concentration was the key to channeling magic energy and some spells required intense emotions to be stronger. Spells should also be practiced often for the user to remember the spells and master them. After reading the introductory, the book says for the reader to start off with the Dream Recall spell as it was one of the easiest to learn. This spell was a must as it will teach her about herself as well as lead the reader into a more advance spell like the Astral Projection spell later down the line. Kathia went to the next page to learn about the Dream Recall. To do this spell, she would have to cast it at night right before she goes to bed and falls asleep. That way she can remember her dreams a lot better than she did normally when she would forget and have no memory what she had last night.

Since this was a spell for nighttime, Kathia decided to save this spell for later and go on to the next spell in the beginner's section; the Familiar Spell. The Familiar Spell involved the spell-caster choosing a familiar person or animal and casting the spell to create a bond between the two. But in order for the spell to work, there had to be 2 requirements: 1) the wizard had to be acquainted with the target and 2) neither the wizard nor the target must hold any dislike for the other. That meant the spell couldn't be used on enemies. The familiar spell can be cast repeatedly to cement a stronger bond of friendship, but not romantic love; there were love spells for that. Kathia thought about testing out the familiar spell, but she had no idea where her friends and servants were or whether they were still alive or not. She could cast it on the black guy, but forming a bond with an unknown stranger might not be the best idea. Again, Kathia would have to skip this spell for the third one that's next in the book.

As she was deeply concentrated on the book, the man came up to her to see what she was reading. "There wouldn't happen to be something in there for making homing arrows would there?" he said teasing a little. "Better yet, summoning fletching would be nice," he added with a chuckle.

The girl smiled in a way that almost made her look like she was giggling and said, "Well I don't know. I haven't gotten this far ahead yet. I'm just new to this whole wizarding thing." Then she thought, *'A homing arrows spell would be nice! Something like that would sure be vital to my hunts.'*

"Just starting, eh? Well Wizardry was never really my thing. I like to do things with my own two hands. When things aren't working out, I find little works better than a good ol' cuff to the head," he said pursuing the joke a little farther seeing her smile. "I've seen you flip through a couple pages now. You looking for something in particular?" he asked walking over to Kathia and then leaning against the books shelf again once there.

Kathia laughed for a bit before answered, "Yeah, I'm looking for spells that would help me kill those dragons. I like to learn them right away, but the book says that I have to start with beginner spells first so that my body can get used to the magic energy that's building up inside me. If I go with the big guns first, I'll just get a stroke." And she couldn't have that happening to her before her life's goal of revenge against the entire species of dragons.

"While I'm not one for magic, I'd say do what the book says," the man stated idly as he plucked a straight branch from his quiver and began peeling the bark from it placing the peeled bark back into the quiver. "Still..." he added with a little more intent and notably quieter so that only Kathia could hear. "If it's practice you need then I think I can help out. I could do with a little practice myself to be honest. And what better place than here in the city?" he suggested pausing in his scraping and peeling to regard Kathia and read her reaction.

"If that makes us better dragon hunters, then yeah," replied Kathia. Then she thought she might have made a mistake on the first assumption about the man being a dragon slayer himself. For all she knew, he might be just an animal hunter or a guy who just does archery as a hobby. "That is... if you are one," she added. If they were going to practice magic, then they were going to need some sort of good place like a hideout or a wide open place in the city with little to no people. Magic, as shown by dragons, can be a dangerous weapon to use.

"I am indeed, but it would be best if we talked somewhere else. Quite frankly, I'm not inclined to risk eavesdroppers," he said keeping the hushed tone.

"Right," Kathia agreed and spoke quietly. "We don't know who's going to turn us in to those blasted monsters."

The man then placed the shaft he had stripped back into the quiver. "So..." he said speaking clearly now. "Let's get under way. We need to find you a place to practice magic where you won't hurt anyone by accident. We also need to find fletching and arrow heads for me so I can get back to hunting. Neither of those is going to happen if we're hiding out in this book store," he said with a smile on his face.

The girl replied, "Right, let's get of here." Then they walked to the glassy double doors and saw that the rain had stopped sooner than expected. The air smelled of moisture when they stepped outside to the stony streets.

As they walked, Kathia looked to the man and asked, "So since we're going to be hanging out for a while. I want to know what's your name."

The man answered with a smile, "You can call me Jason. What about you? You mind telling me your name?"

"Kathia," she answered.

"Kathia," Jason repeated the name. "What a nice name for a pretty girl like you."

The girl enjoyed the compliment and replied, "Why thank you. I think it's a nice name, too." The redhead kept her eyes out for any stores selling the items the archers needed for his hunts. She passed a barber shop, a women's salon, a bakery, a Dominican market, and a... Kathia's face contorted into a

disapproving glare when she saw a spa for dragons. "Hmph! As if I need the 'dragons are people' crap rubbed in my face," she said bitterly. Even Jason was upset about this as he huffed at the spa. To them it was practically devil worship. Well, say goodbye to pelt farms that produced the best clothing, gear, and weapons; city developments made from dragon labor; and the tasty dragon meat and eggs. Thinking of food; Kathia had the idea to check the grocery stores later to see if the food made from dragons were still on sale. But for all she knew, the dragons might have banned them and threw them out away. Still, it wouldn't hurt to check later after practice and shopping. Soon, the duo came to a store selling fletching and arrows. "Look Jason, there it is!" she said.

"Finally some good news," the man said, relieved to see a store selling the materials he needed. "Come on," Jason said taking the lead and heading inside. Instead of looking around they made straight for the counter. "I need two dozen arrowheads and enough fletching for two dozen arrows," he said to the shop owner. The clerk behind the counter nodded and went to get the man his order.

While Jason was getting the items he needed, the girl took a look around to see what the store had to offer. There were all kinds of equipment such as bows, knives, traps, fishing tools, game calls, hunting magazines, guns, and ammunition. The last two were useless as of now, but some of the other stuff may be of use to Kathia. There were the dragon call, dragon baits, protective helmet, and camo wear; tools which would be efficient for her hunts. She was quite thankful that the dragon officers haven't confiscated the stuff yet. If she had money on her, then she would be able to buy these items right now. But her parents' credit cards were at home and it was going to take quite a while walking from the store to there and back to here again.

Jason seemed to have noticed the stuff as well as he said, "That camo looks handy."

Kathia agreed and said, "Yeah, I bet we could blend in and kill those lizards without them knowing."

The clerk returned with the order he brought. "Here ya go," he said.

Jason nodded and replied, "Thanks." The clerk cleared his throat and the hunter paid the man for the arrowheads and fletching, then dumped both into his quiver. He eyed the weapons on the wall and asked, "How much for the guns and ammo?"

The old man looked at the same objects and said, "That lot? Heh, you can have em. Useless junk now anyways. I was just gonna chuck em, but if you want them, they're yours, take as much as ye like."

The hunter smiled and said, "Thanks. Kathia think you can grab a couple guns? I'll get the ammunition." He made his way over to the ammo, and began collecting it up.

The girl complied, but with curiosity. "Okay, but why do we need guns away? They can't shoot anymore," she asked. She went to the gun shelf and picked up two boxes with rifles in them.

Jason answered, "We might be able to do something with the powder. We could probably sell the metal, too."

"Like what? What are we going to do with the gunpowder?" asked Kathia.

The hunter said, "We can use them to blow up stuff. You know? Ka-boom!"

"Oh, that's cool." The girl had forgotten that fact about gunpowder. It was a good thing that the black man reminded her about that.

"And we can even use it as medicine," said Jason, smiling.

The redhead found the suggestion very weird. Whenever she thought of gunpowder, she always imagined people using that stuff to fire and shoot. But gunpowder as a medicine? How was he going to pull that off? Raising her brow in confusion, she asked, "Medicine?"

The hunter nodded and replied, "Yeah! It may sound funny to you; but trust me, it ain't just weapon to be used. The ancient Haniyese used that stuff to cure sores and ringworms. It even keeps away the damp and plague."

The girl was surprised in a good way to hear all that. "Wow, I never knew that. I'm impressed!" she said as she grabbed the third box.

The two carried the stuff over to the counter, where Jason paid for them. The clerk gave him back his change and said, "Thanks fer shopping, buddy! Hope I see ya again next time."

As the duo carried the stuff and headed to the door, Jason looked back at the clerk and promised, "You will, don't worry."

Kathia looked back as well and said, "And I will be there, too." She intended to get the equipment she had her eyes on, the next time she returned. They went out the door and walked all the way to the parking lot. The place was smaller than it used to be with cars having completely filled up the spaces left and right, leaving those who wanted to stop and go shopping to look somewhere else for a parking space. The two went to a dark green minivan and Jason took out his car keys to push the bottom-most button on the little control. The trunk opened its lid up and the car's musty smell came out and touched the girl's nostrils. They put the guns and ammo into the wide empty space of the trunk and closed it back.

After that, they went on a search for the perfect place to use magic in the backlot. They saw an empty public basketball court and Jason pointed it to it. "Hey, that looks like a good place. Want to go there?" he asked.

"Sure, why not?" Kathia replied. They set foot into the place and Kathia opened up the tome to the page she was last at. She turned it over and discovered the calming aura spell. It was a spell that soothed the user's emotions to the point where they were relaxed and tranquil. The girl followed the instructions to this spell and let her mind tap into her inner magic energy. She felt nothing rising as there was a heavy blockage in the way of her channel. To remove it and gain the permanent ability to use magic, she had to remain in her magic trying state and chant, "Unluk magisto!" Just like a charm, the blockage was gone and Kathia now had access to her spells. She tried the calming aura spell again and channeled her magic energy to her mind, while trying to think relaxing thoughts. Gradually over a minute, she became serene as a swan.

Jason looked at her, trying hard to find something. "Hey Kathia, is that spell of yours working or what? Because I can't see a thing happening," he asked.

The girl explained to him, "That's because this spell uses an invisible aura to help keep me calm. You're not supposed to see it."

The hunter looked curiously and asked, "And what spell is that?"

The girl showed the page to him and pointed to the spell's name. "This one," she said.

"Oh, I see," he said with a nod. "It sounds like it'll be good for stress and all that."

Kathia, who was glad about the spell's efficiency, replied, "Yep! And I probably won't even need to go to a doctor or take a pill." Turning back to the book, she went to the next page and found the Anti-Anxiety Chant. Basically, it involved her chanting a magic word over and over again to remove anxiety. When combined with the calming aura, the effects of the two would be greater. The girl gave this a go and chanted, "Galini, galini, galini." The girl felt nothing, even when she spoke the same word a few more times. Either because she did it wrong or because the calming aura was masking its effect; she'll never know. Then she discovered another spell called the plant-blessing spell, which repelled insects and ensured a healthy garden. She decided to try out her spell on the grass outside the court. Her hand hovered over the grass and glowed in an aura of light green. She let the magic seep into the green blades until the aura disappeared. Kathia thought she did the spell right, but she wanted to test it out one more time on a flowered area of grass where a bumblebee was flying around. She walked over there and blessed the patch. Immediately, the bee flew away from the flower it was pollinating. The spell had worked like a charm. The girl made a small smile; thought it may not be useful to her, she thought that this would be a good spell for her gardeners to use. That is if they were still alive.

Jason enjoyed seeing the little magic show the girl did and asked, "So Kat, what's your next spell?"

The girl turned to the next page and answered, "The Book-Blessing Spell." She read all of the instructions and explained, "It's a spell that makes your book more enduring and long-lasting in good condition."

"Ooh, that sounds neat!" said the impressed man. Then he asked, "Are you going to try it out on that book of yours?"

"Of course, what do you think?" said Kathia obviously. She closed the book and began to follow the steps she had memorized in her mind. After channeling her magic energy again, her hand glowed in a soft white aura. She touched the book and let the energy engulf it in the same aura. The aura stayed visible for a few seconds before it seeped into the spell book. Opening the book again, she went to the next pages. But most of the ones up the intermediate section required certain items that were needed for the spells and some of the spells were not at the appropriate time for Kathia to use, such as the Cure Headache Spell as the girl wasn't having a headache right now. So she went to practice the plant-blessing spell by casting onto multiple sections of grass. This went on for three minutes until she became tired from spending nearly all of her low amount of magic energy. The girl panted and put a hand on her chest, where the ache was felt. "Whoa, I think I need a break from magic," she said to herself.

"Sounds like you do. Come on, let's go sit over at the bench," said Jason. They went over to the bench and took a seat.

Kathia took her time to rest and thought about the hunter's arrows. She figured archery would be another thing that she should learn, in case her magic powers run out. "Hey Jason."

The man looked to her and asked, "Yeah?"

The girl asked, "Can you teach me how to be an archer like you? I mean I got to learn everything if I want to be good dragon slayer."

Jason nodded and said, "Sure, I can! We'll go practice on that small tree over there, since the hoops are too high for me to get my arrows back." They left the court and went to the dogwood tree and put some distance between them for a shooting line. He handed over his bow and quiver to the girl. After she puts the quiver on and armed herself, the hunter started to explain the basics of archery, "Okay listen up! You might think archery is easy by just picking up a bow and shooting. But it takes a lot more than that and you're bound to fail if you don't follow what I say properly. So first thing's first, we got to get you into the right stance." He checked which hand Kathia was holding the bow and saw that it was in the left hand, which meant that she would be shooting the arrows in her other hand. "You're right-handed, right?"

"Yes I am," the girl replied.

"Okay, put your left foot forward," instructed Jason. Kathia did put a step forward and waited to hear the next part, which the man said, "Now put some space between your foot so that they're a shoulder width apart and don't forget to bring your right foot back, so you have an imaginary square between your legs." The girl moved her right foot backwards and sideways until she was in what archers would call a "square stance". The hunter looked at her torso and saw that she was slouching a bit. Jason went

to correct that, "Now stand up straight and keep that chin of yours on the bow arm."

Kathia straightened her torso up and tried to put her chin on top of her shoulder, but her neck hurt at the attempt and the highest her chin could reach was the side of the shoulder. "Jason, I'm trying to put my head on my shoulder, but it won't reach," she spoke her trouble.

"Well then, just keep it as close as possible. It doesn't have to be on the shoulder," said the hunter.

The girl relaxed her head and decided to leave it beside the shoulder. "So what's next?" she asked.

Jason said, "You move your hips around so that they're tucked under the upper body and your lower back flat like a pancake." Kathia turned her hips to the left, so that she was diagonal from the top left to the bottom right. "Now lower your chest and ribs down to your stomach and push your shoulders down a bit," he said. After she did all that, the man smiled and nodded in content. "There you go, now you're in perfect stance, kid! Now we move on to nocking."

"What is nocking?" Kathia asked about the strange word she never heard before.

The man explained, "It's when you hold the arrow the bowstring. It's a shame that word's not used much." People, who don't know much about archery or are just new to it, rarely used the word, or much less hear about it.

The girl made a slight nod and said, "Yeah, I understand that."

Jason went back to the subject on hand and said, "But anyway, Kathia, I want you to take out an arrow out of the quiver and put it on the colored part of the string and the arrow rest." Before Kathia could ask what an arrow rest was, the man answered for her, "It's that's bulky part on the bow that sits in front of the colored part." So the girl put the arrow there and let it touched the nocking point. "Okay, now turn that arrow until the fletching is aligned with the string," he instructed. After this was done, the next step was, "Now get your bow arm forward and keep your fingers hooked onto the string and fletching. Pull the string back to the side of your side. All the way until you see the tip of your index finger at the corner of your mouth." The girl pulled the string back until she could barely see her fingers. "And now for the last part. We're going to shoot at the tree's trunk," he said pointing at the dogwood tree. "What you want to do is point the tip of the arrow at the target, so that it would fly there and hit it right where you want it to. But don't forget to line up the bowstring with the center of the bow's limbs, okay?"

"Alright, got ya!" Kathia said. "So can I shoot?"

"Yes you can," said Jason. The girl let go of the string and watched the arrow fly, hoping that it would hit the tree. It did; the arrow pierced the trunk and stood there. "Good job!" the man commented. "Now let's see if you can hit its branches, too."

Kathia grabbed another arrow and got ready to shoot with it. She moved her torso along with her bow, so that she was aiming for the branches on the left side. Once she had the arrow's point where she wanted it, she shot it into the branch. But arrow managed to touch it, but unfortunately it slid through the branch's underside and left only a scratch. The girl murmured her disappointment with her miss, "Dang!"

Jason, however, wasn't; he knew that beginners may make mistakes on their first tries. "Try again; you'll improve with each shot," he encouraged her. Kathia thought that her teacher was telling her to keep shooting at the tree until she ran out of arrows. So she went and did just that as she shot at various parts of the tree. Sometimes she hit it and other times she missed. In one of her attempts, she saw a robin flying in the sky. The girl decided to literally take a shot at the bird. She missed as the robin had been flying too fast for her arrow to reach in time. After the arrow fell down at the basketball court, the man let out a friendly laugh and said, "You think you're ready for shoot things that move, huh?"

The girl looked at him and replied casually, "Hey, it was worth a try. I mean how else am I supposed to know if I good or not?"

Jason reasoned with her, "Yeah, but we ain't ready for moving targets. You still got to practice with the still ones first." The man pointed to all the fallen arrows across them and continued, "I've seen you miss a few times and I want you to be perfect at this before we move on the ones that move."

"Do I really have to?" asked Kathia. She really wanted to learn how to shoot mobile targets right now, so that she could get closer to being a skilled dragon slayer.

"Yes, you have to," Jason told her. Then he gestured her to continue. "Now keep practicing or you won't be as good as I am," he said as he made a cheeky grin.

"Fine, if you say so," said the girl. So she kept shooting at the tree until she ran out of arrows. Jason went to retrieve them all, so that he can give them back to her for more practice. After a little while later, Kathia's arms started to feel sore. They decided to take a rest until her arms would get better. In the meantime, the girl practiced her calming aura spells and anti-anxiety chants.

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After a long day of training, along with some sword practice, it was now after sunset. Kathia and Jason went into his car and drove to the grocery store to see if they still have the delicious dragon meat and eggs in stock. As expected and much to their dismay, the Aquarians have banned such products from being sold in any store as they were deemed a barbaric in that it was the murder of dragons and their unborn. So they had to purchase the other needed groceries without them. Kathia accepted Jason's offer to take her home. So he drove through the city to look for her home. At first, Kathia had trouble pointing out the right directions the man needed to go as the once-familiar streets had been warped into a whole new world with different routes. The girl angrily cursed the dragons out for getting them

lost.

Sometime later, Kathia had finally found a familiar place, albeit different in appearance, as she had known this street by heart. It was then that her directions started to become right and easier, thus enabling her to get to home. When they got to the mansion, the girl frowned at its makeover. The mansion's fancy and modern appearance has been turned to that of an old stony medieval fashion. *'How dare they turn my beautiful home into this ugly dump! I am so going to tear the place and remodel it later, but with magic of course,'* she thought. Kathia may be a billionaire, but she didn't feel like hiring builders as they would cost money that she needed for college and other important stuff, and she also didn't want the help of dragons, too.

Jason interrupted her thoughts when he asked, "So is this it? Your home, I mean."

The girl answered in an annoyed tone, "Oh yes... This is my home. This old-fashioned crap is my home."

The man understood her disappointment and said, "Wow... I feel for ya, girl. I'd be mad too, if I found out those monsters changed the inside of my home as well. And something tells me that I'm going to have a hard time finding my pad. I mean you know what happened tonight."

"I know, right?" said Kathia agreeing with him. "I totally hope one day I get to teach those dragons a lesson for changing our lives."

"Yeah, me too," the man said. "Anyway, take care and good night, Kathia." After the girl returned her farewell, the car drove away from her residence.

Kathia went to the front door of the mansion and knocked on it. She knocked, because there was no longer a doorbell for her to ring. She waited a minute for someone to answer until a middle-aged maid came and opened the door. "Yes, who is it?" she asked.

Glad to see her most trusted servant here, the girl smiled and said, "Hello Mrs. Merryweather, I'm home!"

Happy to see the girl she's always looked after from a young age, the maid and the girl embraced each other in a hug. "Oh Kathia, I'm so glad you survived that horrid mess. I was afraid you and your mother might have died out there," said Mrs. Merryweather. Then she looked around for Mrs. Rittevon, but she was nowhere in sight. "Where is your mother?" she asked.

"She's dead, Mrs. Merryweather," Kathia answered grimly.

Look of sorrow and pity swarmed over the maid's face as she let go of the girl and said, "Oh Kathia, I-I'm so sorry..."

"It's alright, Mrs. Merryweather," said Kathia, stepping past her maid and going inside the mansion. "The only ones who should be sorry for all this are those damned dragons. It's their fault why many people had to lose their families and their homes." Her memories burned with the sorrow of the survivors from camp at yesterday and how she walked past some people saying that their original homes had been taken by others who got there first before they did. Shaking her fist, Kathia said, "Those dragons are going to pay for this and I'll be the one who makes sure that they do in blood!"

"But Kathia!" Mrs. Merryweather reasoned. "There's many of them out there and only one of you; how do you plan on killing them all?"

The girl turned around and showed her the spellbook, "With magic of course, and some old weapons too."

The maid's dark brown eyes ran from the sheathed family sword resting on the girl's side and the shield, bow and quiver on her back. "I see you're armed like a knight, dear. But you do know that Mayor Esteed has sold the city to dragons to make it illegal to slay them, right?" she asked with disapproval in her tone for the mayor.

"Yeah, I heard about it yesterday," said Kathia, rolling her eyes. "That stupid traitor," she whispered with contempt under her breath. She'll never vote for that man in the next election after what he just did. "But don't worry, Mrs. Merryweather, they only said no killing inside the city. I bet they don't care what happens outside in the woods," she said.

"Well you better be careful, because I don't want to lose you, too. You hear me?" said the maid.

"I know," said Kathia. Before she decided to make her way to her room, the girl asked, "Hey my home wasn't taken by anybody was it?" She had to make sure before she could get her lawyer and sue the thieves for stealing her mansion.

Mrs. Merryweather assured, "Oh don't worry dear, I made sure nobody besides you stepped foot inside the mansion."

Kathia gratefully said, "Well good, that's exactly what I needed to hear. Thanks Mrs. Merryweather."

"You're welcome, dear!" the maid said and nodded. Kathia went upstairs to the bathroom and took a bath. Then she went to her room and changed into her pajamas. She opened the spell book and went to the page with the Dream Recall spell. The girl followed the methods to the spell and cast it before she went to bed.

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Aeolus sat in his cave thinking about the attack on the refugee camp and analyzing how well it went. His

tornado alone had done a great deal of damage to both the humans' home and population. The survivors that had fled the camp were few in number before they got killed by the other dragons. It seems like with the ability to cause tornadoes and earthquakes, he was powerful enough to do a mass extermination on the human race. With a few dragons at his side, they could make his conquest easier. But these dragons had to be the best and have special abilities to add to the group's arsenal. He was thinking about taking the night magi, Eitri, with him due to his being able to see in the dark and a wide range of magic that included the invisibility spell. Hewey the healer dragon should come too as his healing magic would be useful in mending wounds and injuries. A pygmy dragon who can go inside human territory for reconnaissance would be useful, too. A shadow dragon who can melt into the shadows and unleash surprise attacks is also welcome. A phoenix dragon to make everlasting fires and a storm dragon for creating storms to interfere with the enemy's prowess. This was how Aeolus was going to destroy all the humans in Solomos. Along the way in the whole continent, he may encounter other breeds of dragons with useful abilities and have a stronger horde. The disaster dragon left his cave and went to go talk to Doubloon for permission to take some of his villagers with him on his quest. The disaster dragon entered the chieftain's cave and padded slowly so that he doesn't abruptly disturb the dragon's sleep. As Aeolus neared, Doubloon sensed his presence by smell and woke up from his rest. The chief asked, "Oh Aeolus, what is it that I can help you with?"

"Well Chief Doubloon, I was thinking about how powerful my tornado was in demolishing the humans' nest and how I can easily wipe out the humans with just that and my earthquakes. But of course, there may be humans who would find ways to prevent my powers from doing any damage to them whether it be by the new tools they made or their magic," said Aeolus. "I was thinking about bringing with me a few dragons with the best and useful powers to help me purge Solomos of those wretched creatures before they breed up back their numbers and wage another war against us." He proposed the following dragons to bring with him, "I would like to take Eitri, Hewey, Leafwing, Zylanon, Corona, and Lutarn as their abilities would be a valuable asset to my team."

Doubloon said that he'll give Aeolus the dragons he needed, but first they need to give him their consent first. The chief telepathically asked the dragons if they want to go with Aeolus to destroy the humans around Solomos and they all said "yes". He looked back to the disaster dragon and told him that they'll go with him in the morning, but Eitri and Zylanon will have to meet up with the group at night as they are nocturnal dragons. Aeolus understood and the green dragon went back to his cave.