

Chapter 26: Assault on the Army

After a day of water magic practice and hanging out with Ronan and Drake, Minerva bid her guests good night and went to turn off all the lights in the house. Then she came back up and went to the bathroom to brush her teeth and take a shower. After the woman was done, she looked out the window to see the last few fireworks in the distance. It ended with a big firework image of a dragon and a human hugging each other. It was a big way to end the festival with a symbol of peace and harmony between humans and dragons. It was quite pleasant in the woman's opinion, but at the same time, she would imagine a lot of conservative and racist humans would be offended by image. She couldn't wait to hear about that on the morning news tomorrow. Minerva put on her pajamas and went to sleep.

Juna walked over to Axle and change into her dragon form. Then she picked up her brother in her jaw and moved him over by Mekarth, where set him against the black dragon's side. The silver dragoness sat down next to them and looked at Aeolus. "Thanks for your hospitality, but it is getting late and these two need rest. I would not want to keep your horde members worrying about you now," Juna said biting down a snarl. It was clear as day that she had a distaste for the horde leader and she was not trying to hide it.

"Of course not, I was about to leave to have a discussion with my horde," Aeolus said, holding back his offended feelings. Then he turned around walked over to the spot away from her. He had a gut feeling that Juna was going to oppose his campaign later and that she would do everything to keep his horde from getting too powerful. So, he had to gain knowledge as quickly as possible before secrets would be hard to keep away. He formed telepathy with Atlas and asked, *'Atlas, since we last talked, did you learn any new spells?'*

'Yes, I did. Why?' the magi asked.

'Because I need some of these spells to destroy the humans,' Aeolus answered. Then remembering that Atlas's encounter of supposedly good humans, he quickly added, *'The bad ones, that is.'*

Atlas was taken by surprise at her friend's distinguishing of wicked men from the whole human race. But in a way, it made her feel glad and happy for him. She decided to answer him, *'Ha ha, I did not think I would see the day where you would start seeing humans in a more positive light. Did our experiences change your mind?'*

'It did and I became enlightened. It seems like not all humans were as evil as I thought they were,' the disaster dragon said. Exactly, it wasn't the truth at all; he still believed that the whole race was terrible and only needed Atlas for his own ends. *'I do hope to meet these nice humans of yours someday,'* he said. *'But anyway, let us get back to the topic, what spells did you learn, Atlas?'* He didn't want to take

too long, since Juna was probably going to get her to keep quiet. Well, why else would she ask Aeolus to leave them?

'Just how to change into a human,' Atlas said.

'How did you do it?' asked the disaster dragon, wanting to get his claws on that spell. 'It would be quite useful for us to get in closer to the humans and see whether they are good or now.'

The magi said, *'Yes it will! Okay, here is how you do it.'*

After Atlas told him everything about the transformation spell, Aeolus said, *'Thank you, Atlas you are very much helpful! You have saved the lives of innocent humans we will encounter in our campaign, leaving only the vile ones to suffer.'*

'Ha ha ha, thanks! Be sure to roast those scums dead, alright?' Atlas cheered.

'I will,' Aeolus promised. After disconnecting telepathy, he thought to himself, *'All of them in Solomos as well as the rest of the world.'* Not even Atlas and Juna's human friends will be spared.

The magi's excitement was cut short when she heard Juna snarl, "So I take it you told him the spell Axle taught you then? What a good way to back stab Axle."

Atlas whipped her head to meet the silver's glare and asked in confusion, "Huh? What are you talking about?" She didn't understand why sharing the spell was betraying Axle.

The silver dragoness growled, "I did not get the nickname "sheath dragon" for no reason, nor will I let that slide between my talons. So really you have two choices; either A, you tell me what your friend wanted the spell for and what he plans on using it for, or B, you can remain silent and I can find out myself. And if I see or hear what I think he going to use it for, you or your damn friends won't want to be anywhere close to me, Axle, or Mekarth once we find out. Axle may be a forgiving type, but he does not look so kindly on betrayal." Juna sounded like she meant what she said and it sounded more like a warning than a threat. "And if I were you, I would be thinking really carefully about what weighs heavier, because both maybe end to a loss of some kind."

Atlas felt mad about being treated like a bad guy and she didn't know why. "Whoa, I don't know what you're getting all pissy about, sister. All Aeolus wanted to do with that spell was get in close to humans and learn about them so that he won't have to kill the good ones when his horde goes on their raids," she answered defensively.

The sisters were worried about their aunt receiving the hostility from the silver dragoness. Danielle asked, "Aunt Atwas, why is she being mean to you?"

The magi looked down at her niece and answered, "She isn't. She's just pissed about me telling Aeolus how to change into a human."

"Why?" asked Kylie, not understanding the harm behind that.

Juna got up and said, "I'll take your word on it, but if it happens to still be what I think it will be, I will hold you accountable." As the Firestars watched her walk away, Atlas looked at her puzzled. It seems to be going past her holding a grudge against Aeolus for the assault on her brothers. It looks she distrusts him as well. Then as the silver started to run into the covers of the night, she continued, "I will also keep that a secret for right now, but if it ended up being a threat to Rudvich or to anyone who lives up there, those two will know in a heartbeat. Now I'm going to look around a bit and stretch my legs. Being lock up for two months does have it tolls."

After she was gone, Atlas said after her, "Oh come on! Aeolus is an honest dragon. I'm sure he won't come over to your continent and start all that ruckus." Juna probably wouldn't hear her speak, but the magi felt like she had to let her thoughts out. The sisters watched a tree fly down into the lake and make a big and loud splash. Everybody turned their attention to lake where the noise was made.

Aeolus, having heard the conversation being taken between the two dragonesses, knew that it was even more evident that the silver was not stupid at all nor was she very approving of sharing spells with strangers. If he wanted his future operation in Rudvich to take place without anybody knowing much about his horde. He needed to find some way to secretly dispose of Juna. The horde leader thought about which dragons would be good for the job. Magis like Eitri, Enamora, and Kekul can help out with their magic spells. Though Eitri probably wouldn't be fit for the job since he probably got brainwashed by the idea of good humans existing. Tavurth, with his super strength and resistance to most magic, would be a good asset too. He may have listened to the dragonesses' experiences, but he was still skeptical. Then there was Pyro to disable Juna's magic, if she had any. But Aeolus would have to ask what his opinion on humans was now. The flower pygmies can knock her out with the sleeping pollen. With those dragons in mind, the horde leader needed to think of the perfect time to use them. Right now it's not, because there are no scapegoats or anything that will give false explanations as to what happened. So for now, he would have to wait until the right time came.

As the disaster dragon got to the middle of the horde, he heard the call of his cousin shouting, "Hey Aeolus, we're back!"

The leader looked to see Bam return with his group and the recruit. Eyeing the red dragon, he said, "So this is our new recruit. Bam, what can you tell me about him?"

The navy blue answered, "Oh Sargoth here can summon vines from underground. We saw him lift up a tree with them and threw it away."

"Oh yes, I saw and heard it splash down into the lake," Aeolus said.

Bam explained, "Ah, so that's one of his powers you just witnessed. He also breathes fire and block basic spells with his stone walls, but... he's susceptible to other dragons' magic and he gets battle fury."

"Okay then," the disaster dragon said. Then he looked at Sargoth and said, "Sargoth, is it? We are going to destroy a huge army camp tonight. After Pyro kills off the halfling mages, I will need you to place stone walls around the camp to prevent the humans from escaping. Our magi dragons can help you with that as well if it seems too much of a work for you." Then he continued speaking, "Once we have the camp trapped, I need you to join in and help us annihilate every soldier you see so that they won't kill any more dragons again. Do you understand all that?"

Sargoth smiled and replied, "Aye sir! With a magi, I could bring a wall up as tall as their buildings in five minutes or less."

"That's good," Aeolus replied. "Now come, it's time we get our assault started now." The group went over back to the horde. The disaster dragon announced to everyone, "Vulture Horde, it's time we finally go out and put an end to the army once and for all. Magis, teleport us now!" As all the horde members roared enthusiastic battle cries, Aeolus gave the new magis a mental image of where they were supposed to go. Eitri and the magis teleported the whole horde over the cliff where the Vulture Horde found the camp a few days ago. The majority of the humans' camp was asleep with most of the humans with a few watchtowers looking out for dragons and a few guards walking the camp with torches in their hands for light. "Looks like we're going to have to make a new change of plans. We need to take out the watch towers first before we can send in Zylanon. Flower pygmies, put the humans at the towers to sleep before you kill them. Then move the lights around a bit so as not to attract suspicion from the guards. But don't let the lights hit Zylanon. We can't afford to have him be seen." The flower pygmies flew to the watch towers and avoided getting caught by the lights. Once there, they put the men to sleep with their pollen breaths before they killed them. With their task done, the flower pygmies confirmed the deaths of their targets to their leader via telepathy. Aeolus looked to the dragon beside him and said, "Now Zylanon, take out the guards." The shadow dragon went into the camp and melted down into his shadow form. When he neared the guards, his head lunged down to snap down the guards and eat them. When all the guards were dead, the horde leader said to blackphase dragons, "Go find the halflings now." The black ghosts went into spirit form and went through each tent until they found the halflings. The black ghost dragons sent Pyro a telepathic image of where they found the halflings.

The cassare nodded and flew over to the camp to meet the black ghosts. Aeolus waited for Pyro to confirm his kill when he heard him asked telepathically, *'Should I attack?'*

The leader answered, *'Yes Pyro, you should. It's what I needed you to do.'*

Sargoth sent a telepathic message to Aeolus, *'Just give me the word, sir, and those walls will be up in no time.'*

Aeolus responded, *'I know; I'll let you know soon after Pyro kills the halfings.'*

The black ghosts stood by Pryo, who stood away from the tent, and waited for him to kill the sleeping halfings inside. Eatorn got a bit restless and whispered, "Well, what are you waiting for? Crush them! Pull them out and eat them; do something."

Pyro rolled his eyes and said, "Ok, ok, I'm on it." He slipped through the entrance to the tent, where the few halfings were sleeping. The black ghosts stayed outside and listened for sounds of the cassare's assassinations.

With the Vulture Horde gone, Atlas decided that it was time to go to bed. She brought her nieces close to her and said, "Come on, girls. It's time to catch some sleep." The hatchlings slept by her side as Atlas brought her head down to the ground and closed her eyes. But then her sleep was short-lived by ten seconds when Juna appeared before her as a halfling.

The girl bit down a snarl as she said, "We need to talk in private, away from the hatchlings and my brothers." Then she walked a nice length away from the group. The magi wondered what the halfling woman wanted this time before she got up.

The hatchlings were woken up by the movement and they looked up to see their aunt has gotten up. "Aunt Atwas?" Danielle asked.

The magi looked back at the whiptail and assured her, "I'll be back. Just go back to sleep." The hatchlings closed their eyes and rested again. Atlas went up to Juna and asked quietly, "What is it you want this time?"

The halfling shook her head and crossed her arms over her chest before asking, "What are the Vulture Hoard after and is it just to this region? That's all; after that you can go back to sleep." Then she said bluntly, "The only reason I'm asking is because I overheard your friend a bit about attacking a camp before they teleported. That's all I want to know."

"So you want to know about the Vulture Horde, huh?" Atlas asked. "Okay fine, I'll tell you." Then she started explaining what she knew, "The Vulture Horde was originally going to destroy all the humans in Solomos. But ever since we discussed the existence of good humans to Aeolus, he decided to spare only the good ones alive. And to do that, I think he's going to go disguise himself as a human and go into the settlements to see which ones are worth saving and not. That's all I can tell you about the Vulture Horde, because frankly that's all I've heard."

Juna nodded her head in respond before walking away towards her brothers. It was evident that she thought something else, but she was keeping quiet about it. Atlas wondered what was on the shapeshifter's mind concerning Aeolus. Perhaps she thought that he was going to destroy Shadow Wind? If so, she was wrong. Aeolus was always honest to Atlas from the time they had first met over a century ago. There's no way he would tell her he was going to do something and then go against his word and the magi knew that well. The magi went back to her nieces and fell asleep.

For the first few seconds, there was mostly silence with the quiet sounds of Pyro's body movement. But then came the surprised cries of the halflings, before they were quickly silenced by death. After a brief moment of nothing happening, Pyro came out with his claws caked with blood and a stupid smile on his face. Confirming that everything had gone as planned, Eatorn sent a telepathic message to his horde leader. *'That halflings are dead, Aeolus,'* he said.

'Good start attacking the humans now!' the disaster dragon said. Then he turned to the rest of his horde and told them, "Vulture Horde, it's time to attack! Sargoth, Eitri, Enamora, Kekul, spread out and barricade the camp. Keep the humans trapped inside." Sargoth and the magis flew out and went to their own positions at the camp's borders. Eitri at the west, Sargoth at the south, Kekul at the north, and Enamora at the east. They started raising stone walls off the ground to prevent the enemies' escape. Rising into the air, the red dragon created a hedge of thorny bushes inside the wall. Just as he came close, he blew a fire ball into the bushes. The bushes crackled and burst into flames as Sargoth flew past and started on the massacre.

Pyro and the black ghosts smiled after watching the creation of the stone walls. The humans began to panic, running around and scrambling for their weapons. "Let's have some fun," the cassare said.

"Yeah!" Eatorn agreed with enthusiasm for human blood. Pyro flew over to one of the smaller tents, where the humans were just waking up, and landed on top of it, crushing the people inside. He blew fire all around the camp, setting some of the other tents ablaze. The black ghost dragons pursued their prey and snapped their jaws at the humans they can get, piercing the flesh and crushing the soldiers' bones with their teeth. Volkin caught a man by slamming her front foot down on him. The frightened man tried to free himself, but the weight of the dragoness would not let him go. He met his death by the sharp teeth closed around his neck. The rest of the Vulture Horde went to attack the campsite. The humans taken aback by the ambush came out of their tents with weapons as some of them died in their sleep and some getting killed before they were ready for combat. Aeolus and the surrounding crimson flares flew out of way of the arrows shot by the archers before disaster dragon electrocuted them with his lightning breath.

The horde continued to decimate the army's numbers as the dragons burned each individual and groups with their fire breaths. Aeolus hovered over the camp watching the panicking soldiers and burning tents below. *'The plan worked pretty well. These humans have become nothing without their halflings to back them up. They can't even function right since they're taken off guard. Tonight's victory will be a piece of cake,'* he thought with pride.

Orion the magma dragon blew out a spray of lava at the humans armed with spears. They burned, screamed, and melted into the lava. "This one's for Dedries and our horde!" he roared with vengeance.

Tavurth clamped his jaws down on a few humans and crushed their bodies with his strong teeth. After eating them, he yelled, "And this is for the Sunlight Horde as well!"

Corona the angry phoenix dragoness chased after a fleeing man, who was terrified for his life. Her orange body became covered in bright flames and she roared, "And this is for Leafwing!" Then she charged into the man fast and burned him alive.

A man and a woman were swinging their knives at the surrounding wasp and leaf pygmies. The wasp pygmies stung the soldiers with their stingers while the leaf pygmies blew out tiny fireballs. Despite their injuries, the pair courageously fought on for their lives. The man stabbed one of the wasp pygmies through the abdomen with his knife and decapitated the other. The stabbed wasp pygmy dropped dead with his blood pouring out, while the decapitated wasp's head rolled across the ground as blood gushed out of his neck like a geyser. The woman stabbed and wounded a leaf pygmy, who dropped on the ground and started dying of blood loss. Then she killed two other pygmies, a wasp and a leaf. A female wasp pygmy got really angry and got onto the woman from behind and brought her stinger around to penetrate the throat. The female soldier's eyes went wide in shock and fear. She tried to scream, but it was drowned out by the blood gushing through her throat and mouth. She clasped her hand around the wound before she died.

The man was too busy fighting to grieve for his companion. After stabbing a leaf pygmy through the wing, all the pygmies retreated as the wounded leaf fought against his pain to leave. The man got confused as he wondered why his little enemies had fled all-of-a-sudden. His thoughts were cut short when he grabbed by Udiya, who then covered his body in electricity to electrocute the man. After dropping his victim, Udiya told his leader through telepathy, *'Aeolus, I've found five pygmies here dead.'*

The disaster dragon received the message and replied, *'Dead, hmm? Then I guess we'll have to stop the ground assault and bring out the tornado.'* It was kind of disappointing, since he wanted the fight to last until the end. But having at least one dead horde member in a fight wasn't going to be good as he needed numbers saved to combat larger and stronger groups later.

The ember dragon then asked, *'Speaking of tornado, why didn't we use that earlier? That could have saved the lives of these pygmies.'*

Aeolus explained, *'Because I needed to give the horde some experience in fighting humans up close for when we're in dragon-occupied human territories like Windfall and Shadow Wind. Since I can't use my tornado at the expense of our kind, it wouldn't do good to fight the humans unprepared, especially when they're up against magic-users like necromancers.'* He had been referring to Spinx for example. The leader knew that magic-users were far more dangerous than physical attackers and shooters. So he needed his horde, especially the former slaves, to get some experience fighting the weakest type first before they can move on to the stronger ones.

Udiya said, *'Ah, kind of like how we went to free the slaves, huh? Okay, I understand.'*

Aeolus said, *'Anyway, I'm going to need everybody out of the way so that I can get to work on ending this faster.'* Then he told the ember dragon, *'Look for a magma dragon named Orion and take him out of here before I use my earthquake to stall the humans.'*

'Got it!' Udiya replied. Then he went to look for the magma dragon. After flying over tents and dead human bodies, he found the magma dragon burning down more soldiers in lava. The ember dragon called out to him, "Orion, we have to go! Aeolus wants us all to get out of the way."

Orion stopped his rampage and looked to the approaching ember as he asked, "What? Is he bringing out his tornado?"

"Yes, he is. Come on, let's go!" Udiya told him. He picked up the magma dragon and carried him off the ground. *'I got him, sir!'* he told his leader.

After hearing the message, Aeolus slammed his foot on the ground and created an earthquake to shake the humans off their feet. He then told his horde telepathically, *'Vulture Horde, I need you all to leave the camp as I will conjure a tornado soon. Magis, teleport every dragon you see flying off into the air.'* The horde started to fly into the sky as the magi dragons teleported each and every one they saw before warping out of sight. Once, he was the only one left, Aeolus stopped his earthquake and unleashed his devastating tornado as a final strike on the camp. The remaining soldiers were sucked into the windy vortex. *'Now magis, combine your magic flames into the tornado!'* the disaster dragon ordered. The magis sent their fire streams into the tornado, which then turned into a flaming twister to burn all the humans inside. Once all the soldiers were dead, Aeolus dispelled his tornado and let the bodies fall.

Now the whole camp was destroyed; there was nothing but burnt tents, bodies, and objects that had been scattered into a mess. The horde came back to their leader, to which the disaster dragon told, "Vulture Horde, well done! The army has been decimated. Now dragons everyone in the rainforest will sleep peacefully without fear of these apes ever again." The horde roared out their cheers until they were silent again. "But our victory did not come without a price to pay. Udiya had witnessed the deaths of five pygmies in combat. They will be missed forever and their sacrifice honored," Aeolus said in a disheartened tone. Udiya had brought the bodies back for all to see. The former slaves, who knew these

pygmies were all saddened by their deaths as they dropped their heads in grief with some in tears. After a moment of silence to pay respect to the departed, Aeolus said, "Now magis, take us back to the lake, so we can sleep." The magi dragons teleported the horde back to the lake.

As the dragons went to their spots to sleep with Hewey and Cirrus healing the wounded; Atlas, who wasn't fully asleep yet, heard the sounds of moment and formed a telepathic communication with the horde leader to ask, '*Hey Aeolus, how did the assault go?*'

'*Wonderful,*' Aeolus replied. '*The humans' army is no more.*' Then he laid down and went to sleep.