

((Note: This section takes place during [Chapter 27](#).)

Yopple, the large cassare dragon with glowing orange scales, was flying overhead the city of Windfall when he saw a riot underneath him. *'Strange. A riot. And it looks like "dragon huggers" are stuck in the riot underneath me. I can read their minds. Well, his friend hates both. How his friend hates his own kin, I don't know, but they are trapped in there. Should I help them or not?'* thought the mighty cassare, as he tried to devise a plan of diving in there and grabbing the two humans, a boy in an orange hoodie and an older boy in robes. But how would they like that? Yopple was bouncing between the two things: their happiness level of a total stranger rescuing them, or their lives? He knew that the two could be trampled and possibly killed in that riot. He dove down to save them. When Yopple landed, he looked slowly through the crowd for the two he saw during his flight. When he sighted them, his eyes locked on them. Silence followed as the dragon stood, looking at the two.

The hooded boy grimaced as he was suddenly yanked away by his friend from the mess. He grumbled as static still flickered around him. The Aquarian guards moved down off the rooftops and surrounded the human crowd, blocking the streets and alleys to contain the event. Their leader, Woltar, signaled back to the city hall to send daydream dragons to calm the people. The gold dragon moved into the crowd and told them, "Calm, people. Do you want to burn your city again so soon? Your voices can be heard without this rioting."

The hooded boy fumbled after his friend, slowing as the dragons blocked all exit routes. He looked to his friend and asked, "So are we flying out then?"

They moved towards the nearest exit, only to be blocked by a guard dragon. Skidding to a stop, the robed boy turned to his companion and answered, "Flying it is!" He shifted into a mouse and climbed up to the hooded boy's head.

Yopple was surprised by the sorcery he just witnessed as he thought, *'That one boy turned into a mouse! Should I wait longer or should I grab them now? Well, I will wait, for I have a feeling that something strange is going to happen.'*

The boy and mouse looked to see Woltar trying to calm the crowd, but they were beyond reason. Like a stampeding herd of spooked cattle, the crowd would not settle down. The human-mouse commented from his spot on his friend's head, "These people are unbelievable!"

The guards weren't budging from their spots, despite some attempts at 'aggressive prodding' from the crowd. The hooded boy uttered with a sneer, "Should've just crisped them."

Yopple felt the rocks bounce off his hide, even the sharpest not making a dent. He was worried that a human was holding a knife secretly and might try to pull a blade on him. *'Not like a dagger could break through. A sword can, though, and it doesn't look like any humans are wearing blade sheaths on their*

*waists. Well, I will just wait for the two to do something else and I will follow them.'* The magi-cassare stood there until a really sharp rock dug in his skin. Did someone throw a dagger instead of a rock?

A golden glow enveloped the hooded boy as he shifted up into an 8-feet-tall gold dragonet. "Away it is..." he said, looking towards the woods. The mouse held onto one of the long black horns as the dragonet lifted off the ground and used his lightning dash to instantly zip away to the gates, flying normally towards the vast woodlands. The guards were easily out-paced as they tried to stop him.

After discovering the hooded boy's identity as a hybrid, Yopple frowned, thinking, *'Looks like I must be fast. Well, I have spells, but they only work for so long.'* The cassare cast an invisibility spell and took flight. Yopple tried to keep up, but they seemed to get farther and farther ahead. He couldn't cast a speed spell, for he needed his energy for flight. After a while, he started catching up with the mouse and dragonet. *'I should be fully caught up by the time they land- oh no!'* the dragon thought when his spell wore off. He tried to be silent, but stress made his wings beat harder, making loud sounds. Yopple thought of some ways out before he got the craziest idea. He quickly jumped on the ground hard, and then jumped up again. He repeated for a while, trying to grab their attention. He jumped another time and then another. He always made a loud, booming noise and always returned to the air. *'I hope they stop. Wait! I have the craziest idea in my life!'* And boy, did he have a crazy idea. He shouted, "Stop! Wait!!" Believing that he was embarrassing himself, he thought, *'I am nuts.'* He landed one more time and then took air. He hoped that worked, and he was sure it did.

The hybrid curled his scaly lips into a sneer and glared, snarling, "What do you want, weirdo? I'm not in the mood for preaching dragons."

The cassare was so stressed, he didn't land. He crash-landed and rolled into the tree. "As you see, not all dragons are always graceful. But anyways," he panted, "you both are in grave danger. The "dragon huggers" aren't just shunned by humans, they are KILLED... and their helpers also, maybe less harshly, but still slayed." He knew that one of them hated his guts, but no matter. He needed to try and get them on his side. "And so you know, I am not on one side. I hate this war. I believe that humans and dragons are equals. Equals in power, equals at the top of the food chain. Not one can hold down the other. Dragons had strength and magic, and humans had technology. Now things are unbalanced and each one thinks the other should- well, different beliefs, with the same factor: one should be lesser than the other."

The hybrid's glare persisted suspiciously and his lips remained curled. He muttered, "Thanks captain obvious. I'm aware hunters don't like dragon huggers. That's nothing new."

Yopple turned to the hybrid-turned dragon and continued, "And I assume that is why you hate both? But you help the human next to you. Oh, and please don't have that unhappy face. Well, I can't say that." The hybrid's eyes flickered to the human-turned mouse for a bit as the cassare chuckled, "Well, are you going to hear more or run off like little kiddies?" The mouse cringed at the question as if it was annoying him. Staring with interest for the mouse as if he was really special, the cassare

thought, *'Because on my honor, I will protect you, for there is something inside you, something that can save this world from this war, and possibly change the sights of humans and dragons forever. Maybe, once peace is restored, I will find a new master. Not a slaver one, for hopefully that will be done. Maybe this child is even more powerful as a child than Esko was full grown. Hmm... Who is this kid?'*

The mouse rolled his eyes, wrapping his tail around one of his friend's horns for better balance. He scoffed, "Times have changed and changed again, I doubt I'm in any sort of 'grave danger'. And for the record, I detest being called a human. I am an aristocrat mouse of the highest order!"

The enraged hybrid growled, "You'll do well to watch your mouth, you blubbering fool. I don't like humans OR dragons. Fine by me if you idiots kill each other. And like he says, he's not human. Not anymore."

Yopple sighed, "I should've guessed. You don't understand. You are just too young. And don't tell me your age, please, because no matter how old you are, you are still acting immature at heart. You may not care now, you might never care, you probably think I am an old fool preaching. But this war will leave you in ruins, for you will pass by many corpses of humans and dragons alike. You will walk, knowing there is a mixture of blood underneath your shoes. It will devastate you more than you can imagine. Now go on, think I'm silly and old, say I'm 'captain obvious' and think you don't need to listen to me, but it will come back to bite." The hybrid's sneer slowly degraded into a flat look of frowning disgust. The cassare sighed again. "Such a shame, too. I have a haunch...that at least one of you has extreme power, enough to stop this war. A shame you don't really care to use it. I could've helped you harness it, and train it in whichever one of you gave me that feeling. No time for introducing yourselves. I must be off. Good day and good luck with watching the war. If you really do change your mind, I will be in the nearest city ruins. Have fun." And with that, Yopple took off, only to land close by, for he was curious on what their reactions will be. *'What brought them to feel this way about the two sides? A great puzzle to solve. But how? Hmmmm.....'*

He heard the hybrid growl, "Backwards old bat. This is exactly what's wrong with dragons. They think they're so much better than everyone else because of their knowledge. Dragons are so damned arrogant. Matches the selfish and power hungry nature of humans."

*'Just as I thought. That hybrid is especially so. Huh, someday, they will wish they listened. Just wait. And that boy, saying he isn't in danger! Oh, is THAT wrong. But maybe that one is a teensy bit more sensible than the hybrid. Better stay close, maybe make a shelter. I really, really wish we could become friends, for I can sense good in at least the heart of the mouse. They, as a duo, have so much potential, especially to stop this war. But at least the hybrid would gladly watch the two sides soak the earth with blood. I can't believe-'* While Yopple was wrapped up in thought, he didn't notice a rather large tree root sticking out of the ground, very close to where the mouse and the hybrid were. CRASHHHHHHH!!!! The mighty cassare tripped and fell, the impact shaking the ground. The sound and ground shake attracted a group of hunters traveling in the woods. Even though the hunters looked less menacing with swords instead of big rifles, Yopple still knew of their lethality. The dragon tried to get up, but fell down instantly, creating

another mini-quake. "Damned tree root, I can't get up! My arm must be broken. I wasted most of my stamina to fly after the two boys, and I don't have enough juice to heal my arm with magic." Thinking about his own well-being, he thought, *'I need someone to heal me.'* He looked in the direction of the mouse. *'I can sense he is a mage...oh, quit the nonsense, Yopple! He is with that hybrid and the hybrid sees me as an old dragon preacher, so 9 out of 10, he won't do a shit. Oh well, let me see what I can do.'* The dragon hunters saw that Yopple couldn't escape, so they took advantage of that. *'Wait, I can't stand, but I can fly!'* When he tried to flap his wings, he felt something heavy wrap them together. *'Stone weights! Great! Now I'm in grave danger myself! Unless-'* Another thought in his mind conflicted with his hope and told him, *'No, don't count on that boy! Dragon hugger or not, he won't help, not with that hybrid around.'* The cassare reasoned, *'Not all people are influenced easily.'* The second thought replied, *'So?'* Determined, he told himself, *'I can still try.'* Yopple roared. It wasn't a roar of defiance; it was a roar for help. He hoped that the mage just might come.

The dragon kept roaring and turned up his volume when spears found their way through his scales. He heard one of the hunters speaking, "Woah, this one isn't easy."

The other man said, "This is the biggest and finest cassare I hunted so far!"

*'Why thank you,'* thought Yopple, who was prepared to meet his fate. Unless....

Help had arrived, just like the cassare had wanted, but the two rescuers weren't the ones he was expecting. A brute dragoness roared and jumped at one of the hunters. A tall and lean brunette girl in gray clothing released her arrow, hitting another man in the leg. He roared in pain and she unsheathed her dagger. The girl yelled, "Leave him alone!!!"

The hunters looked angry that a dragon hugger and her dragoness had come in to save their prey. They were feeling lucky that a mouse and his hybrid friend stood around doing nothing to help the cassare. They came prepared for dragon attack, for just before any fire could possibly be spewed, water barrels were splashed in the faces of the dragons. The brute jumped back from having her face wet. For fire-breathing dragons, that usually meant that they couldn't breathe fire until their face was dry. The men split into two groups. One would finish the cassare, the other would battle this girl and her dragon. The brute shook her head, spraying droplets everywhere before pouncing on one of the hunters. She knocked him over and flicked her tail, tripping the others. The girl slashed wildly at the hunters with her dagger, managing to strike one of them in the face. Infuriated, he lashed out with his fist and pain seared through the girl's side. She lost her balance and fell over. The man towering above her, hissing, "Foolish girl, maybe next time you won't stick your nose in other people's business!" He pulled his foot back to kick her, only to be swept of his feet by the dragoness, who tossed him at the nearest tree.

The brute turned to her human friend, her eyes filled with worry, and asked, "Are you all right?"

"I'm fine," the girl answered. She winced as she tried to stand, clutching her side.

"You better stay here," said the brute, who gently pushed her back down before raising her wing to stop the shower of arrows. "There's too many of them!" She stood on her hind legs, roaring and slashing at the air in a poor attempt to scare the hunters away.

Yopple was getting hurt all over by the men stabbing him with their weapons. He thought, *'Ow ow OW that was near my crouch! Ow! I hate spears. Ow. And daggers. ACK!! And a water soaked face. I hate so many things right now. And I didn't get hurt purposely to get the mouse and the hybrid's attention, in fact, they seem to not notice. Oh well, I didn't mean to get hunted, so I am grateful of my not-planned rescuers.'* The hunt was well organized. Hunters in the trees and on the ground. The ones in the trees were mostly with bows and arrows, and some with slings. Arrows were going everywhere, trying to hit their prey and enemies. Suddenly to Yopple's horror, a stray arrow zipped away in the direction of the little mouse. Before he could look to see if the arrow had hit anyone, the same arrow had returned and fallen to his side as if it had been deflected. For once, the dragon didn't know what to feel as he thought, *'That must have been the mouse!'* He looked up and saw the mouse let out a sigh and leapt from the hybrid's back. He shifted to his human form, landing heavily on the ground. Already waving his hands and muttering a spell under his breath, an unnatural wind blew through the forest with enough strength to disrupt arrow flight. *'It is like dodging an arrow for him,'* the cassare observed. Moving forward now, the boy changed his hand movements and closed his eyes as the earth below groaned furiously. From the ground rose six deadly looking spears made of stone and launched towards the hunters with amazing accuracy, impaling them. *'He doesn't look the slightest bit tired. This is what I meant. He has power to stop a war. And with his hybrid buddy....they could end it once and for all! I knew I found the right pair. Oh, if only they would listen...I must really look like an old fool. The hybrid must be looking at how silly I must look. He must be thinking, 'old fool, he really is hopeless.' The thing is I'm not too old. Only 30 years. Esko found my egg when he was ten. If I could tell them that and if they would be curious enough to tell them how, just how the humans killed him in one of the worst ways possible. And if they could tell me their names. That would be amazing. Stop thinking, keep watching.'* Yopple continued to watch when he realized, "Oh yeah, I'm still wrapped up." He tried to bend his neck around, but someone must have pinned his neck down with ropes. If he hadn't depleted his energy on flying, he could have busted out already. He then felt a sharp pain in his side. The hybrid dragonet spread his wings and flew up to the hunters in the trees, snapping his jaws at them as venom dripped from his fangs.

Yopple watched more chaos stir up. This hunting party had turned into a battle and then into a really, really BLOODSOAKED battle of humans against a girl and dragon duo and a legendary powerful hybrid and mage duo. Or was the mage boy the "leader" of the two. He couldn't even tell anymore as he felt the life leak out of his side, one little red drop at a time. Yopple started to feel the slightest bit dizzy as his blood levels started dropping low. A stray droplet of venom hit the cassare in the side, and he watched with horror as he saw the droplet slip out of his view of vision and slide toward the spear. He saw the girl crawl over to him. With a grunt, the girl yanked the spear out and tossed it away before inspecting the wound. Her face contorted into an emotion of hopelessness as if there was nothing that could be done to save him. Quickly, the girl cut the ropes and jumped to her feet. She urged

Yopple, "Go! Quickly!" Running back to where the brute was waiting, the girl turned to gaze at the fight as she asked, "Should we help them?"

The brute dragoness nudged her friend's arm and answered, "They're stronger than us, little one. We can't help them, now. Let's get you home." The girl climbed on the dragoness's back and they disappeared into the forest.

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(**Note:** This section takes place during [Chapter 28](#).)

Another dragoness, a lumina, watched the fight. She facepalmed at the wounded cassare and telepathically asked him, *'Yopple sir! What trouble did you get into now?'*

Yopple tried to assure her, *'Don't pick over your scales. I'm fine.'* He knew it wasn't the truth, but he didn't want her getting all worried over him and nagging him for his carelessness.

Ohimia the lumina didn't buy the story as she asked, *'So a spear in your side is FINE?! What would master say about this?'*

*'He isn't master now. He is six feet underground. Because of filthy humans...'*

*'Yopple, you're getting rebellious! We can't have that!'*

*'Oops. Well, now that you are here, how 'bout giving me a hand?'*

The lumina declined, *'Sorry, gotta watch the fight. You look like you are being saved already. If I go in there, then I will be trapped too. And if I go in there, then my scales will be completely RUINED. There will be blood and mess and gore!'* Luminas like her were so vain about their beauty that they would do anything to keep their appearances perfect.

*'You are such one of your kind.'*

*'Backwards old bat.'*

Finishing off the ground hunters, the mage boy knelt down briefly and waved a hand over the wounded dragon, casting a healing spell before leaping back to his feet. The hybrid sneered at the cassare as if he would rather let him die. The mage flinched for a bit as he continued to restore the wounds. After it was done, the mage whispered to Yopple harshly, "This means nothing." Then he turned and ran over to help the hybrid with the remaining hunters.

Yopple whispered harshly to himself, "Of course it means nothing. Does anything mean anything to him?" He thought that the mage didn't really care about him at all... or so it seems. "Well, if it didn't mean anything, then he wouldn't have healed me. Too late to tell him that NOW. Well, I'm a backwards old bat? You saw me tired and wounded. Well, I'm feeling refreshed. Time to see why I bear the title of Esko's First Dragon for a reason!" He let out a roar, but not just any roar. It was a roar that shook the forest, freezing the hunters in their places. Angry and broken that the one boy he thought would save his world refused to help, the cassare's mind started to take a turn towards madness. Yopple said, "Hey, why do I feel the urge to kill humans? Eh, maybe the pair of boys is rubbing off on me." Then the he lunged, wringing the body of another hunter. That was when all hell broke loose. Ohimia groaned at the thought of fighting and sharp weapons poking through her scales. All the sticky blood, the chaos and the DIRT. She decided to help Yopple fight, but then he shooed her to another fighting spot. Yopple dug his claws into the ground, shouted a spell, and four stone wolves formed out of the ground and attacked the hunters. Then just for fun, the cassare exploded a group of them, but instead of gore, there were only confetti and party ribbons. He did that to a few more, but that just glorified a human loss. Or so it looked to the hunters. Yopple wasn't doing it to glorify dragons, he did it for fun. He laughed at the confetti and ribbons flying and landing on the weapons, making them look like party decorations. Yopple loved the burst of energy he received from the healing spell. "Thanks, boy!" he shouted to the mage, who was still being a boss at his mage-ness. The cassare had more fun with his magic and shot sparks at a hunter, making his hair stand on end.

The hybrid frowned and uttered, "To hell with this." Then he lifted his maw to the wind as if he was scenting something. He looked at the mage as the corners of his mouth twitched and his legs quivered fearfully. He shook his head like a wet dog and leapt up into the air. The hybrid snatched the mage in his claws and flew away.

Soon, the battle was over and the hunters were defeated. Yoppled panted, "The last of the hunters ran. We are safe, Ohimia." Despite his enjoyment of the killings, he still had the urge to slash more human flesh.

The lumina began to ask, "So, sir, who were those two boys you seemed interested in? Wait..." Ohimia gasped in realization that he had found the chosen ones. "You found the duo strong enough to end the war?"

The cassare answered, "Yes, I did. But they hate dragons as well as humans. They wouldn't listen to me and likely, an old, wise human would do no better. Wait, where are you going?"

But the story didn't turn Ohimia down. Her hopes were too high up that she wanted to try and convince the chosen ones. She cried, "To get them! We need them, so I'll get them, sir!"

"No no no!" warned Yopple. But Ohimia already took off, following the scent of the two boys. Yopple looked shocked at the fact that for once, Ohimia, out of all dragons, disobeyed. The cassare grew an angry face as he took off and followed her. "OHIMIA!! STOP RIGHT NOW! IF I COULDN'T CONVINCE

THEM, NO ONE WILL!!"

Guess what she said? "Sorry sir, but countless lives of humans and dragons count on this! I must!"

Yopple howled with anger as the lumina sped up. When she thought she saw a boy and a golden dragonet, she yelled, "Hey! You! Are you the duo Sir was talking about? Come here! The end of the war depends on it!" She looked like a shiny silver blur as she sped even more.

The cassare shouted, "Ohimia, stop! You fool, stop! You are making yourself look like an idiot!" Ohimia got dangerously close to the duo and Yopple was afraid that at least the hybrid might attack. The cassare groaned as he followed, starting to fall behind.

The dragonet glanced back at the dragons before he looked to the black hybrid wearing a blue scarf. The hybrid dragonet smiled awkwardly, "Ehe..."

The black hybrid sneered, "Are you trying to use me as a scapegoat?" The dragonet inched past the black hybrid towards the white hybrid. The black one looked at the fast-approaching Ohimia. He bared his fangs and extended his claws. He growled, "And what are you maggots supposed to be? More fools picking on hybrids? If you want to die, just say so." His eyes flickered to Yopple.

The lumina's smile widened as she saw she was noticed. She went right to the group of people. "Hi, I'm Ohimia, and I have to say we need you two," she said, pointing to the duo she was talking about. "You see? You guys can end this war and lots, I mean LOTS of lives count on the end of this war. So, how 'bout it? By the way, are my scales messy? Oh, there is dirt on this one." Ohimia picked off the scale and then it quickly grew back, shinier than the last.

Seeing the black hybrid snarl, Yopple tried to get her to stop. "Ohimia, get away from those guys! You are asking for death! Get away, that is an order!" The cassare tried to crash into the dragoness, but she dodged, making him crash into the ground. Ohimia continued talking; she seemed willing to be friends, not be corny or end a war.

Ohimia dragged on. "You guys seem awesome. Why not we be friends?" Yopple facepalmed at her cheerful ignorance.

The dragonet snorted, tipping his head back towards the boy to get his attention. "Get a load of this dumb broad," he said with a small bark of laughter.

The black hybrid stood between them anyway. The white one looked at the mage & dragonet pair quizzically. He moved over and spoke quietly to them, "They seem like they're three fries short of a happy meal. How'd you get caught up with them?"

The dragonet rolled his eyes and shrugged, "Who knows? Whack jobs just started to follow us. Guess



dragons from the asylum escaped slavery, too."

The black hybrid charged forward quickly, slashing his claws out at the soft underside of Ohimia's neck. He spat, "Let's taint those preening scales scarlet, worm."

Yopple shrieked when he saw the scales get ripped up by the smirking hybrid's claws. Ohimia shrieked, but didn't make a sound. They realized something; the claws had hit her vocal cords. When she tried to talk, she ended up taking large breaks in between as blood burbled out. After the black hybrid jumped away, she managed to get out the words, "I guess.....you.....see the.....bad side.....of things.....no....friend.....ship?" She covered her wound, hiding the gore. She looked at the mage, then the attacker, the other hybrids, and finally at Yopple. She hoped one of them would try to help her.

The cassare refused to help as he told her, "Sorry, Ohimia. You brought this on yourself. I am going to save my healing for more important things."

Ohimia was shocked at what he just said. She saw his eyes and noticed he was in a weird state, one where he wasn't himself. In this case, it was a stone cold personality. "Sir...this...isn't you...." she gurgled. It was amazing how she was still alive. Probably because she had a lot of blood in her, being a dragon. "Scales....dirty..." Well, this would leave her vocal-impaired for a while at least.

She saw Yopple just sitting there, watching the show. Being insensitive, he told her, "I had no success and you won't do better. I told you. You didn't listen. Well, I guess this is your consequence."

The dragoness wondered if the mage who healed Yopple would heal her. *'Well, probably not, in front of those fiends. They attacked when I ask to be friends. Some sickos they must be, huh? Probably not the best duo to get powers.'* Ohimia started coughing blood up, staining the ground with every drop. Drip, drip, drip.

The black hybrid snorted, "Pathetic. She didn't even "try" to dodge. I should have known better than to expect a challenge from prissy breeds." He raised a bloody claw to his nose, sniffing the scent. He licked a bit of blood from his hand and lifted his red eyes to the cassare. A low chuckle emitted from him and he asked, "Would you like to be next, maggot?" He drew his katana from the sheath on his back. The other hybrids looked on blankly.

Yopple chuckled, "Nah. I like to talk. You did me a favor; she always talked like that. Blah blah blah. Man, I owe you guys one." He seemed to change into...one of them. The black hybrid's ears twitched in response.

Ohimia looked as she saw her own friend change. "What is wrong.....you? You...never acted...this way ACK!" She chunked up a blotch of red blood on the dragon's feet.

The cassare yelled at her with disgust, "Ugh, prissy scales, what is wrong with YOU? Aim your blotches at

something else!" The dragoness started shedding tears as her friend slipped into the influence of these violent beasts. She hoped she could chant herself a healing spell as she ran to hide. The black hybrid snorted in as Yopple chucked a sharp stone at Ohimia, which pierced her in the buttocks, and then laughed. "I see what you mean. There are pros and cons to humans and dragons, but there are more cons. I am ashamed of my kin. I see the truth now. Truce?" he said as he held out his hand for a shake. He smiled as he heard more burbles.

Ohimia knew now that in order to help end this war, she needed to do it alone. And she needed Yopple back. She thought sadly, *'If only, if only Esko survived.'*

The black hybrid made an amused bark of laughter, "Looks like you got the wrong impression, little dragon. I don't much care for whatever family issues you have or what you think of humans and dragons. You simply came into my area and annoyed me. Dragged here by that one, which will get his presently." He pointed his katana briefly at the dragonet. He growled sternly, "You on the other hand best get out of my sight before you start to annoy me as well. I don't care what petty business you have with those two fools." The white hybrid moved around to look at Ohimia, though keeping his distance.

Edging away, the dragonet muttered to the mage quietly, "And that's our que..."

Yopple looked at the duo. *'Yup. Que to...run or hide? Because both of those sound smart right now. Please don't snap at me. I am a changed dragon; no more of that silly war-ending business. It ends with one side dead and the other...close to dead.'* He sent that telepathically, for saying it out loud would be dumb. "We might wanna take flight...that katana looks like it has a bite..." Yopple hoped that the duo won't exclude him now. He was changed and he loved his new point of view. "By the way, I never caught your names."

The mage shot a burst of healing magic towards the injured dragon with her cut throat before turning towards Yopple with a look of disgust on his face. He spat, "Do you really think disliking the stupidity of both races means having a complete lack of a conscience and forsaking your friends, or are you just screwy in the head?" Holding onto the dragonet tightly, he put his head close to his ear and whispered something.

The cassare scoffed, "She? My friend? Not really. She always acted as a servant, not a friend. She admitted that she would do anything for me. I can shoo her off and she goes. Friend? I think not. It was her stupidity that ended her up with a torn throat, not my 'lack of conscience' as you say."

The black hybrid snorted and smirked, "That's pretty low, even by my standards."

"If you wish me gone and not have me as an ally, then I will go. Remember: if we meet again, I WILL NOT be so willing to be friends. Good day." And so, the changed, corrupted Yopple flew off. He must have been influenced by something.

The black hybrid mused, "I hope that fool is joking after how easily his friend was cut down. I hate weaklings that try to act big."

The white hybrid glared at the form of Yopple as he said, "Good riddance. With friends like that, who needs enemies?" He folded his arms across his chest. The other hybrid retracted his claws and turned his eyes on the duo.

Ohimia didn't want to accept this blessing without thanking the mage. She flew up to them and yelled, "Hey! Sorry to interrupt, but I didn't want to leave you guys without thanking you, so thanks. Even if I can't travel with you, I would still be happy to be friends. So, how about it? Unless you somehow would tolerate me along, I will leave after this. Sometimes, I think both sides have faults. I wonder which side will oh I NEED TO STOP TALKING SO MUCH!!!" She smacked herself in the head. *'Because my voice and lack of common-sense almost got me killed. That attacker must have influenced Yopple.'*

The dragonet looked at her with a glare next and snapped, "Stay away from us. That basic enough for you?"

The black hybrid raised an eyebrow, smirking again. Then he raised a bloody finger to point at the mage, "Why is that "thing" on your back?"

The dragonet paused before answering, "Humans aren't very... fast. I needed to move."

The black hybrid interjected, "Have some dignity, fool. And on the note of stripping dignity, if you ever pull something like that again, I'll kill you." He flickered his eyes briefly to the lumina.

"Yes, sir, big brother," the dragonet muttered quietly.

The black hybrid's ears twitched and growled, "What was that?"

"Nothing," the dragonet turned and swiftly took off into the air.

Ohimia said to everyone, "I guess you guys don't know how to take an apology. So sad. Well, I would be happy to meet you again!" Then she flew away. She hoped she made it evident that she wasn't the cheesy, corny, "wise" dragon. Unlike Yopple, who went from level-headed and wise to.... this, all in the span of a few seconds. Maybe it was the hunters, the dragonet hybrid, maybe the other violent guy who damaged her neck earlier. Maybe all of them. Esko did mention in a scroll that Yopple had "a problem with major personality swings that could take a very long time to change." She hoped for the best and remembered her inability to dodge earlier, which brought a thought to her mind. *'I need to train. I was so focused on preening my scales that I never trained for battle like the others. Now, I won't be afraid to get my scales dirty, especially for Yopple to be...himself again. His goofy, 16-year-old self.'* The dragoness went off to try and find a fighting school.