

((Note: The following sections take place during [Chapter 37](#).)

The air was crisp as Cynder was walking down the narrow winding trail. The teenage boy's hair is black and his eyes were red as blood. He wore a white cloak with black and purple accents. He was going to a nearby human settlement, a journey he didn't like making considering what happens to dragons there. At the same time, a falconiform wyvern named Atlarius was flying around the place she called home. It was a large area in the forest that was next to the trail that Cynder was on. Catching a scent that spoke danger, she said to herself, "I can smell a human nearby; the trail next to my territory..." She chose to fly there, confront the human and chase him away from her territory.

Cynder looked ahead at his path begrudgingly. "I hate going to this settlement, but it's my only reliable source of food," he spoke in a tone that held great disgust and a hint of rage. "Just two more miles..." As soon as he finished talking to no one in particular, Atlarius landed in front of him. She seemed to be two stories tall from the ground-up. The boy looked up at her and said, "Well hello there." His voice held a tone that was conversational. As if it was usual for him to be confronted by dragons.

The wyvern's purple body flames burned ferociously as she demanded, "Explain your reason to be here, human, or do you have a death wish." Her voice sounded threatening to say the least.

Cynder told her, "I'm on my way to the human settlement nearby. I presume I'm near your territory." His voice still held the conversational tone.

"Is that so?" she growled in disbelief as if she suspected that the human may be lying.

Cynder confirmed, "Yes, now if you don't mind moving out of my way so I can continue. I will leave your territory as soon as possible." A spell in mind caught his attention and he was prepared to use it just in case he had to.

But Atlarius was still suspicious of him. She thought he might be trying to leave, so that he can do something like bring a band of hunters to her turf. "I don't think so. I don't believe your story at all," she growled again in an attempt to scare the truth out of him. She wasn't going to let him go until he can prove his innocence.

The boy's voice changed from a conversational tone to an annoyed one quite quickly. He said, "I can understand your disbelief. However, I spoke the truth. What must I do to prove my story to you?"

Atlarius stopped growling after she heard the offer for the human to prove his story. She asked, "Do you carry any weapons on you? If so, I want you to throw them out of reach." Cynder complied and sent the small knife he always carried airborne into the dirt on the side of the trail. Seeing that he had passed the test, the falconiform said, "I find you somewhat more trustworthy now... Who are you?" For the first time since they met, Atlarius's voice seemed calm.

The boy introduced himself, "My name is Cynder, and you are?"

The dragoness declined to tell, "My name is unimportant. I just want you out of my territory." The dragoness again bared her teeth, this time she did it to force Cynder to turn back.

But the boy refused and told her why, "I cannot turn back. If I don't get food, I will starve. The dragons have taken all the animals as food for themselves. My only choice for hunting is to attack dragons. But I would never attempt to kill one, or attack one unprovoked."

His words surprised Atlarius quite greatly. Never before had she seen a human take her kind's well-being into consideration. He must be different from all the other humans, like a butterfly among the moths. "Hmm, very well Cynder. I will let you pass through my territory to your destination and back."

Cynder stopped preparing the spell and calmed himself. Grateful that the falconiform finally understood him, he replied, "Thank you."

Cynder had walked for about an hour before reaching the settlement, a place called The Graveyard. The all too familiar smell of blood met his nose again and in response, he pondered the option of turning back to his home. He spoke to himself silently with the tone of disgust and rage. He cursed under his breath, "I hate this place. But I can't go back, not yet." He completed the short walk and met the man, who sold him his usual fill of food that always held some fruit, vegetables and venison.

"Greetings Cynder, I believe this is yours," the man always spoke quietly as if he was hiding something. It didn't matter to Cynder though. His stays were too short for him to care about the strange people there.

Nearby, a captured dragon was locked on a large wooden structure along with two men that held swords that were preparing to kill the dragon for its meat. Once Cynder caught sight of this, he chose to save the creature before its death. The boy said, "I think not, you two." The swords flew from the butchers' hands and into Cynder's. He hid them from sight in his cloak.

Both men spoke to each other with confusion in their minds. One of them asked, "Where are our blades?"

"I have no idea," said the other man.

The words coming from the butchers made Cynder quietly laugh under his breath. He decided lying to them, so that he could save the dragon before they got another blade to slaughter it with. Would be well worth the trouble. The boy told them, "I think I saw your blades over there! Go get them quick!" Both men ran after hearing Cynder's shout and he laughed under his breath again at the sight of

their random search for their swords. The wizard also cast a spell that weakened the metal straps, which held the dragon down. He spoke to the dragon through his mind, *'Go quickly and do not attack. If you do, they will overwhelm and kill you!'* The dragon nodded hesitantly in agreement and flew off. The man didn't really care what Cynder did there nor whether a dragon died or not. "Now if you don't mind, I'll be going now. Thanks for the food," the wizard spoke in a voice that intoned how relieved he was to leave The Graveyard. "Goodbye." As he walked along the trail, Cynder laughed hardily while twirling the captured blades in his hands. "Hahahaha! That worked perfectly!" It wasn't until he inspected the blades that he stopped laughing. The blades appeared to be soaked in dragons' blood. In abhorrence at the very sight, the boy tossed the blades aside into a river near the trail. He yelled, "Curse those blades! I hope they are never wielded again!!!"

Atlarius was resting in a little cave deep within her territory. That was when she caught the scent of the venison that Cynder carried. She asked, "What's that smell? It smells like venison!!!" Her takeoff was quite powerful as she wanted the venison very greatly. As she flew, she caught another scent that came along with the wild meat. "I smell human, too.... I wonder if it's that boy that went through my territory."

Cynder was only a mile away from The Graveyard before Atlarius, again landed in front of him. He greeted, "Well hello there." The conversational tone returned to his voice at the sight of the dragoness.

"Greetings, Cynder," she sounded friendly this time, but Cynder could tell she wanted something.

The boy asked, "Did you just stop by to say hello, unnamed dragon, or do you want something?"

Atlarius thought, *'Perhaps I could ask for the venison, maybe he wouldn't mind?'* Just before she spoke of her desire for the Venison, Cynder heard her thoughts.

He offered, "If you want some venison, you can have it." He tossed a single piece of the venison in his bag in front of the falconiform out of kindness. "Enjoy, just know that I need the rest to survive."

Atlarius ate the venison ravenously and thanked the human for his kindness. "Thank you, Cynder! This is very generous of you..." Just before she took off, she said, "The name's Atlarius by the way." With those final parting words, she took off back to her cave.

((**Note:** The following sections take place during [Chapter 39](#).)

Cynder had almost completed the long walk to his home. After about 3 hours of walking, he had almost

made it. "Hmm, I guess I'll have to make another trip back sooner than I thought. But I think it was worth it." He only just noticed the light footsteps behind him before being struck on the forehead by a rock. His vision faded to black as the overwhelming feeling of unconsciousness finally took him down. The last thing he saw before him was a single boot in front of his face.

The wizard's world became pitch black in darkness before it became a new world. "Aauuugh! What happened?" He was standing in the middle of a road. Buildings on each side, except...they were on fire and a lot of the windows along the buildings were shattered. Many people were running beside him, screaming. Cynder asked himself, "What is going on?!? I feel like I've seen this place before..." A massive roar emanated from behind him and the running people. He hadn't even noticed the attacking dragons until he heard the roar! "What is this!!!" Cynder suddenly realized that this was a memory! "How the heck am I here? This happened just after the Spell, this was nearly a week ago!!" A dragon started breathing fire all around itself. It caught some humans in the blast along with Cynder. The fire however phased right through him. Surprised by this, he asked himself, "Oh my gosh! How was I not burned?! I... I guess I'm just watching the memory?"

His theory was proven right when he watched himself attempt to stop the dragons' attack. The past Cynder pleaded, "Please stop this! This murder is needless!!!!" As the memory of himself was attempting to calm the dragons, more fire was launched at him from behind.

The real Cynder watched as his memory counterpart spawned spectral dragon wings and used them to gain extra height over the flames. Having not used this spell in a while and never having to use it much, the wizard murmured, "I totally forgot I could do that."

The memory Cynder then shouted, "I said stop!" The attacker started to slash at him, missing every attack. Getting fed up with the rampage, the past wizard yelled, "I've had enough of this!" Cynder cast fire from his wrists and burned the dragon in hopes of deterring any other attacks. "End this! Now!!" he shouted.

The real Cynder finally started to feel like he was waking up. The burning city turned back into darkness. In the waking world, he sensed someone's presence. Though he was awake, his eyes were too tired to open. So, he just asked, "Hello? Is anyone there?" Cynder's tone was quite groggy after the blow to his head.

A mysterious stranger nearby said, "Ah, you've finally awakened."

"What the heck happened? Who's there?" The boy just barely finished his statement before being struck from an unseen fist. He was then lifted to his feet and he heard another voice. Cynder asked, "My gosh!

Who hit me?!" Every now and then his coughing interrupted his speaking, but he was finally able to open his eyes. The sight that greeted him was quite unexpected. The two men from The Graveyard were the ones that were attacking him. The wizard asked, "What are you two doing here?" Cynder secretly knew that they were here for their blades, but he didn't plan to tell them that the swords were at the bottom of a river.

One of the butchers asked, "We want our blades back! Where are they?!?"

Cynder answered, "I don't have your blades!! Anymore..." The two men appeared to be much more hostile as they heard the wizard speak. Of course, they did not even know of the wizard's affiliation with magic, or that he was even a wizard.

The other butcher demanded, "Where are our blades? Tell us now!"

Summoning up magic energy to prepare a spell, Cynder glared at him straight in the eyes and yelled, "Like hell I will, you dragon-killers!" That was when the boy unleashed a sonic boom at the men that knocked them off their feet and sent them flying across the ground. Their bodies slide on the asphalt concrete upon landing.

The butchers lifted themselves up and looked at the boy with their faces full of shock and awe. One man asked, "What the heck was that?!"

The other guessed, "I don't know, but I think he might have done it. Because there ain't no dragon around, that's for sure."

Cynder confirmed harshly, "That's right, I did this. I am a wizard; a dracomancer to be exact. You monsters have murdered many dragons, sentient beings who didn't deserve to be treated like cattle. And now you're both going to pay." His hands glowed brightly in red auras with vengeance for their crimes.

The butchers' eyes went wide with fear, knowing they were in danger of getting hit with another spell and this time a deadly one. "Ah shit! Let's get out of here!" They got up and ran for their lives as fast as they can. Cynder didn't bother to pursue them as he threw a magic spell that flew between the men and hit the ground in front of them. There was a flash before an eastern dragon spirit appeared and blocked the butchers' way. They froze in fright as one of them murmured, "Oh shit, oh shit, oh shit! We're going to die!"

The dragon spirit wrapped itself around the butchers, trapping them like a snake does to its prey. The men screamed as they twisted and squirmed to try to free themselves from the tight grip. The second butcher noticed the dracomancer walking towards them. Without taking his eyes off the boy, he said to his friend, "Ah crap, he's coming!" The first butcher looked around and stared fearfully at the boy, wondering how he was going to kill them.

When Cynder reached them, he took his aura hands and grabbed the butchers. Both men screamed loudly in pain as the dracomancer's hands burned them in the process of placing a curse on them. When the boy was done, the auras disappeared and he took his hands off the men. He left behind a hole on their shirts where he touched them. And in these holes was a black runic mark on their skins. Cynder asked them, "You see these marks on you?" The men looked down at their wounds and then. The boy continued, "That means you have been cursed. If you ever were to take another innocent dragon's life again, then you will be killed by your curse. You'd better quit your jobs right now, if you value your pitiful lives."

The first butcher cried, "That's crazy! You can't do this! We need our jobs to provide for our families."

Cynder replied indifferently, "So? Get another job; it's not that hard."

The second butcher yelled, "If only it were that easy in a recession, boy! I can't believe you would threaten to kill us over some dumb dragons. They're just fricking animals, you lunatic!"

Upon hearing those ignorant words, the wizard balled up his fist and the dragon spirit started to squeeze the men. Cynder glared at them and yelled, "You think dragons are just mere animals? You think they don't have feelings like you or me? Let me ask you this. Have you seen dragons cower at the sight of your blades? Have you ever heard them talk? You don't see that with a pig. What does that tell you?"

The second butcher argued, "It means nothing! Parrots talk and they're still stupid. And wild animals are always be afraid of humans, whether they have weapons or not."

The wizard wasn't sure how he can argue the last part, but he can make a point about the other part of the man's argument. He asked, "But can parrots talk in full sentences like humans and dragons can?" Neither butcher said a word in response. It seems that they were defeated as they didn't have anything to debunk Cynder's point. The boy took their silence as a "no" and said, "I thought so. Now get out of here and leave my sight. If you don't, I'll kill you for good." He dismissed the dragon spirit, making it disappear into thin air, and released the butchers. The men ran away as fast as they can without another word. With his attackers gone, Cynder went right back to going home. Upon reaching the front door, he took the house key out of his pocket and opened the door to go inside.

Cynder went over to the kitchen and put the fruits and vegetables in the basket. He cast an everlasting cool mist over the plant food to preserve them until they were to be eaten. The venison and some of the vegetables, however, were going to be used for dinner tonight. Even though it was pretty late for dinner, the boy knew it wouldn't be wise to sleep on an empty stomach. So, he went over to the stove and put some meat on the frying pan and veggies in the pot. He used his electric magic to power up the appliance and cooked the food. Once the food was done, Cynder turned the stove off and took a plate out of the cupboard to put his dinner on. After he had his fill, the boy went to the bathroom and brushed his teeth before he changed into his pajamas and went to bed.