

((Note: This section takes place during [Chapter 31](#)..))

After her encounter with Zee, Icefyre went on her way to the river to quench her thirst. No lunch would be complete without a drink. The dragoness's tongue lapped at the cool water, bringing splashes of it into her mouth and gulping them down her throat. After she had her fill, she walked away from the shore and laid down on the nearby grass in a small clearing. She thought about Zee and wondered why would be friends with a human, the race that had caused a long time of strife and misery for dragonkind. The earth dragoness must have returned to her human by now and was currently feeding her. Icefyre knew that Zee had said that her friend was nice, but how did their friendship come to be? Weren't humans and dragons natural enemies? Why would they be friends with one another? The blue dragoness sought to get the answers she had been curious about. To do that, she formed a telepathic connection with the dragoness in mind, *'Zee, it's Icefyre. Are you busy?'*

Zee replied, *'Not at all. What's up?'*

Icefyre inquired, *'That human of yours. What made you want to be friends with her? Why would dragons like you live in a city alongside humans who despise you?'*

Zee answered, *'Like I said, she's a really kind human. She's not like all the others who are abusive, greedy and cruel. She's been friends with me since she was eight years old.'*

The blue dragoness asked, *'And how long have you two been together?'*

'Six years,' the earth answered. *'After my original owner died, I was inherited by her family. Kat was pretty shy at first and I wary of her. But eventually, we got to know each other and that's when we became like a family.'*

'A family...' Icefyre thought, finding this relationship to be unusual. Zee's human was certainly something. Most human children just saw dragons as just simple playthings, but Kat was like a sister to the earth dragoness, if not daughter. But the question is, how long would this friendship they have last? Offspring often go through personality changes to their adulthood. Kat's evil instincts must not have kicked in yet, but she would eventually become wicked like all the adult humans and turn on Zee.

Zee continued on with her story, *'Kat would feed me really delicious food, play with me and read books to me, letting me learn with her about the world. History, philosophy, stories, you name it.'*

Icefyre commented, *'She's certainly sounds strange for a human being.'* Then her voice took on a serious tone as she continued, *'But are you certain that she'll remain that way for life?'*

The earth dragoness replied surely, *'Of course, she'll be the same. I've known her for a long time, so I know what she's like.'*

'You do know the young can change, don't you? You may be friends now, but how can you be so sure that you two won't become enemies?'

'Because she doesn't like hanging around with other humans, that's why. She knows they're all ignorant brutes. She'll never be influenced by them.'

'Never?' Icefyre questioned. *'Not even by her own family?'* Surely the girl's parents would have raised her to treat dragons like the lowly slaves they thought them to be. Even if the intended upbringing didn't succeed for now, this Kat character would eventually become corrupt.

Zee replied, *'Kat is rather distant from her family. Her dad is an abusive drunk and her mother is never around. So no, she'll never take after her own kind.'*

Well this is quite interesting. It seems like Kat has been treating her dragon friend nicely, because of her dislike for humans. If humans weren't on her list for making friends, then dragons are the ones she'll turn to. *'I see...'* Icefyre replied. Maybe as long as Kat doesn't befriend a human or a human befriends her, Zee will be safe. *'I still don't trust this human of yours, but if she does remain the same as she is now into her adulthood, then I can truly believe you that she is a good human. In the meantime, I think you should watch over her and maintain your friendship with her.'*

'Uh... sure, if you say so,' the earth dragoness replied. *'But trust me, Kat's really nice. You'll see someday if you meet her.'*

The blue dragoness thought, *'And that day is when I'll test her.'* Icefyre didn't plan on looking for Kat or Zee, if she was with the girl. Instead, she'll let them come to her. She continued, *'Very well, I'll see if she's as good as you say she is.'* With no more words left for the topic on Kat, Icefyre decided it was now time to bring up the other question she had in mind. *'By the way, since you're implying that Kat is the only human who's good. Why is it that-'*

Zee interrupted her, *'Oh hang on, Kat's wondering why I'm so quiet. I'll be back in a sec.'* Icefyre silently waited for the dragoness to finish her short business with the girl. She flopped the end of her tail casually and looked off at the woods around her. After a few seconds, Zee responded, *'Hi again. I told Kat about our conversation just now and she says that you can definitely trust her not to become like the other humans.'*

'I'll hold her to it,' Icefyre replied.

Zee asked, *'So anyway, what was it you were going to ask?'*

The blue dragoness told her, *'It's about this human city that you dragons rebuilt after destroying it. Were you the one of those who help restored the dreaded place that enslaved you?'*

The earth dragoness answered, *'Oh no, that wasn't me at all. Kat and I just went to live in the forest after the city was destroyed.'*

'So if you weren't there, then did you ever find out why the dragons helped their oppressors?'

'Nope, never did,' Zee said unfortunately. *'But I guessed that they found good humans of their own and wanted to work with them to create an equal society?'* The last part of her sentence sounded like she was unsure of the builders' purpose. *'Maybe, I don't know.'*

Icefyre understood the dragoness's confusion for this as she felt the reconstruction didn't make any sense. She voiced her opinion about it, *'Whatever reason they had, the creation of Windfall is pointless. There was no good reason for that city to be there in the first place. The humans there will never accept dragons as their equals, no matter what their mayor says or the Aquarians' wishes.'* She felt that everyone who took part in making Windfall should be ashamed of themselves for their naivety. Because one of these days, their kindness to their enemies will betray them.

'I can't blame you for thinking that way,' Zee agreed with the sentiment. *'A lot of humans there are pretty prejudiced. They were only nice to Kat when we were selling our stone figurines. I was mostly ignored like I didn't exist to them.'*

Icefyre raised her eyelid a bit in confusion to what the dragoness just said about selling their figurines. *'I thought you said that you and your human lived in the forest.'*

'We do,' Zee answered. *'We just go to the city to sell the stuff we made and get the money we need to buy things we want. That's the only good use we have for Windfall.'*

The blue dragoness asked, *'Like the books you read?'*

'Yeah,' the earth dragoness replied. *'And human-made foods that taste better than what we can find out here in the woods. Have you ever tried a banana split before? It's really good!'* The happy tone at the end almost sounded like she was inviting the other dragoness to try this soundly delicious human product.

Icefyre answered with a bit of disdain towards human culture, *'No and I'd rather not spoil my tongue with such artificial treats.'* So humans had the ability to make meals more delicious than Mother Nature's gifts. This fact just added a bit of salt to the wound as the humans had this kind of luxury while they made their slaves' stomachs suffer with horrible quality food. But even after the Spell, Icefyre wouldn't recommend any dragon eating human food that some of them were unhealthy with the chemicals and additives put into them, causing any human who consume too much of that stuff to become obese. She will just stick to animals and plant food.

'Oh, okay then. Each to their own, I guess,' said Zee. *'Well anyway, Icefyre. It was nice talking to you, but*

I've got to get ready. Kat and I got to get back to Windfall and start selling.'

'Okay, I understand. You take care out there.'

'I will, have a nice day.'

'You too,' replied Icefyre before their telepathy was over.

((Note: The following sections take place during [Chapter 36.](#)**))**

Thistle's horde took to the air as he led them to the northern part of the city ruins where the humans were invading. The Greenleaf Horde had a mission and it was to annihilate the dragon hunters and save the northern community. The humans want to take the lives of dragons? Well the horde will take theirs. It will be blood for blood until these hunters lose or all of them gone. Aiding them on the job were the dragons from the south part of the ruins, who were all being led by Chief Nakupenda to go help rescue their neighbors. Their numbers along with the horde's would just give them the advantage to overwhelm their enemies, which was a good thing. After reaching the northern side and tracing the smell of humans and blood from a distance, the horde found a battle raging between the northern dragons and the hunters with slain bodies of both races left and right. Thistle quickly thought about his strategy for how he will start in this battle. Then he announced, "There they are, horde; the humans we must fight. White dragons, look for any wounded survivors and heal them immediately. Black dragons pair up with a white and be ready to defend them so that they aren't interfered by the humans. Everyone else, attack!" The horde flew down to join with fray with the southern dragons following after them.

After a period of fighting against the dragons' numbers and might, the humans realized that they were losing the battle and started to retreat. However, Thistle wasn't done with them yet. They needed to pay for taking the lives of some of his horde members and he was going to get the revenge for their deaths. The horde leader shouted to every dragon, horde member or not, who can hear him, "Get them! Don't let them escape and come back the next day. Kill them!" Tryp and some of the other dragons, most of which were from the horde, gave chase after their enemies. A few humans got killed by them on the way as they were pursued out of sight. As he left the chasers to take care of this business, Thistle turned to look at all the dead dragons who died today. Most of them were those from the ruins, while the rest were his horde members, with a few of them being the new recruits. Everyone who knew these dragons were all grieving and mourning their losses. Heads were hung, sobs were heard, and tears were running down their eyes. Even Thistle himself took pity on all the deceased and was upset the most by the death of his comrades, whom he promised to keep alive throughout their campaign. He failed them

and he felt guilty for not uphold that promise to them. How could he face his comrades' loved ones after what happened today? The horde leader could a few troubling scenarios for when he goes to his horde. They would probably yell at him, blaming him for their friends' and mates' deaths, before quitting the horde. Thistle let out a heavy sigh as these depressing thoughts filled his head.

A white bird dragon flew down next to his leader, who turned his head to look at him. The bird dragon said, "Looks like we've won, Thistle. But it seems we've lost seven of our horde members at the cost."

"So I've noticed," Thistle sighed. He turned his head to look at a few of his soldiers crying over their dead friend. "We'll let them grieve for a while before we incinerate or bury the dead. Everyone is hurting right now and they need all the time they have to spend their final moments with their loved ones."

The bird agreed, "That's quite understandable, sir. Better to let out all the tears and sadness before we regain our strength."

"Indeed," the horde leader replied.

After a short while later, he saw Chief Nakupenda coming up to the center of the crowd alongside a male purple dragon, whom he was seen talking to some seconds ago. The purple dragon, who was presumably the chief of the northern side of the ruins, said to everyone, "May I have your attention for the moment?" All eyes fell upon the two chieftains as they listened to what the purple had to say. The north chief announced, "This has been a tragic day for all of us. Many lives were taken from us by the human and many more would have been lost if our neighbors from the south and the Greenleaf Horde hadn't come in to quell the humans' slaughter. So I'd like to thank them for their heroic deed."

Nakupenda replied respectfully, "You're welcome, Chief Indigo. May your people find peace in the afterlife."

"Thank you," Indigo said to the white. "And may yours as well." The purple spoke back to the crowd, "And speaking of our allies, they too have lost some of theirs to the humans. So we will honor their sacrifice tonight with a vigil and a ritual in which both communities from the north and south will come together to pay respect to all the dead. Even the Greenleaf Horde may participate if they so desire it."

Which the horde will as Thistle knew his soldiers deserve it. He bowed his head and said formally, "Thank you, chief. I truly appreciate that we all understand each other's pain. May tonight's funeral ease the spirits that will pass on."

Indigo nodded and said, "May so." Then he looked back to the crowd and told them, "Now let us carry our dead to a place where we can bury them before we feast their killers." So the dragons began to collect the dead bodies and take them to a softer ground that wasn't asphalt or concrete.

Thistle went to go help out a dragoness who was pushing her head and then the rest of her body underneath her mate's corpse to get him onto her back. The horde leader lifted up the dragon's rear on and set him on his back, so that there would be two dragons carrying the body and that the dragoness would only carry half the burden that was the weight. She smiled at him gratefully and said, "Thanks."

"You're welcome," Thistle replied.

As they walked with the body, the dragons that had been pursuing to finish off the rest of the hunters, returned. Tryp ran up to her leader to catch up with him, so that she can give him the report. As she walked alongside him, she told him, "Thistle, we've killed off most of the humans, but a few managed to escape us. We tried tracking them down, but then we had to stop when we got to their territory. We had to leave and come back, because there were more humans there and there weren't enough of us to destroy them all."

"That was wise thinking you all did," said Thistle. "It's better to have a bigger number of allies with you than to venture into human place unknown. Humans are very cunning animals that like to use traps and tricks to subdue dragons. They probably had such things at their home and were going to unleash the other hunters they had at home to kill you there." He knew these kinds of things with humans from his past experiences of fighting these creatures and the stories he heard of them.

"True," the neotropical commented. Then she smiled, "But at least they aren't strong as us dragons."

"Right you are," Thistle grinned with pride at one of the advantages his kind has. But then he cautioned her, "But still we mustn't underestimate humans because of what I just said about them. We must always be on our guard around them at all times, so that we don't end up dead at their hands."

Tryp looked up at the dragon on his back in thought as if she was thinking about how he died. "You're right," she said. Then she growled, "These cowardly apes love to use dirty tricks against us. They have no honor."

'Well they are animals, so of course they don't have any,' the leader thought. At least most of them as far as he was concerned, given the few good ones were the exception. Sure humans may be the smartest of all animals, but he'll always see them all as less than dragons. "Which is why we'll give them a taste of their own medicine. After we bury the dead and release our sorrows, we will take revenge on that human place you found and destroy them."

Tryp shared his desire for human blood with an equally determined and vengeful reply, "Yeah, make them pay!"

The dragoness next to him and said, "Do it for my mate, you two. Do it for everyone who suffered." It looks like she too wanted revenge for what happened today, given how mad she looked.

Thistle nodded to her, "Don't worry, we will." He assured her that the horde will succeed in annihilate these dangerous pests. Then he looked back at Tryp and told her, "Tell everyone who went to finish off the humans that we're taking the dead to the graveyard in case they haven't heard yet." If there was any last moments the chasers wished to spend with their late loved ones, now was the time.

"I will," said the neotropical before she ran off to tell the others. Thistle and the dragoness followed the other dragons to the graveyard, which was a human's farmland, and dropped the body in one of the holes that were just dug.

The dragoness looked down at her mate's body as she sobbed quietly, "I'll miss you..." The horde leader placed a wing around her like a human hugging someone in an attempt to comfort her.

((Note: This section takes place during [Chapter 37](#).))

With the last dragon buried, everyone gathered before the graveyard as Chief Indigo performed the funeral ceremony to the end. With the service over, the crowd departed and went their separate ways. Thistle went to look for his horde members, when he was approached by Nakupenda and Indigo. The yellow-green dragon stopped and asked, "Can I help you?"

"Yes," the white dragon replied. "Thistle, we understand that your horde may have some sorrows from the loss of their comrades. But Chief Indigo and I have a request for you."

The purple dragon asked, "We would like for your horde to find the dragon slayers' turf and destroy them all there. They've lost a lot of their kind here in the massacre. So we think finishing the rest of them off shouldn't be too hard. What do you say? Would you do it for us? Our communities will be able to rest easy from now on, knowing that we don't have humans around near us."

The chieftains' request matched exactly what Thistle was planning to do next. His brow furrowed as he said, "I will and you can be sure that the Greenleaf Horde will kill every single last one of these killers." His right claw raked the asphalt road like it was as aching to get itself covered in blood.

Indigo said, "You have my trust, horde leader. May the Guardian of Nature see your success."

"They will," Thistle assured. Then he went to find a clearing where he can have his meeting with the horde about their next mission. He found an open-space parking lot with some broken cars left and right. After sitting down in front of an office retailing store, he telepathically called his horde, *'Greenleaf Horde, follow my scent and meet me at this parking lot.'* The horde leader waited for all his soldiers to come to him as he sat down. One by one and sometimes in small groups, the horde members appeared and gathered before him. When the last of the soldiers got here, Thistle began the meeting, "Greenleaf

Horde, the dragon communities here have requested us to wipe out the last of these humans who attacked them. I know this is sudden after the battle that killed some of us and I understand that some of you are still in emotional pain. You might be angry with me for not keeping my promise of keeping each and every one of you alive. Truthfully, I'm not happy about this failure of mine, but I will try to make up for this by avenging their deaths." Then he snarled, "The humans have messed with the wrong dragons. For the sake of the dragons here and for us, I and everyone else who wants to get revenge are going to destroy these humans and make them pay." Then he continued in a calmer toner, "And to be considerate of your feelings, I give you a choice, fight alongside me or take a break for now and continue to mourn your friends." He watched the eyes and expressions on their faces to see what their answers would be.

For the first few seconds there was only silence like the horde members were thinking about their decisions. Tryp was the first one to speak as she stood bravely and cried, "I'll fight!" Well that's one dragon on his side, but what about the others.

One of the black dragons gave his answer, "So will I!"

All the other dragons decided to fight as well as one of them said, "We knew what we were in for when we joined your horde, Thistle."

A black vine dragon said, "You may make promises like keeping all of us alive, but we all know the world will break that promise eventually no matter how hard you try. We chose to fight and die for the region, so that us dragons will never be harmed by humans again."

A green vine dragoness said, "So don't insult us with the option of making us stay behind from a battle."

The horde leader looked at them proudly for their resolve. "Thank you everyone. I am glad to have such a strong horde. As a leader, it makes me proud to see that my soldiers are determined to fight, no matter what." Now with all his worries gone, Thistle felt more confident than he was for their next victory. He ordered, "Greenleaf Horde, let's teach those killers a lesson." The horde let out roars of approval and cheers. Thistle looked to Tryp and asked, "Tryp, you're one of those that were doing the clean-up of these humans. Lead us to where you found their home."

"Got it," the neotropical said. Then she led the horde to the path the chasers took and lead them through where the human scent followed.