

Dragon Mother

One day a young boy was making his way through a dense forest, with nothing more than a thin tunic, raggedy brown pants, a pair of ripped socks, and a flimsy wooden sword. He had been traveling on his own for over 16 hours, his feet were sore, his legs had become weak, and he hadn't eaten since the previous day. Even so, he moved on without rest, pushing through the thick bushes and branches that littered the forest. He then stopped for a moment and wiped the sweat off his forehead. "As soon as I find a dragon... I can go home..." He sighed. He then continued on through the dense foliage, doing his best to ignore his growling stomach.

A few minutes later he saw what looked like a massive clearing ahead. He was absolutely relieved, as he would have a much easier time navigating the area without the trees crowding his view. He was just about to come out from the bushes before he saw a large creature at the end of the clearing, rummaging around some trees. He stopped in his tracks and ducked into the bushes. It had a beautiful coat of white puffy fur covering its body, and two massive wings folded behind its back. It seemed to have unusually small shoulders, but powerful looking arms, and massive fluffy paws. It had large powerful legs, which stood out from its slightly chubby belly, followed by a long furry tail. Lastly, it had a large rounded head, with big cute looking eyes.

"Finally... I found one..." The boy said silently as he gripped his sword. "Now... I can finally go home!" He then charged across the clearing with his sword in hand. His heart was racing like crazy, as he got closer to the creature which clearly towered over him like a small mountain. The dragon heard him approaching and turned around just as he was going to strike, he flinched and closed his eyes as he went in for the kill. Then.... With a loud "Thwack!" He struck the dragon's leg with his weapon. When he opened his eyes he was horrified to see that the blade of his sword was missing, all he had in his hands was the handle. He looked up into the air to see the blade of his wooden sword flipping in the air before landing on the ground with a soft "clunk." His sword had broken instantly upon striking the dragon! He began to shudder, still holding what was left of his broken wooden sword. He stared at the giant fluffy dragon in fear as it loomed over him.

The creature just stared back looking confused. "Now why in the world would you do that?" The dragon asked in a soft feminine voice. The boy was so shocked that he fell backward in panic. He then tried to sit back up and looked at the large fluffy dragon that loomed over him. "Y-you can talk?" He asked still frightened. The dragon tilted her head with a puzzled expression on her face. "Why of course, all dragons of my breed are capable of speaking in the human tongue." Then the dragon leaned her head closer to the boy. "Did you want to play with me?" She asked in a sweet tone. The child just stood there dumbfounded and confused, he did not understand how the dragon was talking

to him. "Look sweetie, I don't mind playing with you, but why are you traversing the forest by yourself?"

"I'm not playing around! I came here to hunt my first dragon" He said triumphantly. The dragon then giggled in response. "OK then. I'll be the big mean dragon." She gently waved her claws in the air, akin to what a ghost would do, but rather than a vicious monster, she looked rather goofy. "Rawr! ♥" She said playfully, with a smile on her face. The boy just stared at her with a baffled expression. "This... This couldn't be a real dragon... It's so docile." The boy thought to himself. The dragon then rolled on her back and quickly scooped the boy up in her claws as gently as she could. And held him in the air like a baby. "Waaaah!" The boy shouted in shock, flailing his arms and legs around. Flustered he looked at the massive creature that held him. The dragon's smile was so gentle and innocent, like he was being held by a big friendly teddy bear. "Rawr! ♥" She said again jokingly while giving the child a playful look. This was not what he expected when he went searching for dragons. The child grew up reading about how they were the most dangerous predators in any ecosystem with no natural enemies.

"D-don't make fun of me, I see what you're trying to do! You just want to eat me! Let me go!" The child said with frustration in his voice. The dragon looked confused, she lowered the child onto the ground, and took a deep sigh. She rolled on her side and rested her head on her right claw, looking the child in the eye. "Sweetie I'm not going to eat you, I am a cave-dwelling dragon, we don't prefer meat. We primarily eat fruits and other types of vegetation." "You eat... vegetables?" He said as his stomach silently growled. The dragon seemed baffled at his question, it was the kind of look he would get from someone who thought he had no common sense. "Have you ever met a dragon before?" She asked. The boy now felt silly, realizing how little he really knew about the creature he had encountered. "Besides... Carnivorous dragons don't try to swindle or outsmart their prey." She said. "What do you mean?" he asked. "A Blood Dragon, or any other predatory breed, would have gobbled you up on the spot." She said that she waved her claws in the air. "They can't be reasoned with like cognitive dragons, all they want to do is eat."

The boy became spooked, but he maintained his confident expression. "I could handle a Blood Dragon! I'd slay him before he could even show his teeth." The dragon giggled innocently, amused at how cute and proud the child was, but then she realized something concerning. The boy's seemed unusually thin for a child, and he didn't seem particularly fit either. Upon closer inspection, he appeared malnourished and frail looking. It didn't look like he could survive one day in the forest. She became very concerned and put on a serious face. "Dragons aside, it's extremely dangerous to go wondering deep into the forest with nothing but a toy sword. Do your parents know you're here?"

"It... It wasn't a toy! This sword is a magic item given to me by my father! He

told me that it was passed down through my family for generations!" The boy huffed. "Hmm..." She pondered. The dragon picked up the broken sword in her claws and sniffed it. "Sweetie... this is not a magic item..." "What?" The boy gasped in disbelief, eyes widened with a look of shock. "I don't smell any enchantments, or even a curse, in fact, this wood isn't ancient at all. This sword was hastily made, recently, and probably in one quick night." The dragon said as she continued sniffing it. "You're lying..." The boy replied. She looked upon him with painfully earnest eyes. "I'm not lying to you, this sword broke as soon as it struck my leg." She sighed with a hint of pity in her voice. "But... My parents said that if I could hunt a dragon with this sword, they would let me come home!" He said flustered. The dragon looked shocked and quickly stood back up. "Wait... What did you say!?!?" The child looked up at her, surprised at her sudden change in tone. "You mean your parents kicked you out... And sent you away to hunt dragons... With nothing but a wooden stick?!?!" She asked.

The child began to quiver. "No! They didn't! They must have... The enchantment probably ran out! They gave me this sword so I can finally live up to the family name. I've disappointed them so many times, and they said that this was my last chance." The dragon's heart sank as she bit her lip in silent anguish. With his skinny physique, tattered clothes, and lack of common sense, the child was clearly neglected. She became distraught as she tried to take deep breaths to remain composed. But her fruitless efforts to stay calm were quickly replaced with helpless frustration. "Why would they do such a thing to you!? No parent who loves their child would send them in harm's way!" She blurted. The boy froze, he didn't answer, he just looked down at his broken sword in silence, before he turned around and ran back into the forest.

"W-wait!" The dragon called out to the boy as he disappeared into the bushes. She tried to follow him, but she was too large to fit between the trees that crowded her path. She flustered about as she could hear the boy's footsteps getting farther and farther away. "Oh Gosh! Why did he have to run off by himself? What if he really does run into a blood dragon?" She began to panic and paced back-and-forth. "I'm such a fool! Why did I say such terrible things!" She stopped pacing and looked up at the clear sky, as she put her paws on her chest with grief. "That boy... Despite everything he probably still loves his parents..." She began taking slow deep breaths. "OK... Calm down... I can still find him..." She took a large deep breath through her nose and instantly picked up his scent. "I've got him! Makes sense since he's the only human in the area for miles! But what's that other smell?" Curious she sniffed the air a few more times. "Smells like tears... That poor child..." The dragon said with a sad expression on her face.

Meanwhile, deeper into the forest, the young man began wiping away his tears, as he rested against a large oak tree. "Hic... Sob... It can't be... They wouldn't send me out here with a fake weapon..." Suddenly he felt a strong gust of wind erupt from the sky, he quickly shielded his eyes from the powerful gust

with his arms. Then the ground shook as something large landed in front of him with a loud "THOOOM!" The child hesitantly peeked over his elbow to see the large fluffy dragon looming in front of him, looking flustered and very worried.

"What were you thinking? Running off into the deep jungle alone like that!? What if you had run into a wolf or a bear?" She scolded. "I'm fine! I just need... Well..." The child paused, and looked down at the ground, unable to finish his sentence. The dragon frowned, looking down at the lost confused child. "Sweetie? What's your name?" She asked. "I... My name was taken away..." He said in a monotone voice. The dragon became very concerned. "What do you mean? What did your parents name you?" She asked. "They call me boy now." He said like it was no big deal. She put her claw on her chest in shock. "Do you have anywhere you can go?" She asked bluntly. The child looked very uncertain as he thought of a response. "Ummm... yeah..."

The dragon leaned closer to the child and looked at him with her large frowning eyes. "Please... Don't lie to me... Do you have anyone else who will take care of you?" The child's expression went blank, as reality began to sink in... He was alone... His parents didn't expect him to come back... And if he did go back who knows what they would do to him... "Sweetie?" The dragon asked again with a concerned tone in her voice. The child still didn't answer, all he could do now was stand there... As he slowly broke into tears. The Dragon frowned as she witnessed the child weep in anguish. "This poor child... He was ready to put his life at risk just so his family would accept him. Who would abandon their own child out of spite? Why would his death appease them? No one could be this cruel!" She thought to her self.

"Sweetie..." She said as she opened her arms. The boy slowly looked up, trying his best to hide the tears pouring down his face. "Come here..." She put on a welcoming smile as she reached out to him. As he took two steps forward, she proceeded to scoop him up in her giant paws and held him tightly against her fluffy chest. The child buried his face into her fur, as if he was trying to drown out his cries so she wouldn't notice. His arms were splayed to his sides, with his hands tightly grasping at her soft white fur. The dragon began to slowly rock back-and-forth in the attempt to calm the child down. "Shhh... It's alright... I'm here for you..." She said in her soft voice. The child cried for minutes, his eyes red from his flowing tears, his throat had become sore from wailing uncontrollably, and now his eyes had run completely dry. Still, he whimpered, longing for the love of his parents, who had since but abandoned him... The dragon looked down at the poor human, concerned that he had not spoken for over half an hour since he started crying. "Sweetie?" She asked softly. He tilted his head up slightly, lifting his eyes from her fur. "I came all this way... So I could go back to mommy and daddy... But... I really just came here to die..." The child mumbled into the dragon's chest. "That's not true sweetie ..." The dragon replied. The boy lifted his head from the dragons soft fluffy chest and looked at her, his sobs momentarily ceased.

"If you hadn't come all this way... I wouldn't have found you." She said in a sweet welcoming voice. The child's frown slowly disappeared, as he looked at her with a curious expression. "How would you like to stay with me?" His eyes widened as he gasped cheerfully, replacing his feelings of despair with hope. The boy tried to talk but his sobbing prevented him from speaking in straight sentences, so instead he just slowly nodded and buried his face back into her chest. The dragon put on a smile and lowered one of her arms. She opened up what looked like a pouch from right under her chest, and gently lowered the child into it. He looked down as he was gently placed inside the soft pouch which cradled him like a newborn. He was now surrounded and cushioned by the dragons incredibly soft fur, he felt a gentle sensation of warmth wash over his body as he was nestled inside. Strangely, the pouch made him feel like he was being held in a mother's arms, with his head, neck, back, and legs perfectly supported.

"Why don't you take a nap in here for now? And don't worry, we will be home by the time you wake up. ♥" The dragon said in a soft motherly voice, as she gently rocked her pouch side to side. The child's tears ceased as he slowly closes eyes, and began to drift off as he was gently rocked like a newborn. And before he knew it, he was fast asleep. The dragon smiled as a child finally drifted off, and tucked her pouch in further so the sunlight wouldn't wake him up. She then spread out her large fluffy wings and took off into the sunny sky.

Minutes later she landed outside a large cave, hidden under by a bed of thick bushes. She first looked at her surrounding for predators, before disappearing within the deceptive foliage. "Brave! Rosie! Zeque! I'm home!" She called out happily. Then three small dragons eagerly came to greet her, as they lovingly hugged her legs. "Aww.... My babies..." She smiled as she leaned down to cuddle her children. Brave was the oldest child, his fur was ruffled and bright orange, and he had curved antlers on his head. Rosie had smooth light gray fur, she was only a couple years younger than Brave, but she didn't have any antlers. Instead, she had a bright pink ribbon around her neck. Then there was Zeque, who was the youngest, he was only a toddler and had short lime green fur, his antlers hadn't grown yet.

Rosie looked at her mother's belly and saw that there was something in her pouch. "What did you bring us?" She asked joyfully. "Did you bring a cupuacu fruit!?" Brave asked as he began shaking with excitement. "Is it a bunch of strawberries?" Asked Zeque, still hugging her leg. "Ok, ok settle down..." She giggled. She reached into her pouch and gently cradled the sleeping human child in her arms. The children were absolutely baffled, seeing that their mother had brought a human back with her. "Mommy... I don't want to eat a human..." Said Zeque. The dragon giggled softly and put her index finger over her mouth, signaling them to speak more quietly. "No silly goose we're not going to eat him... This human is going to be staying with us from now on." She said as she cradled

the child in her left arm, and made her way to the closet.

The three dragon children looked at each other with baffled expressions. "I thought mommy didn't like humans..." Rosie said as she looked at brave. "Now now... I never said I hated humans, just to be careful when approaching them." She opened up the closet and began rummaging around a mess of old wooden furniture, and pulled out a large crib with her right arm. It was about 6 feet long and 4 feet wide, too small for a dragon toddler, but more than big enough for a human child. Fortunately, it was still clean, even after being stored away for so long. She then gently placed the sleeping child in the large crib, and draped a silky blanket over him, before tucking him in, as her children cautiously watched from a distance.

"Don't be afraid, this child is harmless... He just needs a place to stay." The mother said softly. The young dragons cautiously approached him and peered into the crib that cradled the sleeping child. They leaned in closer and began to sniff him, to better familiarize themselves with their new occupant. They could tell just from the scent of his dried tears, that he had been through a great deal of grief. The dragons became fascinated with the human, he looked so innocent and adorable while he slept in the crib, so much different from what they imagined a human would be like. "Can we keep him?" Rosie begged with an innocent face, still holding her claws on to the crib. The mother giggled, trying to hide her grin with her right claw. "No sweetie, he's not a pet..." A collective frown set upon the faces of her children, as they all sighed in disappointment.

"From now on, he'll be your baby brother." She said happily as she began taking some vegetables out of the pantry. Her children gasped in excitement, their ears standing up revealing their delight. The mother put her index claw in front of her lips as she began preparing the vegetables. "Shhh..." She shushed, reminding them to keep their voices down as the child slept. They fell silent at their mothers' request and continued to observe their new sibling. The child's eyes were still red from crying himself to sleep, though his face looked peaceful and at ease.

They began to rock his crib back-and-forth, keeping him eased into a gentle slumber, until he would later wake up to meet his new loving family. All while the mother prepared a meal for her new human child.

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