

Dawn of the Dragons

Justin grew up in the city of Thornbridge. When he was still a young child, this city was burned to the ground by a fierce, black dragon. All of the adults disappeared. He vowed that he would one day become a knight and slay the black dragon. At the age of twelve, Justin left the ruins of his city and headed for Calvermain, a city renowned for the training of knights.

While on his journey, he saw an old man being robbed. Justin picked up a rock and hurled it at the men who were attacking the old man. The men fled. The old man was so grateful that he gave Justin a glowing, red gemstone, to thank him. All the old man said was the red gemstone was something that would help Justin on his journey.

The next morning Justin arrived at Calvermain. He was enrolled to be trained as a knight. For the next six years, Justin was trained in the ways of knights. On the day of his final exam, a messenger arrived warning that the black knight and his army were near. Since he could not complete his final exam, Justin was sent to help the healers. They were preparing for the arrival of injured warriors.

Near dusk, Justin could hear catapults firing and crashing like thunder. Calvermain never stood a chance. The battle continued but the Calvermain warriors were defeated. The building Justin was in started to collapse. He was the only one that managed to escape, through the fall out tunnel.

Justin fled to the nearby Talowa Forest. He looked behind and the City of Calvermain was in ruins. He found a bloody sword on the forest floor. He continued on, hoping to find the black dragon.

Talowa Forest, Justin had heard, was where the dragons lived. Yet, as he continued deeper into

the forest, he found no dragons. On his third day in the forest, he spotted his first dragon. It was slightly bigger than a horse, and blue in colour. Justin drew his sword, but the dragon did not notice him. He charged at the dragon. The dragon quivered in fear and knocked Justin's sword to the ground with his tail. Finally the dragon spoke. He asked Justin why he was being attacked. Justin realized the dragon was not evil.

Justin and the dragon continued to talk. They became friends. The dragon's name was Drake. They talked all through the night. Justin learned there had only been one black dragon, in the last million years of the Matrinoth world. That black dragon was controlled by the black knight. Justin also learned that Drake was the only free dragon. The black knight had captured all of the others.

Near dawn, Drake realized Justin's chest pocket glowed red. Justin took out the red gem and showed it to Drake. Drake told Justin the stone was a dragon gem. It had magical powers. Each dragon was born with a gemstone. Drake showed Justin his gemstone. It was hidden under the large scale plate, on his chest. Drake's stone gave him the powers of agility and the capability to breathe ice. As the sun rose higher, they vowed to work together, to defeat the black knight and free Drake's brethren.

Justin and Drake set out for the black knight's fortress of doom. They were not even sure it existed. But, that is where the knights of Calvermain said he and his evil forces resided. They continued East and met a mystic, who told them to follow the constellation of the sword. These

seven stars glowed brightly overhead, even in daylight.

Ten days later they found a huge, black fortress ahead of them. It had sixteen towers, each with a watchman and a patrol of warriors, circling the walls. A wide moat encircled the

fortress. Two black dragons flew around the tallest tower in a vertical, circular pattern. It almost hypnotized Justin and Drake. Why were there two black dragons?

How could they get into the fortress? Out of the blue, a supply cart filled with hay appeared. It stopped directly in front of them, but had no apparent driver. Two horses were harnessed to the cart. They found the driver, inside the hay, unconscious. Drake hid in the hay and Justin donned the driver's clothing. They removed the driver and hid him in a bush. Justin drove the cart towards the black knight's fortress.

The drawbridge lowered, letting them into the fortress. Once inside, they heard the loud roaring of hundreds of dragons. The noise was deafening. A guard spotted them. Before he could react, Drake breathed through the hay and froze him to the spot. They abandoned the cart, and ran towards the noise.

They found a dungeon full of dragons. At Drake's suggestion, Justin used his red gemstone to melt the dungeon gates. The dragons were freed. Deeper in the dungeon, Justin found hundreds of adults. He believed he had found the missing people from Thornbridge. He told them they were free to leave.

Justin noticed a man staring at him. His father. Drake noticed a dragon staring at him. His

-4-

father. The four of them decided to go after the black knight. Justin and his father mounted Drake and his father, and they flew to the tallest tower.

The two black dragons pursued them but did not catch them. They arrived at the tower and spotted the black knight. He mounted another black dragon, with a black gemstone. A fierce battle ensued. Drake's dad used his brown gemstone to shift time, to give them more reaction time. Justin and Drake attacked head on. Justin's dad acted as a decoy. The battle continued for days. No other dragon or human could participate, even if they wanted to.

Justin got an idea. He took his gemstone and Drake's gemstone, lashed them to his sword, using his belt. He hurled the sword at the black knight. It missed the knight, but shattered the black dragon's gemstone. The black dragon and the black knight exploded in midair.

Justin's sword flew back to him. The blue gemstone returned to Drake. Justin's sword had a new gold gemstone. Drake explained the golden gem could rebuild the city of Thornbridge.

Once rebuilt, it would be a city for both humans and dragons. After all, it would be rebuilt by the efforts of both.