



*Slayers and
Dragons
by Elisabeth*

Slayers and Dragons: Running in the Realms

By Elisabeth C

Part 1: Rotaris V.S. Charrheart

Chapter 1: Race Gone Wrong

"I'll race you to the Northern Peaks, Llosuris!" Xauvaylyx called, flapping her orange-amber wings wildly. The sky was pool blue, it was a perfect day. So far.

I blew a spurt of green fire into the sky and it exploded in a ray-like blast. I rose higher into the sky. My scales shone in the morning light like emeralds. Xauvaylyx glared at me. "Lydia and I been practicing, so no dragon like you can beat us!"

Lydia was holding on to Xauvaylyx's reigns.

"Ya ready?" She asked as she gripped the reigns tighter.

"Ready as I'll ever be." Xauvaylyx replied.

Lydia leaned over the dragon's back and her long brown hair dangled as she looked at the ledge below. There was her brother, fifty feet below.

"Hey, Jaaaaaaaack!" She yelled at the top of her lungs. "Are you and Rinix in? Llosuris thinks he can beat us!" Jack jumped on the young dragon's back. Rinix snarled and shoved him off with his wing.

"I'm not sure we'll even make it to the mountains in one piece with this dragon." He muttered. "Rinix, if you don't let me on, and if we don't make it to the mountain, NO dinner for you." Rinix flicked his brown tail and barred his teeth with disgust. He lay on the ground and Jack cautiously

and slowly got on his back. "Good boy! Now, up!" Rinix stood up and spread his smallish wings... And dumped Jack off again.

"Um..." Muttered Lydia. "So you're not coming," she said.

Xauvaylyx laughed. "Are you ready to make it to the finish line first?" She tugged on the reins and snorted a stream of ice and it evaporated in a blueish mist. I arrogantly looked at them.

"Yeah, yeah, like *that's* ever going to happen. We'll start at that cliff down there, in the mist." I gestured to a red rock ledge that was shrouded in a misty fog.

"Come on!" I said as I dove, folding my wings in tightly.

I unfurled my wings quickly in front of the ledge as the updraft began to lift me. I flapped to slow down then stopped on the ground.

Not far behind was Xauvaylyx, with her human friend clinging tightly to the reins. She nearly flew off her back. Xauvaylyx skidded to a stop flapping her wings wildly. I marched around the cliff ledge, looking up anxiously. Suddenly where the clear blue skies once were, an unnatural black, evil sky was replaced. There was only dark. I growled angrily.

Xauvaylyx's eyes were wide. "What's going on? When did it get so dark?" She cried.

"I don't know yet but it's something unnatural." I snapped back. Then she looked up again. "Um, this darkness isn't night..."

Then, something suddenly broke the silence with several rays of purple lightning that ripped through the sky.

"Get down!" I cried. Xauvaylyx jumped up in surprise and came back down and flattened herself to the ground. "W-what is it?" I thought for a moment, **have I seen that before? Do I recognize that?** I snarled to myself. Lydia looked at me astounded.

"You-you know what that was?" She pointed to where the lightning had shot across the black sky. Then, suddenly I felt anger. Fierce, hot fiery anger. I flicked my tongue. My scales started to look more red than green-blue.

"I can't be for certain, but I really think I've seen that before. Do you recall the Six Realms? In the Plutaris Monogourul. Or in English, The Realm of The Underwind Slayers."

"What are you *talking* about?" Lydia shouted. Then we all stood up. Something... something was happening in the sky...

Meanwhile, Rinix ran circles around Jack, who was scowling and following the dragon with his eyes. The scampering dragon came to a stop and panted, looking exhausted.

Jack stood up and said out loud,

"Looks like we're not going anywhere, I have some other things to do." He scowled at Rinix and the dragon whimpered. Then he opened his pack that was on the ground and pulled out five baby dragons that were inside a very large box. When Jack had spare time, he usually enjoys collecting things. He records everything about them.

Then he opened the box slowly and one of the dragons stumbled about, and crash landed on his snout. Jack had never really liked this particular one. It was orange-amber. It flapped its wings wildly, and couldn't lift itself off of the ground. Jack watched its pointless attempts to fly, then he pointed at it. "That is your dinner, I guess." Rinix's tongue dangled out of his mouth and he came racing over.

"I can't believe I just did that." Jack muttered. The little amber dragon squeaked with fright, and fell head over tail. Rinix pounced on it, and Jack turned around and looked at his other dragons in the bag. He looked at a large blue-green one. He carefully lifted it out.

"Do you want a treat, Hydro?" He asked kindly.

The dragon grinned with delight, and Jack pulled out a bag from his pocket, inside was a piece of meat. He took it out and fed it to the restless dragon.

"Now go run around and play." He said.

Hydro flapped his wings and lifted off the ground. He shot a small blast of green energy. Then Jack opened the box again and held a black one with two silver streaks and a vibrant gold one.

"Pitch, Treasure, go mess around." The last was a small, silver one. She was whining because her foreleg had been clawed by a wolf; that didn't have a pack a couple of hours ago.

"Moon, do you want some water?" He asked. The silver dragon nodded. He plowed through his pack and found a water bottle. Then, he looked up and gasped. A burst of purple lightning rays streaked across the sky, and he watched as the sky grew dark.

He instantly stood up and gathered the dragons together.

"Rinix, I don't know what's going on but we have got to get out of here!" He slung the pack onto his back and ran frantically to Rinix. Rinix anxiously darted his head around and growled.

He lowered himself and knew Jack was actually serious. He didn't even get the thought of joking around at a time like this.

He worriedly shuffled around as Jack leaped onto his back. "Rinix Gaunterau, fly like you never have before. We've got to find out what is going on and get the others!" Rinix leapt into the sky, and wobbled. He roared a squeaky roar and flapped his wings as fast as he could make them.

"Where were they going?" Jack asked, racking his brain. He could hear the little dragons whining and whimpering in the box.

"They were heading for a range of mountains, weren't they?" He peered over Rinix's flapping wings. He strained his eyes to see in the

darkness... When something whooshed out of the blackness. Rinix screeched and Jack yelled.

And all sound suddenly quickly faltered.

Chapter 2: The Art Of Rotoris

I started slowly walking backwards. Then, the sky was suddenly ripped open into a round, black, circular abyss of nothing!

A bolt of swirling, purple lightning streaked out of the hole, and hit a couple yards away from us.

Lydia gasped in fear. She had never seen anything like it.

I reared up as something white came flying out of the hole, carrying a chariot of some kind. They're Bone dragons! I'd recognize menaces of those kind anywhere.

Found only in the Monogoural... They only would serve one master...

Someone was riding the chariot down the lightning, he had a long staff with a black claw at the end of it. He wore a long purple cape and wore a pointy hat. "I, Charrheart, am heeeeere!" Sang a strangely cheerful voice.

I snarled, and backed away. Of course, I recognized that voice belonged to a particular person...

"Charrheart! You swore to never come back to this Realm years ago! I had you at my mercy and you would dare to defy me?!" I roared, but I really didn't want him to know I was frightened of him (Which is wise), and to make myself sound scary (Which is also wise).

(I had once been fighting in one of the greatest battles of the Realms and I had my claws at his throat, but he looked so sad and wished for a truce. He promised to never come back. I released him.)

Really, since when do Slayers promise something and keep their word? I should have ended it then. Now he's back, I thought.

Then I thought of Jack and Rinix. Charrheart must have found them!

"Where's the human and the dragon?" I hissed, and I stepped forward barring my teeth. Charrheart flicked his scraggly fingers and two more Bone dragons with purple mist shrouding their ribs came plummeting out of the gaping hole. They swooped down on a nearby ledge in sync. Then they hissed loudly and breathed the purple stuff on their chest and inside their rib jail were Jack and Rinix! I gasped. They've got them in electric mist, or they would have just slid out of the ribs. I noticed.

Jack was worriedly looking out from the dragon's ribs at his sister Lydia. Rinix was miserably curled up, hiding his face with his wings.

"No!" I screeched. Charrheart just laughed his strange jester laugh. The Bone dragons cackled, but it sounded like an eerie creaking door. "Llosuris. You see, you led us right to them." I suddenly looked puzzled. "You should have been more careful about shooting fire!" I awkwardly frowned and shuffled my talons, remembering I had done that carelessly. Xauvaylyx and Lydia didn't even dare to interfere or even move. "So," He continued, "I think I will pick you off one by one when you least expect it." I shot a blast of green flame at him but without even flinching in fear, Charrheart just puffed out of the way onto a different ledge. That actually caught me by surprise. I should have been used to that kind of thing by now. Darn wizard.

"You will never take all of us. Never! We're a team!" I shouted vehemently.

"Hmmm..." Said Charrheart. "Soon you will in fact, not be a team, ha-ha. That was your greatest mistake, Llosuris. You didn't finish me when you could have."

That echoed in my mind terribly. **It's my fault we're in this mess. I brought him here. I didn't defeat him when I had the chance.** But I had to keep myself together. I screamed at myself. **Don't say that! I can show Charrheart I can defeat him again.** I then spread my wings threateningly and lashed my tail. **I can show him what I'm made of!** I lunged, and turned my head mid-leap just to see the Bone dragons were off the ground with Charrheart and Jack and Rinix! I then heard his faint last words: "I'll be back for the rest of you soon enough. Just wait and seeeeee!" He cackled. By the time I looked forward, I then felt a pain in my wing. I had rammed into a rock pillar! I spread my left wing painfully, and I saw it had been torn.

I looked up again and felt a surge of anger. **I am going to save them, no matter what.** But, the chariot was almost to the dark hole! I roared and leaped, flapping my wings as hard and fast as I could, ignoring the pain. **He was not going to escape me. Not now!** Xauvaylyx tried to fly after me. But I was ahead.

"Llosuris, your wing! You're going to fall!" She called.

I pretended not to hear. **I won't lose my friends!** But the giant hole closed after them with a BANG! I gasped in horror. "NOOOOOOOOOOO!" Was that the only chance I had? Then I groaned. My wing hurt too much. It was torn too much. I couldn't fly for much longer. My worst fear was thinking I couldn't do it, that it was too hard. It just overcame me. **I didn't make it. I failed them. It's over. Can things get any worse? Wait, what am I saying? I—I can't quit. I would never admit defeat. I just have to know it!** I strained to flap, then I wobbled and fell. **I've got to control my fear! Just—concentrate. I can do it!** Then, I didn't worry about the fall ahead, and slowly spread my wings out. I believed. Then I gave a mighty flap and rose into the now blue sky quick as a jet. I zoomed

around in a circle and landed right in front of the stunned Xauvaylyx. Her eyes were wide.

"HOW did you DO that? You're glowing!" She observed. I looked down at myself. So I was! A halo of green mist surrounded my wings, and my whole body. I opened my torn wing and gold fire whirled around the tear and healed it!

"Wow." I gasped. "I did Rotaris. I thought I would crash, I thought it was over. Well, that means I'm crazy. So I just believed that it wasn't over. That we would get them back." Lydia jumped off Xauvaylyx and observed me. She opened my wing.

"I don't think you'll have a problem with flying for a while. Your wings look more powerful than before."

Then, I looked up in the air again. The sky was blue again.

"Hmmm. I think I know what that large black hole was. Charrheart and the dragons came and went from here with a Realm Portal. They allow someone or something to transport to the different Realms."

Lydia raised her eyebrow. "So, we could get to Charrheart with one of those portal thingies."

I nodded. "Exactly."

"How do you get one?"

"Uhhh... I don't really, uh, know."

There was silence.

Xauvaylyx leaped in front of me. "Are you telling us that creepy wizard dude just got free from an ancient banishment thing or whatever it is and took Jack and Rinix into a different Realm with a portal and you don't know how TO EVEN MAKE ONE?!?!" She hissed. I backed away slowly.

"Hey, we'll figure it out. It can't be that hard now, could it? I think it's got something to do with elemental powers." I reared and blasted fire in a large circle on the ground. Nothing happened, except the fire burned the tip of my tail. I yelped and stamped on my tail. Lydia and Xauvaylyx scowled.

"I'm going to figure it out, okay?"

Xauvaylyx shrugged. "Yeah. You better." Then, I rose a little off the ground, thinking of something else I could try. Suddenly, Xauvaylyx eyed me smugly. She lunged into the air at me, and we both yelled.

"Get off!" I protested. We tackled each other in mid-air circles. Then Xauvaylyx got out of the way as I blindly shot green flames out of my mouth. I spun in circles faster and faster, not even noticing Xauvaylyx wasn't even there. "I'm going to get you!" I said. But, I soon got dizzy and I careened out of control, yelling.

The two others just stared in awe. I spun so fast breathing mist-flame, it created a circle of green light. It got brighter and brighter, until it was so bright, it blinded us all for a moment. When we looked again, stunned, darkness gathered around the circle and exploded. It became a large hole. Ha! I just made the portal!

"You're a *genius!*" Xauvaylyx exclaimed from across the canyon. I was knocked against a ledge a few yards away. I stood up and flew over the portal. It was very thin, and I landed in front of it. I gazed at it, looking pensive.

"Are you guys ready to do this?" I asked. They exchanged glances.

"Yeah!" Said Lydia.

"Of course." Xauvaylyx agreed.

"Okay. I say we go together, in case we get separated when we step in." I said. I reached a talon out closer to the portal. The lightning around it crackled threateningly, and I pulled it back.

"We jump on three." I nervously crouched, ready to leap into the darkness. (I had forgotten what transferring Realms was like).

"One, two, three, NOW!" I shut my eyes tight and we made the blind leap into the darkness...

Chapter 3: Black-Realm Monster

I tumbled over on sandy-rocky ground, and my eyes were still closed. I noticed that my head hurt. I stood up and shook the sand from my scales. I looked down, and the sand was strangely black. Though my eyes were now open, I couldn't see any light in the sky except for the four moons' eerie glow. **We must have got here in the middle of the night; or this place is just always dark, but where is here? I think we landed in the Negro Realm!**

"Hey, guys?" I shouted, but of course, not too loudly. "Are we all here?"

No response.

No. I thought. **They might not have made it!**

I let my head and wings droop, when I heard calling.

"Llosuris...Llosuris..." The calling seemed ghostly, and it was seeming to be coming from under the ground behind me! I also heard movement. I poised myself ready to attack, but I was afraid. **What is that? Is it under the ground? Is it some kind of sinister freaky creature???** I quickly jumped into the air. "Who are you?" I shouted. Something then started rising out of the sand! Something small? Something—human?

"Llosuris..." Said Lydia, brushing the sand off herself. "Don't you know I can't breathe under your tail?"

I growled and descended.

"Are you kidding me?! An unknown thing under the ground. That's actually something that could have been very *serious*." I scolded. But, she didn't even seem to understand she just totally freaked me out.

"Wait, there's something under the sand?" She asked worriedly, standing on one leg.

But was that not her? Was that really something else? Then, the sand seemed to rumble under our feet. There *was* something else besides Lydia under the black sands.

"Is that you, Xauvaylyx?" I asked, watching the sand ripple underneath.

"Llosuris?" Said Lydia timidly. "That thing is significantly larger than her. What is it?" I slowly slumped close to the ground, and whispered,

"I don't know."

Suddenly the ground seemed to shake more violently. Then, the head of a giant ugly worm erupted out of the ground!!! It must have roared louder than a jet engine. Its eyes had no pupils, just deathly white holes.

My jaw dropped. "RUN!!!" I shouted. But Lydia actually jumped onto my back. She commanded, "Up, up, up, UP!" instead. Flying would be more logical, so I beat my wings as hard as I could just as the worm lunged at us, with rows and rows of fangs nearly slicing us. As it missed, it barreled back down into the ground again.

"Oh man! That is an actual Deshorn. I don't think we're going to make it out of this alive!" I cried. "The thing's totally killer!" Then the Deshorn dove underground and zoomed underneath as if it was in water. It suddenly burst out of the ground in front of us! We yelled. It extended its head forward, biting and I banked a hard right. But, a pair of its buck

toothed fangs sliced my side and my tail as it recoiled itself for another lunge.

"Ahhh!" I groaned in pain. I started uncontrollably spiraling toward the ground. "Lydia, I'm hurt. If that thing—" I gulped nervously. "—if that thing eats me, save yourself." Then we crashed into the ground, and Lydia fell off my back. I tried to stand up. Lydia ran out of the way, stumbled, and saw just in time the worm take me down with it as it dove under the sand again. She gasped in horror and saw the last length of the creature disappear into the sand. She couldn't move for a while. She was so frightened she had to think about what just happened. Then she wandered around the Dark Desert, and often she stooped down; observing odd plants. But she was being careful to not trip on any sleeping monsters. (Though she didn't know, she was a little closer to doing that many times than she would have hoped for). She walked for what it seemed to her forever, however she had been walking for three hours. She stumbled over something and found it to be a shard of bone and a tough weed. She tied the bone to long slender stone with the weed, so she had a weapon. Then she decided to try to find something to eat. The light of the moons gave her enough light to be able to see things on the ground. She managed to kill two lizards which she caught sleeping. She made a small fire and tried hard to collect enough wits to eat some of one. She found it tasty, however it looked just as good as dog poop. She saved the rest of it for later.

As she shambled on, gray brush started appearing. Then, she saw a small tree! It also had white leaves. Of course, it was black and about six feet high; but its foreign bark felt soft and smooth as silk.

She walked on and saw more trees, gradually getting taller along the way. Soon they became a white and black blur of a forest.

Then she saw a large overhanging rock in the distance for a shelter and under it was a cave. She decided that it was worth it to see if she could use it. She walked to it carefully.

She cautiously went down the dark tunnel. There were lots and lots of deep passageways, which was turning her experience more terrible. Something could be lurking around any corner, watching her at any minute! She started to assume this cave-exploring thing was a bad idea. The strange, eerie glow about the walls was unsettling. She just started to turn back, when something with warty long fingers snatched her from behind.

"Ahhh!" She cried. She looked over her shoulder and saw an indescribably ugly orc. "Let go of me! Now!" She struggled, and then pulled out her bone-knife. She tried to twist her arms awkwardly trying to slice the orc. It just disgustingly licked its teeth and simply plucked the knife from her grasp. He pinched her harder.

"Your attempts to escape are proving fruitless." It growled.

Then the giant multitude of orcs came running out from the deepest, darkest part of the passages of caves. Some carried torches burning bright. All of them were ugly and terrible, looking at her clothes; and checking her pockets; searching her over, observing her face to feet. They chained her feet and arms. Then out of the swarm came an especially strong one carrying a whip. Lydia flinched. She covered her eyes and peeked out, and the orc raised the whip. She waited for the blow. But it never came. All eyes turned suddenly toward the other end of the tunnel, where a distant light was faintly appearing, and rapidly getting closer. Lydia squinted hard, and she saw a flame coming from around the corner. The fire licked over a group of the orcs and burned them. The burned ones rapidly either dropped to the ground, rolled and screeched in pain or split up and fled down the passages. Lydia was not touched by the flame the enemies did. Then, a shape came barging around the corner. Lydia could not see what the shape was through all the smoke in the air. It bit the orcs and swept its wings and sent them flying into the walls. Clearly, it was not fond of orcs. The rest of the orcs that hadn't been hurt went running and screeching, down the tunnels into the dark.

"I believe this is yours." Said the thing, and it held out Lydia's knife. She unsurely picked it up and held it out toward the thing. She said,

"What are you? Who are you? Is this some kind of trick?" Then the thing snorted.

"I would like to say I am a friend, and it is no trick. We should talk somewhere else, if the orcs come back." Then the shape stepped out of the smoke and Lydia stood amazed.

"How, Llosuris?" She cried. "I—I saw you, weren't you—"

"Taken?" I finished her. "Yes, I was. I thought I was a goner." But then I suddenly stood still. "Where's Xauvaylyx?" Then, Lydia's eyes went wide. I realized, "Oh no! I don't think my fire was powerful enough to keep the portal open to allow all three of us to pass through! Then she would have been all alone with Charrheart on the loose! He must have captured her." I sadly made my wings droop. "Plus, I'm not sure you'll want to know where I even was. It's a nasty business." I changed the subject and stuck out my tongue in disgust. Then Lydia pleaded eagerly,

"No! Come on. I have to know where you were, and more importantly, how you escaped." I shrugged.

"Okay. That was your decision. So..." I continued.

And then I explained this is what happened after the worm took me under...

Chapter 4: My Side Of The Story

When I was taken under, I lost consciousness. When I woke up, I smelled the most revolting thing I could ever imagine. I didn't remember anything about the Dishorn taking me under. The pain in my side was less, but it was still bleeding. At least I was strong enough to fly and breathe fire. If I wasn't, that would have been the end of me, really, as you will soon find

out. I wondered, *Where am I? What happened?* Then, I gazed around. I was very confused. I was in a big cave. The walls were an odd color, and made a strange noise. They were also—moving? I stood up, and my talons made a **squelch!** I looked down. *What the?* The ground was all strange, too. I also saw a weird green slime oozing out of the walls, and made a hissing noise. “Ohhh.” I groaned. *Pft. Duh. I know where I am.* I nearly threw up at the thought, though. *Aw, man. The stupid thing just ATE ME!* Then, I suddenly leaped out of the way just in time when stomach acid splattered from the ceiling. “How am I going to get out of this mess?” I said to myself. Suddenly, the whole place lurched forward, and rumbled. I was launched forward. *It must be tunneling farther into the ground! But I’ve got to get out, not further in! Oh, but maybe I can’t. Maybe I’ll just die here miserably. NO! I think I can get out of here in one piece! Maybe two, if I’m unlucky, but still!* I thought strongly. I looked around, both ways. They looked the same to me! One way would (Possibly) Lead to ‘freedom’, and the other unfortunately to the monster’s intestines. I swept off the ground. I didn’t; well, no one would like the way digestive juices began to suddenly slowly fill the whole floor! I also noticed the slimy walls of the stomach were compressing tighter. I took extra caution to avoid the toxic acid. Then I could hear something screeching from outside. Then the noise suddenly stopped. “Oh, no.” I muttered.

There was a slurping sound. “Oh no.” I said again. *It’s going to swallow something.* I gained height as I saw something slowly being squeezed by the walls out of one of the tunnels into the stomach. The thing was unfortunately big and took up a lot of the space. I also observed it smelled terrible. I did recognize the thing, and I nearly threw up again. I looked yellow. It was a warty Sasquatch, with its spine cracked in half, and the back of its head was touching its heels. Then I refused to look at it, and I turned around. I was the same height as I was a moment ago, but when

my wings up stroked, I could feel the slime of the stomach. The walls had gotten closer! I backed up, and actually flew into the other wall. Then I looked down, and I yelled. The digestive juices had filled up half of the whole stomach! The Sasquatch was already engulfed in it. *I have to get out of here before I'm digested. At least I know where the throat is. But what if its mouth is closed? Well, I think I have a solution for that. Or, I might use it now.* The walls and juices were dreadfully close now, and the only way to disturb the worm right now was fire. I roared, and shot streams of fire all around; and the worm shuddered. "This might work!" I cried. I shot more fire, and evaporated on contact, but hurt the thing nonetheless. It lurched, and the walls went back, and the acid level went lower. From inside, I could hear the Dishorn roar. But, if I was going to fly out of its mouth, I would have to keep its throat muscles back. Then, I thought. *Fire! I can use fire again! But if fire isn't strong enough to push the muscles back, I'll be swallowed again. Well, it's worth a try!* But, it took me a while before I decided I would actually do it. The Dishorn's guts shifted and I nearly fell. I didn't have much time. I growled nervously and started flying up the throat. The muscles around me squeezed in tighter, and I flapped a little bit faster; but the throat started closing in on me making a disgusting sound. I inhaled sharply and shot fire. But would that make the muscles retaliate, or close in tighter? The worm shuddered, and the passage opened! But not for long. And how long is it from its stomach to the mouth? I flapped more cautiously. I kept thinking so hard if Lydia was fending for herself okay, and if she was even alive that I did not notice the muscles tightening again. Until I felt them mushing against me. I struggled, but I was just squeezed tighter. And pushed downwards!

"Nooo!" I shouted. "Not again!" I clawed at the throat and blasted fire, but the muscles were so tight, I could barely get enough air to breathe flames. Then I stopped trying altogether. I was tugged downwards faster, and closed my eyes, thinking. *What was I thinking? You can't escape being*

killed if you're eaten. But suddenly, I felt the same surge of energy I did before the portal closed. I can't fail Jack and Rinix; and Xauvaylyx, wherever she is. I WON'T DIE HERE! I gritted my teeth, opened my eyes and roared. I shoved the throat back with my wings with as much strength that I had left, and burst forward, sending flames in all directions. I angrily sank my teeth into the walls around me, and clawed the throat as deep as my talons could. The Dishorn hissed, and as I flew on, I suddenly saw a large tunnel, *probably the way to the lungs.* I thought. I steered clear; very clear; of that side of the esophagus. Soon after, a gigantic tonsil dangled in front of me; (Four times the size of me) and there loomed three rows of the largest fangs I had ever seen. *So, those are only the BIGGEST FANGS I HAVE EVER SEEN! How'll I get past three rows of giant teeth?* Then suddenly its giant black tongue was raised, and slapped down again and it made a thunderous noise. "So I had better avoid that." I muttered sarcastically to myself. "I'll have to do this quick." I took a deep breath and quickly flew toward the mouth. All of a sudden, the giant mouth collapsed. I groaned. "Now I just have to use fire again." I tried to shoot flames at the closed jaws, but I just coughed smoke. *Pfft. Bang goes that idea. I'll have to just do this the old fashioned way.* I could see a bit still because the monster's fangs gave off a faint (unsettling) light, and I barreled out of the way just in time when the Dishorn's tongue nearly slapped me out of the air, again, or rather, the air **in** the mouth. "Darn." I said suddenly. "I'm **inside** of a gigantic worm!" I grabbed on to one of the large fangs and held on. I started biting and clawing at the roof of the mouth and its gums. I felt the mouth rumble, then it opened with a roar, and nearly blew me off of the tooth. *Now is my chance!* I anxiously beat my wings as fast as I could, and shot out like a bullet before its mouth closed again. It looked blinded and surprised, but there was no light. But then, I looked at myself and I was glowing once again. I looked all around. We were in a strange, giant sand cave with some slime occasionally seeping out of the wall. I then finally saw

a giant horde of carcasses which added to the terrible smell, and piles of jewels and gold. For a moment I stood (Or technically flew) dumbfounded. There was so much! Then, I realized that I could breathe fire again when I came to my senses. I wouldn't have even stood a chance against it if I didn't. I swooped down, and circled its head until I got it confused. Then, I stopped and shot a blast of flames at its empty eyes, and it screeched in pain, writhing around, lashing its head around; trying to find me. I was well out of its reach. I had to cover my ears. "When he gets angry, he sure gets angry." I muttered. It tried to lunge at me again with its jaws open, but I flew up. It was like a deadly game of 'Dead Man' with my life and possibly everyone else's at stake. Then, I dove down and blasted a stream of flame along its back and I saw the Dishorn's true size. The thing was like a snake, long and slender (For its size), and I thought it must be truly miles long! I looked at the coiled length and unsurely thought I could get out of here. Suddenly, the tail whipped around and hit me! I was knocked out of the air and realigned myself and dropped a bit as the tail came at me again. After the tail coiled around again, the head of the giant worm opened its mouth and slowly turned around menacingly. I suddenly just remembered that Dishorns smell through their tails. *Oh, I'm hooped now. It can find me from practically anywhere here. Unless it didn't have anything to find me with!* I zoomed out of the way as the worm attacked, and I headed behind it and the tail just started to smell where I was. Then I blasted the tip clean off of the rest of the tail and I watched as puffy indigo blood came gushing out of the tail. The Dishorn roared in pain. I groaned and turned around. I looked yellow. *Hey, I'm already green! Why must this thing keep doing that to me? Or do I just change color depending on my mood? Or do I change yellow all the time?* I ignored it, and the monster looked angrier than ever. It slithered quickly, hissing, at me. How could it know where I was? *Oh, yeah. Some of these dumb things have infrared vision. But I shot it. Maybe I only struck one eye.* I blasted the worm's other working eye, and it

suddenly melted like wax! It was the creepiest thing I had ever seen, (For right now). The eye socket was drenched with dark blood and it was empty. I really tried hard not to be grossed out. It made a terrible gurgling noise in its throat and suddenly out of its mouth came a shower of toxic droplets like a dragon breathes fire. I gasped in surprise and fear as a drop of acid nearly splattered on my wing and leg and I suddenly realized exactly who I was dealing with. **Oh. My. Gosh. This must be the—the leader of them all! No other Dishorn but the leader can spray acid!** My eyes were wide as I scanned the fortress for a way to escape. There was none. Then the Dishorn sprayed acid at me again. The drops were flying everywhere. There were too many of them to dodge, and I knew it was fatal. Then time seemed to stand still as I thought, **So, this is how I'm going to go down. Killed by an overgrown worm. Right here.** I refused to move, it would do no good if I did dodge. **This battle could go on for as long as I live.** I sadly lowered my head. **But...**I perked up a bit. **I will not let my friends die!** I yelled in my head. **"THIS IS NOT HOW I WILL DIE!!! THIS IS HOW YOU WILL!!!"** I shouted as loud as I could. I folded my wings over my body, and I knew what I said was a pure fact. Then I roared triumphantly and unfolded my wings and spread them. I was surrounded by white and gold fire as a strong shockwave of energy shot from my whole body with a noise like lightning. It possessed the whole cavern and worm backed up and hissed. I inhaled deeply and felt the surge of energy once again; and hurled golden fire at the monster. And the fire engulfed the fortress. That is the power of Rotaris. I roared again in success as the dead monster lay lifeless on the ground. I blasted my new gold fire at the ceiling and it collapsed in a heap of sand all over the place, but I created a shield with my power, and the sand merely didn't even touch me. I looked up and I inhaled the first breath of fresh air I hadn't in forever (Two and a half hours), and there was no ceiling left of the cave, and I zipped out of the opening. I wasn't as deep down in the ground as I had thought, but I was still pretty far in. But I took no notice that I had to fly vertically out. After that, I came out of the opening and gazed at the four

moons for a good while and flew around for a bit, forgetting all of my troubles. Then, I saw the distant embers of a fire, (Which was Lydia's fire) and I suddenly remembered. I had to find her! I sensed there was something happening so I speedily scanned the landscape for things doing things that they shouldn't. After I nearly thought she was done for, I saw a cave under an overhanging rock. I could hear a commotion. (And, I guess it proved to be a good thing, too.) I sneakily swooped down in front of the cave and peered around the corner. *Orcs! I guess I'll stop whatever mischief they're up to.* I then stepped in, and they were onto me in a flash. Before I could breathe fire, they had my wings, arms, and my mouth bound before you can say 'Ball and Chain' and started grabbing at my wings and tail and scales. But I didn't even flinch. I whipped my tail around (It was very foolish of them to not take control of my tail), and bowled over all the orcs within my range, and one I knocked out held keys to my chains. I swung my tail around at orcs trying to get to the keys before me, and I expertly lifted the key chain out of the orc's grasp. I gripped it hard with my tail, and brought the key up to my arms. I adjusted it around a little bit and slid it into the lock. The chains dropped and I snatched the key with my talons and freed my wings and my jaws. I blasted fire at the orcs, and they fled like rabbits chased by a fox.

Chapter 5: The Land Where There Isn't

"...And so, you know the rest and that brings us to where we are now!" I finished.

"Wow. I really don't know how you could even stand being in that thing's guts." Said Lydia.

I groaned. "Don't remind me."

"I think we should get out of here. We have to find Jack and Rinix."

I nodded. "And Xauvaylyx." I added. "We've got to open another portal. We better get outside, there's not enough space in here." Lydia

jumped on my back and I sprinted out of the dark tunnel. When we got out, Lydia jumped off my back.

"Okay, so do that thing you did before. Only, make your fire powerful."

I smirked. I shot a blast of gold flame at the ground and for a while the sand just flew. And when we looked again, there were golden sparks flying and there was a deep crater in the ground.

"Is that powerful enough?"

Lydia nodded. "Definitely." Then I leaped into the air and started spinning while breathing flames and the vortex started to take shape. When it was done, it looked much bigger than my last portal. And I didn't get dizzy!

"I can be very sure we will both make it in." I said. "However, I can't guarantee we'll make it the Monogoural." I warned. "Okay. We'll jump in three, two, one, JUMP!"

And we both jumped.

I suddenly free fell through the air. The portal closed behind me, and I spread my wings. The air caught my wings and I sailed up. I looked around and couldn't see anything but air. Empty air. But then again, I felt a cool sea breeze, which I hadn't felt for a while, and breathed it in like gold. But, where the ground should be there was an endless sea of water. But where was Lydia? I worriedly thought, **Charrheart must have taken her at the last moment!**

Then suddenly, something slammed against my back and I nearly fell out of the sky. Of course, it was Lydia. She groaned.

"Llosuris, is it just me, or are we in a land with none?"

I swept the area again, hovering.

"I don't see anywhere to land. But, I think we should get a drink. The water looks clean and clear enough."

I swooped down and hovered just above the water. Lydia climbed to the tip of my tail and drank the water. I looked down at my reflection, and it was so clear I could see all my green scales and spines. Then I coughed. There was something floating above me!

"Lydia, there's something big over us!"

She scrambled around, clinging to my spines. But then... I looked closer. "Well, I'll be darned."

She looked up too.

I whisked off and ascended, and we saw it. Lydia gasped with awe. The land here isn't on the classic ground.

"Lydia, you are really seeing the thing nearly no one has. You're looking at the Sky Islands."

Lydia just gazed all around at the Islands smiling ear to ear. I did, too. How could we not! (I seemed to be gold tinted) The sky was permanently pure crystal blue (Except on a couple Islands with special weather patterns!), and there were so many places to look!

"Wow!" We both exclaimed.

"Lydia, I've heard about this place in legend, and it's more than I ever thought it would be!" I said.

We had no words to describe it; the beauty of the world was overtaking us at this special moment, more beautiful than you can imagine! I plainly just fell in love with it instantly! (Not literally.) But then I groaned.

"I wish the others were here to see this."

Lydia nodded. "But, we should enjoy the moment."

She was right.

Some of the Islands were just pinnacles of bare, lonely rock, but all were unique! The Islands were on different levels, up and down. The bases of the Islands were pointed and covered with mosses and big ones had two points. A few larger of the Islands possessed small but majestic mountains or red rock canyons with streams flowing in between them. There were Islands with tors shrouded with mist. Some had otherworldly (Which is very true) beautiful forests, and some were in different seasons. A few had just pure green grass with no weeds. A couple had fields of yellow, gold and red, and lilac-pink and blue flowers taking over the dull color of rock. Some were inhabited by the crystal clear of water, in fact, so clear you could see their bottoms without squinting. There were also hot springs! Some had a good steam rising. And some were mineral-enriched, and so they were colored like a rainbow. Another few of the Islands had a wall of rock and over them came a waterfall or two that plunged down, down, down, into the sea far below. One had a frozen stiff waterfall that went down to the sea; but it strangely did not melt away. Some Islands were just water. One was a very old lake with giant salt formations to show for it. A few of the Islands had ancient ruin that was appearing not to be inhabited. Some had special weather patterns, like fog hanging low over the ground, or snow coming from nowhere.

There was a lot more, but we were particularly hungry. "Lydia, we should look for something to eat if there even is anything to eat." She nodded.

"But this time, I don't think we should settle for meat (If there is anything alive here) unless we can't find anything else." She said.

I snorted.

"Fine." I snapped. "Meat's better. She better learn that." I muttered under my breath. Then, I dove down toward another island. And another. And another. By that time, I was worn out. "Lydia, we're going to go kill something." But then, unlucky for me, Lydia pointed.

"Llosuris, do you see? On your left, there's a small island with a bramble, and I think it's got berries!"

I growled, but I flew over to the Island, and landed. Lydia sprinted over to the bushes and picked the berries before I could tell her to determine if they're safe or not. I really was hungry enough to eat those. What do you know? They were strawberries; the only berry I didn't mind that much. I ran over to her, with enthusiasm, and picked the berries, too. Lydia just stuffed hers in her mouth and I did too. Soon, I decided I wanted meat.

"Lydia, I'm going to the water, just below here for a fish. Are you coming? You've got to be bored of berries." She frowned. She *was* tired of strawberries. Fish didn't sound that bad.

"Okay, okay, I'll go on your stupid fishing trip."

"Hey, it's not stupid." I protested. "Get on."

She ran over to me and climbed on to my back. I leaped off the ledge and we both scanned the water.

"There!" I cried suddenly. I stooped, and Lydia nearly flew off my back.

"Do you see one?" She shouted.

I got real close to the water and dragged my talons in it. Then I snatched four fish at once and handed them to Lydia.

"Hold these for me." I said.

Lydia groaned.

"But they're all slimy and disgusting."

I shot her a look. "Toughen up. Bass are real good, and if you complain I get them all to myself."

After that she didn't say how slimy the fishes were. I caught more, and by the time I soared back up, we had two dozen. I landed by the berry

bushes and Lydia collected some branches. I breathed flame on them, and it made a good fire. I dumped our fish on the fire. A minute later, I plucked them off. They were perfect. Lydia even had to admit it.

"Llosuris, these fish are actually really good."

I looked at her smugly. "I told you." And I ate two fish. "The cod are the best."

When we were finished, Lydia got on my back and we were airborne again. I glided around, and we both scanned the Islands for a place to sleep.

Apparently, the Sky Islands don't have forever blue skies, and at night, as I found out; the sky turns indigo. There were no stars, but beautiful Northern lights that rippled across the night sky. There was misty green, sea blue, purple and pink. It had also grown a little colder.

"Look there!" I shouted, pointing. I saw an Island that owned a green hill with a large overhang. "That's perfect!"

I plunged toward the Island and I landed in front of the outcrop. Lydia dismounted and strode under it.

"This looks good." She said. "But I wish we didn't have to sleep on wet dirt in the cold."

I growled and let out fire, charring the ground.

"It's not wet or cold anymore." I said. Then I folded one of my wings and laid down. I coiled my tail, and Lydia sat down. Then I covered her with my other wing.

I dreamed of hanging Charrheart's head on a stick.

I woke up very early, expecting a bloody skull on a staff and miserably discovered with a groan that I didn't kill him. And Lydia won't be up for

about two hours; so I flew off. Not very far, you know. When you haven't been in this floating Realm enough, you can get lost all too easily.

I can't leave Lydia by herself for long. Realms are seldom predictable, I thought.

I explored more Islands and learned my way around a little bit better.

And I went fishing again. I went a little farther out than I did last time, and I swooped down. And a few minutes later I finished, and I had ended up with seven good looking fish. I soared back to the hill. I dropped down and put the fish under. Lydia was not awake yet. So, I went back to the Strawberry Island and collected more branches for another fire. I swooped back to our hill. But when I landed, there was no overhang! Oh. I realized. I must have landed on the wrong Island. So I swept off the ground again and hovered. I thought for a moment, and I remembered the Islands I had passed while going to the hill. I had passed one with luminescent mushrooms, then one with dark green oak timberland. I glided past them and soon I saw the hill island. When I landed again, I made the fire when Lydia was just waking up. She wearily rubbed her eyes and saw the fire.

"Ahhh! Fire! Call the police, the Navy! And my attorney!" She ran in circles over and over again; and I tried to chase her to tell her I was just cooking fish. Then she stopped.

"Oh, wait, you're just making fish." She said. She wandered over to the fire and sat down. I picked up some the fish and handed her one. I grabbed a handful of charred ones.

"After we eat these, we'll have to leave again." I groaned. "It's going to be hard to leave a place like this."

"Yeah." Lydia said. "We can come back after this is all over." I tossed the handful of fish into my mouth.

"Well, if we're going to the Monogoural, we should stock up on food and water. We'll go to the Strawberry Island and the sea. Sound like a plan?" I explained. Lydia nodded.

"When? Should we go now? How will we store water and food?" She asked.

I shuffled my talons uneasily.

"We, uh, you could make a sack?" I shrugged.

Lydia frowned. "I'll try my best." She said.

"While you were asleep, I explored the Islands a bit, and I got a glimpse of one totally covered with ferns." I said. Lydia nodded agreeably.

"Come on, then! Let's go!" She leaped onto my back and I ran out into the open air and I jumped off the ledge.

"I remembered it's West off this Island." I banked left and flew past an Island with large boulders, one with a deep crater, and a couple more. Then we both caught sight of it.

"Okay, Lydia. Can you really make a basket?" I asked.

She whipped her hair. "Yeah, of course I can. I used to attend a crafting class and we used grass to weave sacks. I don't see why I can't do it now."

I swooped down and leapt into the ferns.

"They're so soft!" I cried.

Lydia fell off my back and I started to roll on the plants.

"Llosuris, stop it! I need those!" She cried. I stopped and pulled out some from the ground and tossed them at her.

"Come on! Just feel them." I said. She was totally bombarded with the ones I threw at her. At first, I thought she was so frustrated she wouldn't come out; but when I dug the ferns off her, she yelled.

"Hey, I was swimming in those!"

I snorted.

"Pfft. I told you. When am I ever wrong?" I boasted.

Then Lydia crossed her arms. "I have got an answer for that one."

I backed away. "Can you just make the baskets now?" I didn't give her any time to answer, and I said, "All right, then. While you do that, I'll go fishing just below here, okay?" I didn't let her respond to that, either, because I leaped off the edge and dove as fast as I could.

"Hmph. Dragons." Lydia sighed. She went over to the ferns and started to weave.

I wanted to just swim for a while, so instead of pulling up from my dive, I plunged into the sea, with my wings folded like a torpedo. I made a giant wave. I gazed around the water. "Wow." I said. I watched as my breath's air bubbled to the surface. The water was amazingly clear, and there were coral reefs in the distance. There were swarms of fish, tropical and freshwater! **How is that possible? Well, that's the amazing stuff of other worlds!** I beat my wings to propel myself forward. I bit two fish that were trying to zoom past. I put them in my talons and I burst out of the water. Then I stopped flapping and let myself go limp. Before I hit the water I spread my wings with a jerk and skimmed the water as I glided forward. "This is aaawweesssoommmeeee!" I cried. Then I dove into the sea and snagged a couple of fish. I soared back up and spotted Lydia weaving. I flew down to her. "How's it going?" I asked. Lydia held up four finished baskets.

"Did you get some fish?"

I nodded. "Yes, but I think I'll go out again for some more. Five fish won't last us for very long." I said. "Are you going to come with me?"

Lydia slung the baskets over my back. "Yeah. But I bet I can find more fish!"

I growled.

"Bring it on!" I rushed off the ledge and dropped. We plunged toward the water.

"Llosuris, stop!" She cried. I pulled up and saw a fish.

"I found the first one. Hold your breath." I said.

"Hold my breath? What do you—" She said.

I dove into the water at the fish and stabbed it with my talons before it even got the thought of escape. Then I rose back up. Lydia was drenched.

"Put this fish in the basket." I handed her the fish and she grabbed it and stuffed it into the basket.

"I see one!" She cried.

After that, we kept seeing fish and I kept catching them until the basket was filled.

"Okay, the other two baskets will be for water and berries." I said. Lydia agreed. I hovered above the water and Lydia submerged the basket into the water and pulled it out.

"You must have made that one pretty tight." I observed. "Now, we'll go to Strawberry Island." I flew up and off toward the Island. "Oh, by the way, I won the fish catching competition."

I landed in front of the bushes and Lydia started picking the berries and placing them carefully into the basket. Soon, all our baskets were full.

"We're ready to go." I said. "Say goodbye, Lydia." She took one last look at the Islands. Then I whirled around breathing fire and made the portal. I landed by Lydia and we both stepped near the portal. Then we nervously leaped.

Chapter 6: The Land Of Nightmares

We landed painfully on charred rock. Dark clouds filled the whole sky. It was black and terrible compared to the beauty and light of the Sky Islands. Lightning crackled in the sky and there were black turrets everywhere. Servants of evil stood watch on them. There was an erupting volcano spewing lava over its sides, and it came exploding out too. There were flying ships and gray clouds with buildings on top. Then, there was a disturbingly giant pit quite close to us, and there was a giant castle with large houses fenced by a brick wall. There was an arena type thing lined with giant cages that went into the mountain it was built on.

"Where are we?" Asked Lydia timidly.

I looked fierce and highlighted red. "We are finally in the Plutairis Monogoural"

She gasped. Then, some knights with silver armor from head to feet; with spears, swords, bows, and shields came rushing at us, yelling. Lydia screamed and went behind me. I blew a stream of fire in all directions, and some knights fell on the ground. Some blocked with their shields, and surrounded me. Archers twanged their bows, and sent arrows flying at me. I blasted the arrows, but that was probably not the best use of fire. Arrows that did hit me usually ricochet off my scales. Some of them did stick in my tail, shoulder, or wing and I winced. But, those arrows were not enough to stop me.

I swiped the knights with shields back with my tail, and shot fire at the others. But then, one with a spear got out of my visual and plunged the end into my side. I bit the knight and flung him away. I could barely breathe for

a moment, and then I collapsed on the ground. Lydia yelled and ran over to me.

"Llosuris, are you okay?"

I growled in pain. "Yes" I mumbled. I nervously wrapped my talons around the weapon, and yanked it out. I dropped the blood-tipped spear on the ground and my side was bleeding badly. I struggled to my feet and spread my wings for balance. There were no more knights chasing us, for now, so we started trudging toward the castle walls. Then, we stopped. Lydia opened the baskets of food. She ate a strawberry.

"Can you make a fire?" She asked. Then I breathed a plume of flame on the ground, and I winced. Lydia put a fish on the fire.

A minute later, she took it off. And she ate it. But, I wasn't hungry. My side throbbed a little less, though.

Lydia randomly tossed the fish bones behind her.

But they fell and clattered, even how small they were, into the dark chasm of the pit. The echoes were uncanny.

"Lydia—" I managed to say, "That wasn't a good idea."

Then, there was rumbling then a roar coming from the pit. Lydia flinched.

"I think you're right." She groaned.

A giant slimy head burst out of the pit!

"AAAAHHHH!" Lydia screamed. "WHAT IS THAT?"

"Oh, no!" I shouted. The monster in the pit lunged, and whipped a ridiculously gigantic and sticky pair of tongues at us, and I jumped out of the way. Lydia just ran out of its reach.

"I think that is a Baroopal. We've seen enough monsters for one day, really!" I shouted.

"Hmm. I think you might be right." Said a slithery voice behind me. I turned around. Charrheart was sitting on a throne and observing his staff.

"Get out of here!" I commanded. I stalked toward him.

"Oh, just where? I also think I'll take *this* young lady with me, too." Charrheart seized Lydia. She was too frightened to fight back.

I stopped moving.

"Let go of her!" I roared. I charged toward him.

Charrheart clutched Lydia and puffed over the Baroopal's head. Its short six arms were waving wildly, and its tongues were outstretched and nearly touching her.

"Shall I let go of her now?" Charrheart said. I sprinted over to the pit and looked down. The Baroopal's attention was still focused on Lydia. **Well, not for long.** "HEY!" I yelled, waving my wings. "Snail face, I'm over here!" The Baroopal shifted its gaze over me and I flinched back. It started to crawl/slime its way to the other side of the pit where I was. I reared up.

"Come try me!" I shot fire at it, and it blasted one of the Baroopal's arms off, and blood poured from the wound. It didn't look convinced it should be frightened. I kept shooting it with fire balls, and more blood gushed from its wounds, but it kept trudging closer.

"Llosuris, don't do thi—" Lydia cried, and Charrheart covered her mouth. She struggled to get free, but if she did, she would have fallen into the pit. So she stopped. But then, Charrheart released his grip on Lydia and she fell into the pit, screaming.

"No!" I cried. I lunged off the ledge and dived as fast as I could to Lydia. I snagged her up and swooped up. I reached the ledge. But not in safety.

"Ahh, Llosuris, look out!" She yelled. I turned around, and the Baroopal lunged right on top of me and engulfed me. Again.

Lydia gasped. "Nooo." She groaned. Charrheart seized her shoulders. "I've got faith in you, Llosuris." She whispered.

I moaned. "Not again." I muttered. I was only in its black mouth, which is a lot less than I have experienced. (As you know). The tongues were rolled up like rugs in the mouth, and the smell was insanely worse than that of the Dishorn's. Unlike it, the Baroopal had no teeth whatsoever, the Dishorn had three large rows lining the whole mouth.

Then, the tongues started smashing against me, and I dodged to a different section of its mouth. I roared, and blasted fire at the mouth. The Baroopal growled, and opened it.

That was simple. Too simple. I thought. At least, compared to the Dishorn. I dashed out of the mouth and it extended its tongues after me. But I was long out of their reach.

I flew over to a watchtower, and there was a strange person on top, armed with a bow.

Once he caught sight of me, he started firing arrows and shouting curses. I blasted fire, and he fell dead. I landed on the tower and looked for a place likely to keep prisoners. That really doesn't take long in a place like this. I saw a strange (Well, strange for any Realm) area where there was no land, or no land in sight, just red and purple mist and an eerie floating building which looked like it was surrounded by liquefied fire.

"Great." I mumbled. "Everyone's in there."

Chapter 7: Prison Break

Okay, I'll need a plan. I'll sneak past the guards. Or I guess I'll kill them. I'll see if that mist stuff does anything to you, then break into the prison. Free the prisoners, and kill Charrheart, then take the prisoners to a safe Realm. All right, then, that is a plan.

Then, I swooped toward the ground and dove behind a rock as three chattering guards wandered past. "Did ya' see how he jus' fell clean on 'is face in the bar?" Said one that just ripped meat off his chicken leg.

"Yea, the Dragon just put poison in is' drink, I'll wager." Whispered another.

"Hush!" Ordered the one on the left, who was obviously the wisest. "Don't talk about that guy. I don't like him, and you don't joke about it. We're prisoners. That was evil, it was."

"All, right, Galion, I 'spose you' right again." Murmured the first one. Then they walked off in silence without another word. **What was that about?** I thought. **Who's The 'Dragon'?** Then I stepped out from behind the rock and suddenly, Galion turned around and saw me. I gasped.

"There's a dragon." He said, starting to pull back his bow, but uncertainly.

"Oh, just' kill it. I got a 'sowd." Said the second one. He was just about to lunge, I about to breathe fire.

"WAIT." Said Galion. I hissed, and didn't fire.

"Give me one good reason, quickly. You're lucky I've not roasted you yet." Galion put away his bow.

"Wha're ya doin!" Cried the first one.

"No." Galion said. He wandered behind the boulder with me, and the other two did, too. "Dragon, why are you not working at your post? Why do you sneak?" He asked calmly.

"Why haven't you attacked me?" I demanded. Galion looked at me.

"Respond to my questions first." He said. I snorted. "I will answer. I have no assigned posts, and I am trying to get to the prison."

Galion gave me a look.

"No one wants to go into the prison. Why do you?"

I thought for a moment. Is he good or bad? "I- I want to get to the prison to rescue my friends."

Galion nodded. I thought he would yell or something. He whispered. "We can tell you the basics. But first, you should know our names." I was really astounded. Can he really help me? Is he lying?

Then Galion pointed to the muttering, first guy.

"This is Jason, Jason Black." And then he pointed to the second guy. "That's Ronin. Some call him The Jukdod. And I'm Galion."

I peered around the corner at the prison.

"So, you're willing to help me?" I asked.

"I guess." Said Galion.

"Ony' if you free us, give us food an' get us out of 'ere!" Jason protested.

"Okay." I agreed. "But aren't you prisoners? I overheard your talk, so why are you out here?" I asked. Galion nodded.

"We are, in fact, prisoners. We're working for *him*, if you know who I mean. No other prisoners are guards." He said. "Now, I suppose we should help you break into the prison. Right, Jason? Right Ronin?" Jason

unenthusiastically nodded. Ronin drew his sword eagerly. "I'm ready." He said.

Galion started explaining. "Okay. So, the prison is on a platform which under it is a canyon; we call it 'Lightning Gorge' which is an appropriate name to call it, it's filled by really dangerous stuff called electric—" "Mist." I finished. "I've seen it before."

"So, if it's all right with you, we'll fly, on your back, over the mist, but we have to stay out of sight and make no noise whatsoever—RONIN." He said. Ronin scowled. "Fine."

"Then," He continued, "You'll need to knock out, sneak by, or kill some of the guards, and throw their bodies into the electric mist. Then, the prisoners are kept in one single room in the right hall. But, that could attract a lot of attention if you blow up the lock, and it would be difficult to escape with all the prisoners. I would say, the only way you could make the guards flee is if their leader is killed."

I snarled.

"So I would have to—I mean, get to kill Charrheart." I asked. "Or, there is a big chance we won't escape. Do I have this all right?"

Jason nodded. "Very."

"Okay, then." I said. "Let's go raid the prison!"

Ronin leaped onto my back, and nearly fell off. Galion climbed on and held onto my spines, and Jason had to climb up my tail.

"I neve' flown before." Ronin said.

When everyone was sure that they wouldn't fall off, I sprinted and spread my wings and leaped off the ledge. Ronin anxiously looked over the side. Then, suddenly, lightning came out of the electric mist, nearly hitting me! I banked out of the way, and Ronin yelled.

"Hold on!" I cried. The lightning strikes seemed to be following us. I dove, and I crash landed by the prison just when a bolt of the lightning smashes against the cliff face and boulders tumble off into the abyss of basically, nothing.

"Be quiet!" Jason scolded.

"Okay, now we've got to get into the prison." I said. I observed the walls. "The whole place is stone." I held up my talons and scathed the wall. It left a queer red glow and soon disappeared.

Then, Galion looked around the corner.

"The door is over there. There's only a few guards. We should go in now." He reported.

I nodded. Then I walked quietly around the corner and hid behind a pillar with strange markings embedded into it. I watched the guards for a few seconds behind a rock, then I shot fire at them. They fell dead. I walked over to them and threw their bodies over the ledge. I gestured for them to come, and Galion, Ronin, and Jason ran over, swiftly. I shot a look inside the prison. There weren't any more guards, so I stepped inside. The others did too.

"Is it the left hall?" I asked. "I don't remember."

Jason nodded. "Uh-huh." So I stalked uncertainly down the stone, torch lit hall. There were strange engravings, and caveman like drawings of a dragon.

Then, I shifted my gaze away from them and saw a gigantic cage. Which was clearly where everyone was held. The countless prisoners were swarming to the front of the cave, and they still had their weapons and belongings, which was surprising. I looked around the 'cursing Charrheart' crowd from a safe distance to find my friends. It was hard to concentrate with everyone yelling, but soon I thought flying would get me above the

crowd, and I caught sight of a young, brown dragon at the very back, with a person with a large backpack, wandering unhappily in circles.

The dragon sniffed the air and recognized a faint scent out of all the prisoners that were there. He leapt to his feet and sprinted over to the other side of the cage where I was.

"Rinix!" I shouted. "Are you all right?" I asked. Rinix nodded happily. Then, he noticed Jason, Galion, and Ronin. He snarled and tried to bite them through the bars and the three backed away.

"No!" I cried. "They're fine!" Rinix whimpered apologetically.

"It's all right." I said. "Can you get Lydia, Jack and Xauvaylyx for me?"

Rinix jumped up, and ran to the back of the giant cell into the chaos.

Then he came prancing back with Jack, Lydia, and Xauvaylyx running towards me.

"How did he get to here?" Jack asked Lydia.

"We'll have to explain it later. It's a long story."

Jack and Lydia grabbed the bars of the cell.

"How do we get out?" Asked Jack.

I seethed fire, and the vapor glowed and floated to the stone ceiling. "How do you think?" I said. "Oh, by the way," I said loudly, loud enough for every prisoner to hear, "All of you are going to escape tonight!"

Then there was cheering. That encouraged me.

Time to get fierce, I thought to myself.

"Do you have weapons!" I shouted, grabbing the bars and bending them.

"Yes!" The crowd shouted in approval.

"Do you have glory?" I yelled, rising off the ground.

"YES!" The prisoners cried, clashing their swords and shields, making a thunderous noise.

"Will we have Charrheart's miserable head tonight!?"

Then there was the biggest cheer of them all, but my friends and my new friends cheered the loudest, and the crowd backed up. I shot a stream of fire at the bars, and they melted. The prisoners raised their weapons and Xauvaylyx reared and spread her wings, roaring. And everyone charged just as some guards came running in, hearing a commotion.

"What is going on in here?" One said that carried a spear, before a dozen prisoners swarmed him and the other guards. Then they followed everyone else.

Chapter 8: Prisoners V.S. Warriors

This was the first great battle in a hundred years. And I was proud to be a part of it.

Soldiers from all over came rushing to the scene.

But the freed prisoners fought them off. I took to the sky and blasted at the evil servants, and my fire exploded on contact. Then I dropped to the ground and slashed at the enemies with my claws, bit them and tossed them into the Gorge. I swiped them with my tail and wings, and they crashed into others. Jason, Ronin, and Galion stayed close together and they killed and stabbed and shot many soldiers. Jack found good throwing stones, and borrowed a slingshot from a fellow prisoner. It worked effectively, even Lydia used her bone-knife; Xauvaylyx froze the evil warriors with her frost breath, and Rinix fought with talons and teeth. Then he suddenly inhaled deeply and shot a giant stream of liquid fire that must have consumed a dozen soldiers!

"That means Rinix's a Magma dragon!" I realized. He looked pretty pleased with himself there, and he ought to be. Jack, who was fighting near him in the sea of people saw his dragon and yelled. I was happy for him too.

And then, deep, long horns were blown. Everyone stood still. Then, the cages in the arena that I saw earlier were opened, and dragon-like monsters came flying out, roaring and hissing. There were Razoreacks, Delta Ghosts, and Ghost dragons!

I reeled around just when a wispy-winged Ghost dragon flew into me, and we both went careening toward the ground. I crashed, and the Ghost dragon just went through the ground. Then he came back out and tackled me. I shot fire at it, and it screeched.

"Hey, what are you doing? Don't attack me. I wanna get out of here." Said the Ghost dragon.

"What?" I snapped. "Don't attack *you*? You attacked me."

"Shh!" It demanded. "I was just trying to follow suit for a couple of seconds." Then he gasped. "Oh yeah, hi my name's Morro I know I'm a Ghost dragon but I'm a good guy and I can't take Charr-what's his name and don't want to be here and I heard about an awesome dragon freeing everyone and I wanna be on your side and I have to get out of here it will not be in fact the last thing I'll ever do actually it should be the very first if I hadn't mentioned that before!" He said, at, like, hyper speed all at once.

"Did you get all that?" Morro asked. Before I had time to answer that, which my response would be *no*, Morro said, (In hyper speed), "Wait, no, I haven't asked you anything yet! What type of dragon are you? What's your name? How did you get here? Why are you here? How are you gonna get out of here?"

I had to think hard to remember all that, even how closely I was listening. I thought for a moment. "All right, I'm a Nimbus Fury, my name is

Llosuris, I got here in a magical elemental portal and I'm here to rescue my friends and to kill a creepy wizard dude and I'm going to make another magical elemental portal for all the prisoners and then we'll go to a different Realm and I can't see the stupid future!" I said quickly. "Did you get all that?" I copied.

"Yeah! Of course I did!" Said Morro. "Why wouldn't I?"

I really didn't expect that.

"Uh," I muttered. "Back to business!" I said awkwardly.

A troop of experienced soldiers, suited in bronze armor that seemed to glow gold when lightning and lava reflected off them, were riding Raulugs and Aldis toward us. The snarling Aldis took the lead and charged toward the field of prisoners; slashing them with their horns, cutting like swords through everything in their way.

Morro and I exchanged glances.

"Do you even know what those are?" I said abruptly, pointing at a rampaging Aldis.

"Yes," Said Morro optimistically, "They are in fact (Scientific name!) Aldisahj-Osirusauns, infrequent hybrids; the primary, or, first, one of a steel-clad Fire-Metal variety also known as Forge Osiris, in addition to a festooned-with-Sandgems-Alasahj female who inclined to be fond of him and, thus, bred the first Aldisahj-Osurisaun, which of we call an Aldis at the present time which's scales were naturally inlaid with a titanium silver-alloy which can resist approximately ice, poison, and some fire dragon's blasts."

For a brief second there was silence and my jaw dropped.

"Morro there's an Aldis!" I suddenly cried as the giant monster dove out of the air at us. I jumped up straight at its face and stabbed at one of its giant black eyes. The Aldis lashed furiously trying to get me off. I blew fire at his face and some of its now liquid metal armor dripped over its other

eye and it screeched, and then suddenly its talons came flying at me. I tried to leap out of the way but one of the giant claws pierced my shoulder and it stuck there! I roared in pain as the Aldis' hand pulled back and the stayed in my shoulder. I scrabbled the talons on my other forelimb at the huge ivory claw protruding from my arm and it finally slid out. I panted heavily and clutched my bloodied shoulder. I winced when I looked down over the Aldis' jaws of which I was clinging to. Then I crawled behind its head and gripped its horns.

Then I uncertainly spread my wings with pain and I tried a test flap. **Not enough power in my left wing to get me down.** I thought. So I would have to stay there for a while.

I watched the battle for about a minute without being in it when I couldn't take it anymore.

"I'm going down there!" I said. Then I leaped off the Aldis' head. I free-fell.

I just started to get the hunch I would die when I glowed again and swooped gracefully down. And slit a warrior's throat at the same time. He he.

Then I flapped into the air and the giant body of the Aldis followed. It roared and I inhaled deeply in response. And shot a brilliant and strong stream of shining gold fire and the Aldis nearly fell over. But when it realigned itself, it shot a ball of flame at me, and I swiveled around it, unimpressed. I shot another stream of golden fire in its direction and it toppled over, dead.

"Ha!" I laughed. Suddenly I saw the wispy glow of Morro's wings approaching from below.

"What's so funny?" He asked. "Did you kill him?" He gestured to the dead monster. "Oh, looks like you broke your arm." He said.

I looked at my shoulder again.

"I think I did break it." I said. Now, I'll answer your question: When I killed him, he went up in flames and landed on Charrheart's warriors! Squashed them flat!" I said.

Morro's face was blank. Then, "Oh man! That's so funny I'm gonna die! Get it? He landed on his own guys!" He cried. He nearly fell out of the air.

"Morro, is it just me or is Charrheart sending out less warriors?" I said, changing the subject.

"I think they're too scared!" Morro bragged.

I looked around at the constantly moving battle below.

"Hey, have you even seen him?" I questioned.

"Nope." Said Morro.

"Then where is he?"

Morro stared at me. "I don't know."

Then we both hurdled toward a giant tower of ancient ruin.

Chapter 9: The Final Battle

I barreled into a troop of soldiers that were closing in on Xauvaylyx.

I got back up and saw on the distant platform on the top of the tower through all the clashing swords and spears that there was a strange brown lump laying on the ground.

Jack was next to it with his face covered with his hands.

"Rinix!" I cried. I ran, and trampled any knights in my way.

"Jack, what happened?" I asked quickly.

"I—I don't know for sure, but I saw a weird wizard-person that looked strangely familiar with a red spear, and then Rinix wasn't breathing right." He said slowly.

I looked at Rinix and listened. His heartbeat seemed fine. But, there was a bloody gash by his neck. Then suddenly the dragon shuddered.

Time seemed to stand still at that very moment.

"Is he—" I whispered.

"I think he's gone." Said Jack, voice breaking.

"Oi!" Said Morro pointing at Rinix disgustedly. "Who's that? He got a good cut, didn't he?"

"Morro!" I growled crossly. "He's my friend."

"Awwkwaard..." Morro mumbled, wishing he didn't ask.

He turned away slowly. Jack did too. I stooped down and Jack climbed on my back. Morro and I leapt into the air, but we were suddenly stopped in our tracks.

Thunder and lightning gathered around the giant castle. Then suddenly the Bone dragon's wings seemed to cast an eerie black shadow over the battlefield.

The fighting ceased and no one moved. Morro and I landed silently.

The Bone dragons landed by the old ruined tower and roared. Then Charrheart stepped out of the chariot.

"You nincompoops!" He bellowed, banging on the side of the chariot. "I told you to land on the tower."

The impatient dragons snarled and pulled on the reins. They clattered their wings and swooped up into the sky.

Then they landed in a clear spot and then all of the knights and prisoners backed away and started to leave.

"Why are they leaving?" Said Morro looking around.

"I don't know." I muttered. "But something's wrong."

Then Charrheart stepped out of the chariot.

"So this is how we'll meet again today? Mmm. Thought you would be happier to see me."

"Not really." I muttered in an attack position.

For a reason that I didn't know, my wings and talons tingled strangely. I couldn't stop it. I felt a presence too. And by what I could tell, it wasn't a good one.

Then without any fear, Charrheart walked up to me.

"No!" Morro cried, and he lunged, teeth barred, at Charrheart.

Then Charrheart lifted his staff, aimed it at his attacker, and purple energy came surging out of the top of it.

"Morro!" I shouted.

But Morro was hit by the blast. Then it surrounded him and he was flung across the platform!

He landed by the very edge, unconscious. He was so close, his wispy tail was dangling off the ledge.

I was running toward him worriedly. But Charrheart puffed in front of me.

"You are in my way, Charrheart!" I shouted.

"Hmm, I am? I think I want to get in the way a little more." He said.

Suddenly the ground began to rumble.

"Where's it coming from?" Said Jack. "It's not an earthquake. I know my geology!"

I started to get a *sneaking suspicion* that the source was Charrheart. Then the ground cracked as Charrheart got bigger, and at the same time, he got a little... Scaly?

And I mean BIG. And scaly. I really can't explain it, but I'll do the best I can: He's bigger than the entire platform and at least 150 times larger than me. (☺) The scales resembled a lizard once they formed around him. A giant lizard. The thunder of his footsteps shook the earth. But then... Membrane shot up from his shoulders forming WINGS! Suddenly, his mouth started smoking.

Morro groaned, and slowly stood up, and looked up at Charrheart worriedly. "What the?" He muttered.

I gasped. "Of course! Xauvaylyx, Charrheart is 'The Dragon'!" Xauvaylyx didn't really know what I was talking about, but she knew enough to know Charrheart turned into a dragon.

Charrheart's skin was lava pattern, and his talons were enormous. But while Xauvaylyx was frantically looking for a way to escape, Charrheart inhaled deeply and the scales on his chest glowed an eerie glow... The sign of fire! I rose into the air and dove for her, just as Charrheart was about to spew his dark flames... Before I reached her, a swift, reddish brown shape came diving down and tackled her out of the way. Just then, the purple river of fire came to the ground, clouding everyone's vision for a moment. When the ashes cleared, Charrheart looked at Xauvaylyx's rescuer angrily, his eyes full of rage.

A small dragon stood over Xauvaylyx, panting for breath when I noticed a giant gash running all the way down his neck.

"Rinix!" I cried.

But then Charrheart lunged his head at me, razor sharp fangs gleaming in the unnatural light.

I shot a fire stream at his face and swooped down at his gigantic wings. They were dark and ragged. I grabbed and ripped at his wing membrane, when I felt the pain in my shoulder come back again. I winced, and Charrheart flung me off his back. I came plummeting toward the ground. I hit the ground hard.

Morro stood up hesitantly after falling down, and he growled. Charrheart fixed his fiery gaze on the ghost dragon. "You BETRAYED me? You will pay dearly." He inhaled again and Xauvaylyx, Rinix and me attacked. I flapped into the sky and then Charrheart shot a fireball at Rinix and he dodged. In return, Rinix fired a lava blast. It hit Charrheart's wing and it hardened solid. Rinix clutched his neck in pain, while I decided it would be a disadvantage if he couldn't shoot fire.

I glided over to Rinix, dodging another one of Charrheart's blasts.

"Rinix, if you shoot some lava at Charrheart's mouth, he couldn't breathe fire. Xauvaylyx and me will distract him." Then Rinix looked at me, stunned.

"But I..." He groaned in pain, "It hurts really bad. Shooting lava makes it worse."

I looked down sadly. Then I realized that's the first time he's ever talked before.

"Rinix, please. The entire universe could be destroyed." I said calmly.

He scowled at me. "Fine. But you'll owe me."

He waited for Charrheart to turn toward him.

He didn't have to wait long. The giant, red dragon's jaws were ready to fire at him. Rinix couldn't move!

Come on! I figured I would have to scare him so he would shoot. I flew up behind him, and shoved him.

"What was that for?" He shouted.

"Shoot him!" I cried back.

Then I saw as Charrheart was about to hit Rinix.

"Look out!" I shoved him again, but this time it was to avoid a giant fireball. Time slowed down to slow motion as I saw Rinix accidentally shoot a lava ball magically aimed at Charrheart's jaws.

TO BE CONTINUED...