

THE LAST DRAGON
by
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In the Land of Oz lived a great Wizard named Albert Cremshaw. Everyone loved him, and became quite popular when he destroyed the Last Dragon in a great battle between the forces of oppression and the powers of Freedom.

When the villagers heard that the monster had been killed they rushed the mountainside where the Dragon nested and proceeded to break the eggs, thereby insuring the destruction of the species forever.

What they didn't know is that Albert had visited the nest in the heat of battle, and hidden one of the eggs before the villagers got there. He experimented with it in his castle and through his great magical ability he was able to genetically alter the dragon fetus within the egg so that it upon hatching it would be the watcher of the people; a symbol of freedom and great strength for the people of Oz... a present for the people that he loved so much. But for a long time he kept this a secret from the people because he feared they were not yet ready for the trial which awaited them: They would have just ganged up on the Little Dragon and try to destroy it. He became obsessed with the little dragon, and became a hermit. He loved and cared for the little creature, taking time to train it as best as he could.

One day the creature and Wizard sat quietly by the fireplace and Albert's angel came to him and told him his time was upon him. He would soon have to surrender his spark from the confines of his physical body. So Albert called for the Council of The Sword and Shield, a ruling body of his most trusted students, and told them about the little dragon. At first they were repulsed by the idea of bringing up the offspring, the object of their misery, but the magician persuaded them by telling them that the little dragon would serve to be a protector of the people and a symbol of freedom and strength: Al made them swear by the Warrior Lords that they'd care for it.

The following evening, while the Full Moon shone on the peaceful waters of Oz, Albert and his God left forever.

Upon finding their Master dead, the Council leaked the information about the Little Dragon to the people of Oz. They loved the old wizard as much as he had loved them, and after they saw how fragile this poor orphaned creature was they decided amongst themselves that they would honor those raising the little dragon. The dragon was to represent all of the things Albert himself stood for.

Things went well for a short while. The favoritism displayed by the people of Oz towards the Priests and Priestesses that cared for the Dragon created turmoil. For the first time ever there were power struggles within the Council, its members fought over who would supervise the education of the Little Dragon, who would feed it, who would groom it. They set up rules so that making it impossible for others to reach the grades appropriate to caring for the dragon so that only a few could remain in those positions forever. One would say, "I have risked my life and given all so that the little dragon could have food." The other would say "While you first despised the dragon I stood fast in my duty to care for it, for I have kept my word to the Master," and each and every one of them felt that egotistical satisfaction we are so familiar with. After a while they began to look like circus clowns instead of soldiers. Liars, self-interested buffoons, all of them. The Council had become corrupt.

The people were so impressed by the apparent devotion and selflessness of The Council that certain members were given gifts of silver, gold, spices, and women. Treated as Gods for their loyalty and sense of duty.

Everyone at The Council became so preoccupied with the power struggle, and with keeping his or her peers in lower positions became a priority, that they would often forget all about the little, fragile dragon for long periods of time. One day, some one boasted about the dragon and a villager asked to see it. When they returned to the Castle where it was guarded they found it had expired, starved from attention and sustenance. When they looked closely at the little dragon, they noticed a little silver necklace that Albert

had placed around the little dragon's neck. It was the dragon's name: Thelema, a Greek word which means "will" and alludes to ultimate freedom. As they stood around the grave marked Thelema, the Council then realized that cold and empty, feeling Albert himself would have felt, if HE had killed the Last Dragon.

And that's why there is no freedom today.

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