

Dragon Reunion



Illustration by Josiene Saibrosa da Silva

By Mrs Sproulle and Mr Sproulle

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Dragobert and his dragon friends were having a reunion at the Dragon Cafe. They were reminiscing about “the good old days” when knights were knights and dragons were dragons.

“I’ve heard tell,” said Desmond who’d just come in from the kitchen carrying trays of pizzas, “that you used to eat the villagers. I bet that annoyed a lot of people.”

“Oh, that was just a rumour spread by the knights so they could frighten the villagers and then pretend to defend them.”

“We did come close, though,” said Della. “But that would have been too disgusting. Villagers are nowhere near as delicious as this pizza.” And she swallowed another one whole.

“But didn’t you use to take the princesses from their castles?” asked Desmond’s sister, Dixie, who had brought in more pizza.

“Oh yes,” said Dragobert, “we dragons would steal the beautiful princesses from their castles. But only to annoy the knights. We knew they’d be along sooner or later to rescue them.”

“What would you do with the princesses while you were waiting?” asked Dixie.

“Most of the time we’d play cards.”

“But some of the princesses liked to play football,” said Duncan. “They weren’t allowed to in the castle. But we’d usually win. Our long tail,” he explained, “gave us quite an advantage.”

“We eventually made a deal with the knights,” continued Dragobert. “They pretended to fight us, they got to rescue the princesses and look brave. Then the knights could go back to the villagers and tell them there was no need to fear, they’d vanquished those pesky dragons.”

“Yes,” said Della, “the kings would give the knights a lot of gold for rescuing their daughters and the knights would give us food so we didn’t have to eat the villagers.”

“But then,” said Dexter, looking very serious and wiping pizza juice off his chin, “came the dark times.”

“Why were they dark? Didn’t the sun shine?” asked Dixie, who’d decided not to go back to the kitchen. It was much more exciting listening to the older dragons’ stories.

“The sun might as well have stopped shining,” said Dragobert. “The knights stopped giving us food.”

Duncan and Dexter shook their heads sadly, remembering those times. They were dragons who liked to eat and they helped themselves to another couple of pizzas.

“You see,” Dragobert carried on, “a new King came to power who found out about our deal with the knights. He told them they were getting soft. They were knights, for goodness sake, and knights were supposed to fight dragons, not give them food. The villagers also started laughing at the knights, calling them sissies.”

“Yup,” said Della, “we came pretty close to eating the villagers. We were that hungry.” She called to Desmond in the kitchen to hurry up with more pizzas.

“But Sir Gwain the Gentle was nice,” said Dexter. “He continued to give us food. He’d sneak out of the castle at night with left-overs from the kitchen. The left-over meatloaf was the best. A few maggots, but that made it crunchier.”

“Yuck,” thought Dixie.

“Well,” said Duncan, “we had to make some serious decisions. We couldn’t survive on leftover meatloaf. So, were we going to eat the villagers? That would mean fighting the knights because the villagers wouldn’t be too happy about being eaten.”

“What did you do?” asked Desmond who’d just brought in even more pizzas.

“I bet you fought the knights!” said Dixie. She wanted to believe that dragons were fierce and would always fight.

“Well, what could we do?” said Della.

“Yup, we had no choice,” added Dexter.

“What? What?” chorussed Desmond and Dixie.

“We left town, of course,” said Dragobert. “We didn’t want to fight the knights and we didn’t want to eat the villagers - they were too disgusting - so we had to leave.”

Desmond and Dixie looked at each other. This wasn’t what they expected.

“You see,” explained Della, “all that stuff you’ve heard about dragons being fierce and roaring fire and thrashing their tails about, that’s just a legend.”

“Yes, the villagers would tell those stories about us to scare their children,” said Duncan. “So the children would behave.”

Dexter nodded. “We just wanted to have a peaceful life. And eat.” He helped himself to the last of the pizza.

“Well,” said Dragobert, getting up and dusting off his tail. “Time to go. Same time next year?” he asked his friends.

“If I’m not fighting knights,” joked Della.

“Or stealing princesses from their castles,” laughed Duncan.

“Or eating villagers,” said Dexter, licking up the pizza juice.

They left the cafe and flew off, thrashing their tails and roaring fire.