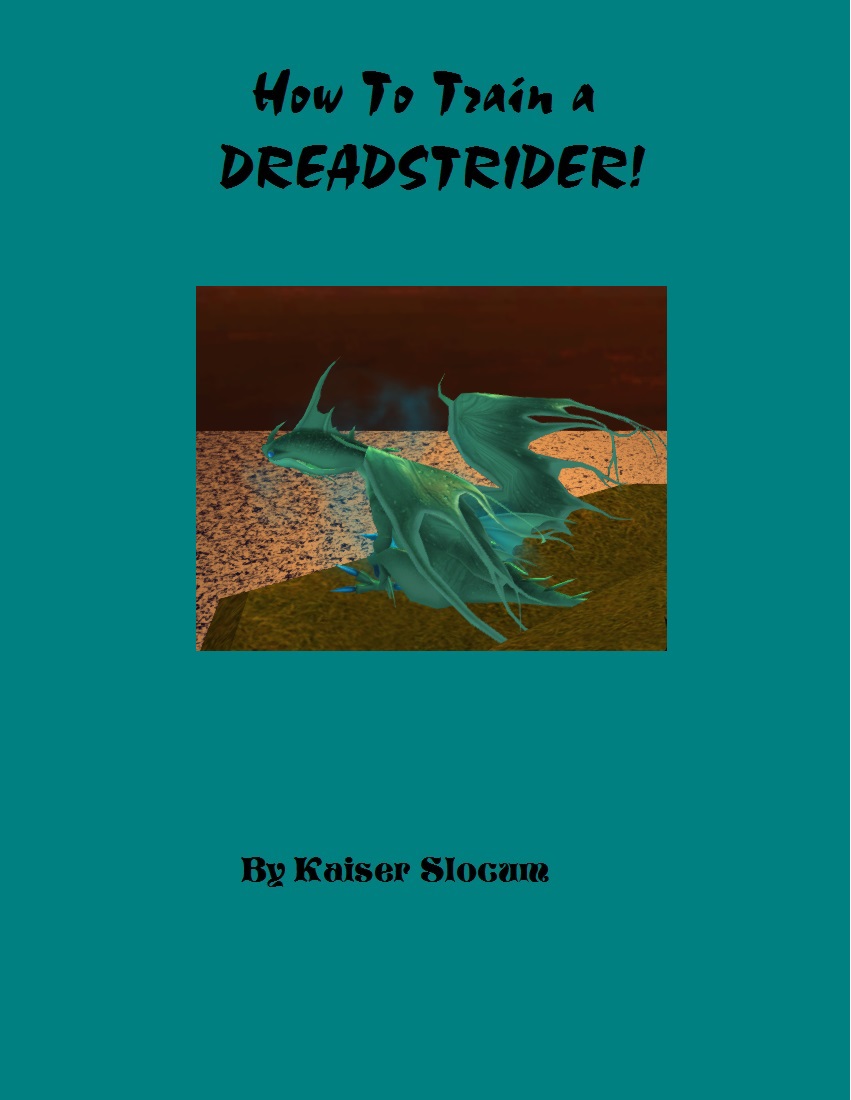
****

**This book is dedicated**

**in memory of Danielle Juno (DJ)**

**The best friend anyone could have**

How To Train A Dreadstrider, First Edition, revised and updated.

Copyright ⓒ 2020 by Kaiser P. Slocum. All rights reserved by God.

Printed in the United States of America. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief notation embodied in critical articles and reviews.

For information address HamsterPublishers Inc.

Cover Art: Copyright by School of Dragons

Editing: Kaiser Slocum

HamsterPublishers books may be purchased for education, business, or sales promotional use.

For information, please contact: slocumkaiser@gmail.com

Or visit: http://citstudent.lanecc.edu/~slocumk473/HowToTrainADreadstrider/buyPage.html

Designed by Kaiser Slocum

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Slocum, Kaiser Peter

How To Train A Dreadstrider / Kaiser Slocum

Protected under Creative Commons License:

[Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

**Table of Contents**

[**Opener**](#_kuq22z34lx14) **1**

[**Chapter 1**](#_d722e2k3wod9) **2**

[**Chapter 2**](#_mwce2kapq2if) **10**

[**Chapter 3**](#_c7g6qwze2kad) **22**

[**Chapter 4**](#_8u7az24r8pu7) **30**

[**Chapter 5**](#_wmv6ngcu6eeu) **38**

[**Chapter 6**](#_ghcrcrqoghzo) **55**

[**Chapter 7**](#_504voy1xj2w6) **61**

[**Chapter 8**](#_b8w8ajfhe36s) **72**

[**Chapter 9**](#_9xfq2uv1ikqu) **87**

[**Chapter 10**](#_9tlobhufi7rv) **96**

[**Character Relations:**](#_wjj0un7f8ap0) **98**

# **Opener**

Honestly, I don’t know why I’m doing this. I guess it’s mostly just for Hiccup. If I had my way, I would have just let these eggs get destroyed; it’s not my duty as chief dragon to tend to a bunch of eggs that aren’t mine. But then, when I thought of Hiccup, I couldn’t bear the thought of what he would say to me if I let that happen – no matter what the dragon egg was. So here I am, flying above an endless array of dark storm clouds and trying to breathe with two large eggs in my mouth.

After a good hour of flying, I figured that I was coming close to New Berk, so I dove underneath the clouds and met the heavy rainfall. Unfortunately, I could barely see anything, but what I could see was just water. I knew New Berk was around here *somewhere,* but it was so hard to find it when the clouds were so high and everything was so dark. Thus, I pumped my wings and flew over the clouds again. After another hour of diving and climbing, I still hadn’t found New Berk. *Well, you did all you could Toothless, if you can’t find the island, you can’t find it. Time to head home and rid yourselves of these eggs.* And yet, I felt like I had to try *one* more time. So, breathing a deep sigh, I dove underneath the clouds and almost collided with a tall rock spire.

*Finally!* I expertly glided to a flat patch of rock and got a good look at my surroundings as rain poured over me and lightning and thunder flashed a few miles away.

*Wait a minute! This isn’t New Berk! New Berk is considerably more green, whereas this place was almost all just rock.* As I thought about where I could possibly be, I sensed two figures to my left. I growled deeply and hunkered down underneath a rock overhang. To my right now, two girls appeared. When they reached a large mud puddle, one of them pulled out a shovel and began heaping great amounts of mud into the bucket held by the other.

Then, I recognized them. They were the children of Ruffnut and Tuffnut. My legs were already starting to cramp up, and I really wanted to get back to the Hidden World, so I figured that I could leave the eggs with the girls, and they could get them to Hiccup. Despite their shortcomings, Ruffnut and Tuffnut had always proved to be reliable on important matters. So I emerged from the outcropping and walked right on over to them. The girl shoveling the mud was so surprised that she fell backward into the mud puddle. The other girl, seeing this as an opportune time, dumped her bucket of mud on the fallen girl’s head. After depositing the two eggs in front of them, I took back off - sensing their eyes following me as I shot back up into the clouds.

*Whew!* I was finally done and could go home to get some rest.

# **Chapter 1**

“A little over to the left. Wait, NO!, to the right – TO – THE – RIGHT!!!!!” screamed Magur at me.

“I’m trying!” I shouted back at him, “But it’s hard to direct it into place and communicate with a flying Dreadstrider at the same time.”

“It’s just a small log. What’s your problem?” Magur taunted.

“Well then,” I said as I finally guided the freshly cut log into place over the building, “How about you direct Powder with the next one, and I’ll help Slizer lift some of the wall pieces up.”

At this turn of events, Powder growled with displeasure, but I silenced him with a finger to my lips.

“Give it a try,” I said gallantly – gesturing with my hand towards the several ropes that were strapped to Powder.

“Alright then,” Magur said confidently. He walked over to another one of the monstrous logs used for the small houses we were setting up and carefully tied Powder’s ropes to it.

“Up!” he commanded Powder. With a monstrous heave and a little help from me standing nearby, Powder did manage to get the log into the air. However, he also moved a little forward in the process (as was the habit for dragons gaining altitude, or so my dad said). Thus the huge log plowed straight into Magur.

Five minutes later and still holding his head, Magur said weakly, “I’ll let you manage Powder.”

“Good idea!” I told him, “Come on, Powder! If we finish the roof on this house we can go to the beach!” I knew Powder loved the beach, so I hoped I could get a little more work out of him. Powder was a teenage Dreadstrider, a cross between a Flightmare and a Speed Stinger. His Speed Stinger dad, Slizer, was still alive and currently helping Magur snap the wooden walls of this house into place. I had found Slizer’s egg frozen in an icicle about nine years ago, and now he knew everyone and everything pretty well. In addition, he was well acquainted with the habits of humans and worked well with almost anyone. On the other hand, Powder was just a little over half a year old, and considerably more aggressive than Slizer. However, Powder could fly, and Slizer couldn’t, which made Powder perfect for lifting the roof logs into the air and to where they belonged. On the other hand, Powder was more playful and excited, which made him less suited to doing jobs which required considerable amounts of concentration and patience.

With a last grunt from both man and dragon, I heaved the final log in place on the Glears’ new home.

“Alright, Powder,” I told him, “Let’s go pick up your dad and head to the beach!” A few meters away, Slider was now helping drag particularly large logs from the forest into the clearing where we could process them. Powder and I watched as Slizer and Tweary maneuvered the logs towards our construction zone – neither of us wanted to help but we both probably felt bad about not. That’s when I heard a young voice behind me.

“Excuse me, Kaizar. Could I, I mean, would you – allow me to ride Slizer for a little bit?” I turned around to see the Glears’ son looking up at me with big, pleading eyes. I couldn’t quite remember his name, but I knew how much it meant to the younger kids to get a ride on Slizer.

I smiled a huge grin and said, “How about you and I ride Powder instead?”

The kid’s eyes got even bigger, and he quickly answered, “Yes please!”

Slizer had amazing ears, and I knew he could quickly catch up, so I jumped on top of Powder and hoisted up the boy onto my lap. I grabbed firmly on Powder’s light, leather saddle and gently squeezed Powder’s body. With a fast running start, Powder blasted into the air and pumped his wings rapidly to gain altitude. Within seconds, we were soaring through the air towards the East beach. The small boy screamed with pleasure and practically wrenched off my arms trying to hold on (with practice I realized that you don’t need to hold on nearly as tightly as you think while flying a dragon).

“What’s your name again?” I asked the boy.

“Gartley,” he replied through big breaths.

“Well, Gartley, let’s see what Powder can do!” I told him

“Wait, do you think that’s a – AAAH!” the boy screamed as I directed Powder through a sharp 360 degree turn and then proceeded to do a few corkscrews. The only thing more fun than riding Slizer was riding Powder, for sure. When the boy finally caught his breath, Powder did one of his famous dives down toward the beach below – sending the poor boy into another cascade of screams.

Finally on solid ground, Gartley sighed deeply.

“That was so much fun, but also super scary!” he told me.

“Yep, it took me a lot of practice to get used to him.”

“Hey look! It’s Slizer,” Gartley said, pointing behind me.

Sure enough, Slizer was quickly bearing down upon us from above the last big hill. When he reached us, he kept on running by and plowed into Powder – causing them both to roll around in the sand in a mock fight.

“How come Powder can already fly?” Gartley wanted to know.

“That’s because Dreadstriders grow really fast,” I told Gartley, “or so my Dad and Hiccup said.”

“Why don’t they have to go to the Hidden World with all the other dragons?” Gartley asked again.

“Well, Dreadstriders and other dragons normally don’t get along with anyone but their parents, so I don’t think Powder could ever go, but Slizer may be able to someday. Last time, he didn’t want to, but who knows?”

“Cool, I hope Powder stays with us forever!” Gartley announced to me. As much as I agreed, I couldn’t help but think that we were in the dire situation we were in now because of Slizer, a dragon. Wanting to capture the dragon, the War Lords from the North had attacked us during the summer and killed many of our people as well as devastated our island in the process. Only about 30% of our tribe lived, but our consolation was that we dealt an even bigger blow to the War Lords’ boat armada (whose masts could still be seen sticking out of the water everywhere in our main bay) and their soldier forces.

“Wanna build a small sand castle?” I asked Gartley.

“Sure, but we probably should get back soon to keep on helping out,” Gartley said as he ran off to find some shells.

“Thanks Mom!” I yelled to him sarcastically.

We were just putting on the finishing touches to our sand fort (as Powder had destroyed it twice before), when our only functioning warning horn blasted.

Both Gartley and I stood up quickly and scanned the watery horizon.

“Is that a ship?” Gartley said, pointing to a small dark object in front of us (to the island’s east).

I nodded grimly, “Let’s hope it’s just one. You take Slizer back to the village, and I’ll check out the boat with Powder.”

Gartley obeyed immediately, but he was still small so I had to help him onto Slizer’s saddle. My Dad, Mom, and I had carefully crafted a saddle for both Slizer and Powder that was both comfortable for them and the rider as well as light so it could be left on all day. Having been promoted to leader of section “Dragon” last spring by my uncle/king/chief Dagur, I commanded attention with the younger warriors of our tribe (though they also realized that I was a normal person as well – hence Gartley getting along so nicely with me).

As Slizer took off back towards the village and with the warning horn practically breaking my ear drums (despite it being at least two miles away), I mounted Powder, and we flew off toward the incoming boat.

“Let’s get a little more altitude,” I told Powder. Thankfully, the sky was pretty clear of clouds, so we could get high without losing visibility. As we approached the ship, it became clear that there were only two of them but perfectly in line with each other. When we were high enough to be out of arrows’ range, I nudged Powder into a large circle over the incoming boats and carefully scrutinized them.

“Oh, are you ready to meet the famous Wing Maidens, boy?” I asked Powder, patting him on the back of his head, “Let’s go down and say ‘Hello!’”

Powder immediately dove straight downwards. I still wasn’t used to his steep dives, but Dad said he hadn’t seen any dragon that loved to dive so steeply, so I guess that I had the exception. At the last possible minute, Powder straightened out and came to an abrupt halt on the deck, which completely dislodged me from the saddle and flung me across the deck. Luckily, I know how to land. With a quick Berserker roll and traction flip, I righted myself and slid to a halt right next to a short, stocky man.

“Well, well, well. Look who showed up first?” he said.

“What’s up Snotlout?” I replied, “I see you’re just as adventurous as normal, huh?”

“You know me!” Snotlout announced, “I wanted to come over and visit and see how life on your island’s doing.”

“Well, it’s not as nice as it used to be, but you’re welcome to it,” I replied. Meanwhile, Powder had come up alongside me and was looking at Snotlout.

“Is it just me or has Slizer sprouted wings?” Snotlout wanted to know.

“Don’t be silly honey,” said a middle aged lady coming up from behind Snotlout, “That’s probably the death-strider or something that Sulpher was telling us about.”

“Oh, yes, of course,” Snotlout quickly agreed, “I was just going to say that.”

Needless to say, Snotlout always made me laugh.

“So, uh, where’s Sulpher?” I asked Minden.

“Oh, she’s on the other boat behind us,” Minden replied, “Where should we dock?”

“Oh, um, I’d recommend docking on the East beach over there, because the main docks are filled with lots of pointy masts that are big hazards.”

“Okay,” Minden replied, “Tira? Aim for that beach over there. We’ll anchor a little ways out and take the rowboats in.” On the second deck of the ship, another Wing Maiden standing at the ship’s wheel turned the ship towards the East dock. Behind us, the other Wing Maiden vessel followed in perfect tandem.

“Excuse me, but does anyone else hear that *awful* racket?” Snotlout asked – pointing in the direction of the Berserker warning horn.

“Yes, actually. That would be our warning horn,” I told him.

“Why would your warning horn be going off? Are you being invaded?” Snotlout asked.

“Only by you!” I laughed, “Let’s just hope they don’t fire that spear crossbow at us before they realize who we are!”

“Their what?!” Snotlout exclaimed.

“Hey, did you get a new hammer?” I asked Snotlout.

“Yep! He replied proudly, pulling the hammer off his back. The other one was getting too small and light – so, I upgraded!” Sure enough the hammer *was* bigger than the last one he had. The rock hammer was so large it probably weighed about as much as I did. I had no idea how he could handle such a heavy weapon, although I guessed it had something to do with his massive muscles.

When we came within rowing distance of the East beach, both of the Wing Maiden ships dropped their anchors and lowered their row boats.

“If it’s okay with you. I’m going to pick Sulpher up,” I told Minden and Snotlout as they pulled a few boxes of supplies into their row boats. I hopped onto Powder, and we swiftly flew to the other ship. Like the other Wing Maiden ship, this ship had at least a dozen Wing Maidens hustling about doing odd jobs and such, but unlike the other ship, this one was considerably more weighed down with weapons and catapults. Off to the side was a girl about my age staring up at Powder and I as we alighted onto the deck. The other Wing Maidens barely gave us a second glance, but the girl did the opposite.

“KAIZAR!” she screamed, running up to me.

“Roar!” Powder growled, planting himself in between Sulpher and I.

“Woah boy, it’s okay. I’m Sulpher,” She told Powder. I gently placed my hand on Powder’s back to let him know it was okay, and he grudgingly moved aside.

“So this is your Dreadstrider?” Sulpher said, gesturing to Powder.

“Yep, and he’s a lot more aggressive and protective than Slizer,” I told her.

“You said you’d visit!” Sulpher teased me.

“Well, I was planning on it, but I never really got the time. You’ll see what I mean when you come to the village,” I told her.

Sulpher gave me a big; then I offered to take her for a ride on Powder.

“I’d love to!” she told me. I let Sulpher sit in front, and I sat behind her. Thus, it was a little squished, but I figured we could manage - though Powder wasn’t happy about it.

With a quick nudge, we soared into the air.

“Woah,” Sulpher breathed, “This is awesome.” We blasted by the Wing Maidens rowing toward the beach and onto the main land. Then, Powder banked to the left and started climbing up as we headed toward the village.

“I’ve missed you a lot, and so has Slizer!” I told Sulpher as she looked at the scenery below.

“Me too, but I see what you mean. Your island is a wreck – there’s hardly any greenery around the base of this mountain,” Sulpher replied.

“Yeah, the elders are worried that we may not be able to survive the winter here with the meager amount of supplies we have.”

“It’s a shame really. All the hurt and pain that those War Lords caused to just get a dragon that they never ended up getting.”

“Tell me about it,” I muttered.

“Hey, are those your parents?” Sulpher said, pointing to two people in the midst of a large group of warriors all heading to the East beach.

“Yep, and maybe we should tell them that we aren’t being invaded,” I wisely considered.

“Ya’ know, that may be a good idea…” Sulpher commented.

I forced Powder into a gentle dive that curved around the group, and we landed shortly next to my Uncle Dagur and Aunt Mala.

“It’s just the Wing Maidens!” I told them.

“We know,” Mala said, “One of our lookouts told us just before we left.”

“Who’s this?” Dagur said, pointing to Sulpher.

Sulpher and I slid off Powder, and Sulpher introduced herself, “I’m Sulpher Jorgenson, daughter of the great Snotlout and Minden Jorgenson.”

“Good to meet you,” Dagur said, shaking Sulpher’s hand in his usual death grip – which Sulpher managed to return. (Sulpher was also super strong - I guess it ran in the family)

“I don’t know how *great* he is,” Dad told Sulpher and I as we walked along.

“It’s just for affect,” I told Dad, “Just like I’d say I’m the son of the great Fishlegs and Heather Ingerman.”

“Ha, and you really aren’t a great warrior – just a superbly smart friend,” Mom chimed in.

“Well that’s very kind of you; I think…,” Dad replied.

“Kaizar!”

I recognized Bartley’s voice and turned around to see him approaching – still on Slizer.

“I see you enjoy your ride!” I told him, “You’re really learning fast!”

“That’s me!” Bartley announced. When he reached Sulpher and I, he expertly slid off and ran off to find his parents in the massive greeting party.

“You wanna take Slizer, and I’ll ride Powder?” I told Sulpher. Sulpher smiled and climbed on Slizer who danced around with excitement to see Sulpher again. I had forgotten how well Sulpher and Slizer got along.

“So,” Sulpher told me once we were back on our way near the end of the party, “What have I missed?”

“Oh, not much. We’ve pretty much just been planting what crops we can – wherever we can – and rebuilding as many shacks and houses as we can. Powder hatched pretty quickly after we arrived back here, and I’ve been busy training him to help with various chores as well as keep under control. He’s still a teenager you know!”

“He’s grown so much! It’s so hard to believe that those Dreadstriders can grow so fast,” Sulpher commented.

“Yeah, I know right?”

We rode on for a little while in silence before Sulpher asked another question, “So, uh, what kinds of friends do you have?”

“Oh, well, I don’t really have any best friends, but I get along nicely with everyone in the village. I typically just hang out with my parents and Slizer and Powder,” I replied.

“Do you have any girlfriends?” Sulpher wanted to know next.

Now that I thought about it, I couldn’t think of any girls in the village that I came in contact with on a regular basis. Even during warrior training school, I worked primarily with boys.

“Actually no, none but you and whatever you could count Puffnut, Nuffnut and Zephyr as,” I told her.

“Oh.”

Our caravan of Berserkers and Defenders of the Wing carried on for a while before we met up with the Wing Maidens who had just offloaded on the East beach.

“Snothat! My! How you've grown!” Dagur yelled across to him.

“You’ve gotten old, Dag-Big Face!” Snotlout yelled back.

Dagur, enraged on multiple levels by the comment, charged Snotlout. However, Snotlout met Dagur’s frontal attack with a punch to the stomach. Dagur was obviously not ready for this and was launched backward a good few meters.

“Oh, yeah! That felt good. You can’t boss me around anymore, Dagster, and I don’t even have Hookfang!” Snotlout announced proudly.

Dagur stood up and fell into a boxing stance, but Mala pushed him out of the way and shook hands formally with Snotlout.

“Nice to see you master Snotlout. I trust your travels have been safe?” Mala said.

“Without a hitch. You’ve met my wife Minden?”

Minden and Mala shook hands, and Atali came over to shake hands as well.

“We realize we weren’t exactly invited, but I wanted to come over and see how our neighbors are doing,” Atali explained.

“Well, you are very welcome here. As you can see, our island isn’t in the best of condition and our accommodations aren’t very good, but you’re welcome to whatever you can find,” Mala graciously answered.

“Nah, we’re good. Why I remember sleeping out multiple times in our Dragon Training Arena with just a blanket and Hookfang,” Snotlout said.

“Yeah, my back still remembers,” Dad added.

“Why don’t you come this way,” Mala said gesturing towards the path we had just taken from the main village.

The way back to the village was fraught with conversations and remembrances of old times. During the chaos, Sulpher (with Slizer) and I were separated, so Powder and I just walked along with everyone else. When we reached the village, Mala led the head Wing Maidens and the elders of our village (including Mom and Dad) into the biggest building we had, which served as our meeting area. I followed along, but Dagur wouldn’t let me in.

“You’re not a village elder, Kaizar,” he said.

“Yeah, but I’m an important part!” I declared.

“So are all the Wing Maidens, but they can’t *all* come in,” Dagur stated, “Move on.”

“But *Uncle*, can’t you make an exception.”

“No exceptions,” Dagur said again as he let Magur inside, “Well, except my son.”

Magur grinned at me as Dagur slammed the door shut behind him.

I backed off with Powder and found a nice big log to sit on near another building that was half finished.

“How come *they* get to have all the important meetings, Powder?” I asked him.

Powder didn’t seem to care but was sniffing around for something too much. Unlike his mom, Powder didn’t need to just eat glowing algae. He could also eat most grains and vegetables as well as meats like his dad.

As I was sitting there, I noticed Sulpher and Slizer over by the meeting hall, and Sulpher had her ear pressed up against one of the walls.

*What was she doing?*

I pulled an apple out of my side bag and fed it to Powder who eagerly wolfed it down, but I kept an eye on Sulpher. Presently, she hopped back onto Slizer, and they came straight towards me.

“Kaizar!” she called, “I thought you were in there with them!”

“I thought so too, but my uncle wouldn’t let me!” I replied.

“That’s too bad,” Sulpher said while dismounting Slizer and sitting next to me on the log, “Dad wouldn’t let me participate either – that’s why I eavesdropped on what they were talking about.”

“What’d they say?” I asked.

“Oh, they were just talking about the island’s conditions and your tribes’ chance of survival here. I guess your relatives are considering temporarily moving to our tribe,” Sulpher explained.

“Well, that’d be interesting. I just can’t imagine they’d agree to that. We’ve been here for so long, and we’re pretty proud of our island,” I replied.

Sulpher shrugged her shoulders, “We’ll see.”

We sat there for a while looking at the horde of Berserkers and Wing Maidens milling about and trying to find something productive to do, but all wanting to be in on the meeting.

“Well,” I finally said, “It’s getting close to evening, so maybe you want to go on a flight with me?”

“Sure, but how about a run; so I can be on Slizer,” Sulpher replied.

“Works with me!”

I whistled over to my dragons and mounted Powder.

“Where are we going?” Sulpher wanted to know.

“I don’t know. Just around the island I guess. Anything to keep my mind off the meeting,” I chuckled.

Despite the lack of greenery and majority of scarred earth, the jaunt was quite nice and the evening sky was glorious. I decided on a roundabout but fairly level path around the mountain that I used to train Slizer and Powder for speed running.

“I can just imagine what this place looked like before the great battle!” Sulpher said as she rode alongside me.

“Yeah, there were lots of flowers up there, and a really nice green forest over there,” I pointed out.

“What’s your favorite place to view the island?” Sulpher asked.

“Hmm, well, I guess it’s a little place up the mountain a ways. There’s this perfect ledge where Slizer and I would play ‘scout’.”

“Can we go there?”

“Well, I guess, but we’ll have to make it quick because the sun is already starting to set.”

We continued along the main path for a mile; then I took a side trail that rose steeply up around the mountain. After another mile, I took a very small, faint trail to a large flat ledge that projected out over the village which was many miles down below.

“This is it!” I told Sulpher as I got off Powder and sat down on the grassy null, “One of the few places left on the island with grass!”

Sulpher also got off Slizer and sat next to me on the ledge. We just sat there for a while and gazed at the island and evening sunset with glowing clouds. I guess Slizer and Powder got tired, because they curled up for a nap. Meanwhile, Sulpher rested her head up against my shoulder. I felt like this was a great moment to tell Sulpher how much I liked her, but I didn’t know how to say it. All I could remember is that Dad would hold Mom’s hand some nights as we all sat out on our house’s back deck. So, I did that. I reached out my right hand and grabbed Sulpher’s left hand in mine – gently. Sulpher smiled and didn’t refuse.

“It’s too bad the world has to be so violent at times and can’t enjoy our moments on earth like these,” Sulpher whispered silently as if talking too loudly would ruin the moment, “Kaizar?”

“Yes?”

“Part of the reason we came here is because I wanted to go to Whispering Death Island to pick up a few more scales for my projects at home,” Sulpher began, “Would you like to come with me and a few Wing Maidens on a three or four day trip?”

“Yeah, that’d be nice, but I’ll have to ask my parents first. They may need me here at home. Also, I’d have to bring along Slizer and Powder, because they don’t like being without me for long,” I replied.

Slowly, ever slowly, the sun started to disappear behind the horizon, but neither Sulpher nor I wanted to go back. Finally, I pulled the cork on the moment.

“Well, we probably should go back now,” I said.

“Yeah, uh, we should… definitely go now,” Sulpher agreed. I retracted my hand and stood up.

“Come on Powder. Dinner is waiting for us at home!” I told him.

At the mention of dinner, Powder awoke quickly and came over.

“Race you to the bottom?” Sulpher asked.

“See you there!