

Tales from Huo Huan: Naga

Long, long ago, a story about a magical dragon playground brought the Book Bug Naga to life. Little Naga's ruby-red scales were warm like the sun. Her eyes were bright, brimming with the laughter of children on swings and slides.

Before Naga arrived, the citizens of Huo Huan were a stern lot. They were known as the hardiest of Book Bugs, strong and enduring, and were renowned especially for their prowess in building. However, they did not find much joy due to the harsh conditions of Huo Huan.

But where Naga went, laughter followed. She would poke her head into desert settlements, burrow into the sand with other young Book Bugs—all over Huo Huan did Naga tumble and twirl, treating the rocky plains like her very own playground.

As Huo Huan became livelier, Naga changed and grew. Her soft, ruby scales turned hard, just like the land's stony cliffs. Her eyes deepened in hue to the colour of a fire's last embers. And one day, when the younger Book Bugs had gone back to their homes after a morning spent playing, Naga curled up in the desert sun and went to sleep.

She did not wake up.



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For many years, Naga did not stir, though she was not gone; pressing feelers and ears to her, the Bugs of Huo Huan could sense the stone-warm heat of her body, and the slow, steady thump of her heart. “She’s just resting,” they concluded. “One day she will wake up, and we will all play together again!”

But even without the ruby-red Book Bug, the Huo Huan Bugs were cheerful and happy, having learnt to find joy while building castles from sand and chiselling homes in rock. And so Naga slept on, peaceful, unneeded...

... Until ripples of unease disturbed the serenity of Bugtopia, with reports of Bug disappearances and natural disasters.

And one morning, as if sensing this threat to Huo Huan, a curious amber eye opened. A sleeping Guardian stretched and yawned, trying to shake off the slumber of many years.

