

Dragon Sight

Jenna Brager

Towson High School

First Prize Winner

BSFS 2005 Young Writers' Contest

Rose sat on the sand, just out of reach of the ocean's cold waves. She faced the water, wind whipping her hair, and she shivered, despite her warm sweatshirt. Next to her sat her best friend, Amy. They both squinted into the distance.

"Do you see them yet?" Rose asked impatiently.

"No, not yet," Amy replied, "but soon we will, don't worry."

Rose and Amy were looking for dragons. Specifically, sea dragons, the kind that dove through the waves, wings folded tightly at their sides, lithe, serpent-like, and the exact color of the deep.

There are many different kinds of dragons, dragons for every environment, every setting. Of course dragons are real, they are just invisible to human sight. Chameleon-like abilities allow dragons to stay carefully hidden, keeping them safe from the men who might wish to bother them. People have a penchant for killing off the extraordinary magical beings they know about. Look at the Unicorns. So few know the dragons exist, even fewer are able to see them. It's better that way.

Rose and Amy saw the dragons. They had for years. All they had to do was stare at the horizon for long enough, and they were there. The dragons were on the ocean's surface, deep in the forest's shadows, disguised as an odd puffy cloud or a snow bank. Dragons were even in their homes, miniscule swooping mischievous things that committed small misdeeds, like hiding keys and tearing up homework, hoarding glittering objects and snatching food off countertops (an act commonly blamed on the canine members of the household).

Amy named all of them, her favorite being an especially small, pearly white dragon she called Andy. Amy fed him sugar cubes and let him sleep curled up in her bed like a scaled puppy. Rose preferred to keep the little creatures savage and wild, feeding them scraps of raw meat and teaching them to breathe fire. She encouraged them to nip at human fingers and tangle long hair into snarls impossible to untangle.

She ran through the woods, feeling their wings flapping in her face, wishing she too could be free and invisible.

Today, Amy and Rose had persuaded their parents to bring them to the beach, because Andy had told Amy of a pair of sea dragons who always came to this same deserted shore to bask in the shallower water. The two friends were waiting for them, hoping to catch a glimpse of the rare creatures of legend.

"I see them!" Rose squealed excitedly, and indeed, off in the distance appeared the faint image of a pair of long dark bodies sliding through the waves. "Look, there they are!"

"Oooh! I see them too, look, that one, there's its head!" Amy jumped up and down, clapping her hands. They ran down the beach barefoot, following the dragons path for a while. At first glance, the dragons appeared to be a school of dolphins. But the movement was more fluid; the dragons slipped between the waves, not noisily splashing into the water like dolphins do. Then came glimpses of scales, spines and the fin-like under-developed wings folded at their sides.

"They're so beautiful." Rose whispered reverently. "Why can't they stay all the time?"

"Oh, Rose, you know why. Do you honestly think the grownups would accept a creature of legend as real? Besides, knowing humans, we'd probably kill them off like everything else."

Rose smiled sadly. "Like the dodo bird."

"Yeah, and the two headed llama," Amy laughed. "It's sad, isn't it?"

"Yup," Rose replied, and turned back to watch the magnificent creatures. She sighed as she watched them frolic in the choppy water, riding the swells. "Don't you wish you could be one?" she asked Amy.

"A dragon? It'd be cool, but you'd have to hide your entire life."

"And isn't that what we do anyway? People hide their entire lives. At least dragons are free."

"I suppose," Amy chewed on her lip. "But we don't

have to hide. Dragons do. Their lives depend on it.”

“You could say that ours do too.”

Rose and Amy sat on the sandy shore, in complete silence but for the whistle of the sea winds, just watching, for the better part of an hour. Finally, they heard the calls of their parents, beckoning them to leave their magical world behind and return to the everyday one. They stood up and brushed the sand off their jeans. Their parents walked towards them, motioning for them to hurry. Rose glanced wistfully towards the ocean.

“Rose honey, what are you looking at?” her mother asked.

“Oh, nothing, just a dragon.” Rose answered defiantly. Amy shot her a warning glance.

“A dragon, huh? What imaginations kids have these days! A dragon, more like a dolphin or a faraway ship. Come on honey, let’s go home, it’s getting late.” Her father said.

After taking a final look at the sea dragons, Rose and Amy smiled at each other.

“Yeah Dad, I was just messing with you. Of course

there aren’t such a thing as dragons, that’s nuts!”

Rose and Amy walked up to their cars with their parents, arms wrapped around one another, deep in conversation. Rose’s mother hesitated, turning to the ocean. She squinted at the waves, searching for something she felt she had lost long ago, and could no longer remember exactly what it was. For a moment, she swore she saw a shape on the horizon, deeply cerulean like shadows on the water. A golden eye stared at her as she blinked in shock. In the second that her eyelids were closed, the silhouette had disappeared, the gold only sunlight sparkling on the water. Rose’s mother laughed at herself “I’m just as bad as the kids,” she thought, and then turned her back to the sea and went to her waiting family and friends.

Trailing behind her, small, strong wings riding the shore winds, came two creatures that were not supposed to exist. Rose and Amy watched their dragon friends soaring behind Rose’s puzzled mother. Digging their toes into the sand, they marveled at how very real they were.

Listen to This

Meredith A.E. Collier

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Second Prize Winner

BSFS 2005 Young Writers' Contest

I.

Listen to this:

My father's boots stopped just short of demolishing my sand castle. It had been five days since he drowned his church. Gritty sand stuck between my toes, and my hand froze, mid-dig, as I stared at my father's black, glossy boots.

"He isn't here," my father said. I looked up. He was working his jaw back and forth, like he wanted to spit right onto my gold-brown castle. I said nothing.

"See that up there?" he said, pointing a finger up at the twilight sky, a lone bone-line reaching straight to a bold red dot amidst the navy. "He's up there. We've just got to knock on His door a little louder, and you'll see."

My father's boots walked on, heels grazing over the towers of my castle, causing a sandy cascade of precision into abstraction. That is, he messed it up bad, and I worked my jaw, just like him. I spat, and a white-rimmed slick of black punctuated the center of the worthless sand-heap. Just like him.

II.

Listen to this:

My mother's heels stopped just short of the doorway. It had been five years since she hand-painted the golden cross on the altar of the new church, the First Episcopalian Church of Sin-seh-kyeh, though most people called it the First Episcopalian Church of Sin. Sandwiched between a rec-room and a Kimchi buffet, the church's name was ineffable from the first sermon.

My mother's heels were lime-green and pointed; the Christmas-red carpet cried out in protest. "You can't make a church in space," my mother said.

My father lowered his hands down onto the kitchen table, eyes level with hers. Mother was all firm stoicism; a little pitying, I think.

"If there is one place a church is needed," father said, "it is here. The face of God is in the stars."

Mother looked as if she wasn't going to explain, tightening her mouth into a pale line, but her shoulders quivered a bit, and I was reminded that she *had* once loved my father.

"No one here wants your God," she said. "It just doesn't suit."

For all her sophisticated manners and jade-green dresses with opal buttons, mother was still a Midwestern farm girl at heart. Her marriage to my father was financially fortuitous because, on Earth, religion was paradoxically en vogue. It took my father thirty years of his life to realize that people were coming to his sermons more to brag about how many psalms they had memorized than to actually find any spiritual connection. That's why he took us into space. To "cultivate new fields with the mighty hand of Our Lord." It only took my mother thirteen years of marriage to realize she was coming to my father's bed more to brag about how few marriage problems she was having than to actually have a marriage.

So she left, just one more silver wink in the horizonless dark of space. My father and I moved to smaller quarters, and we both doubled the time spent caring for our church and spreading the Word.

III.

Listen to this:

My father only had three churches that I know of. The first was from before my birth. It was a wood church that he had built with his own hands, and then draped inside and out with a thousand bright and shining things. I expect he didn't want anyone mistaking the architectural simplicity for meaning a more Puritan mindset. The church was just big enough for a few families to sit in on Sundays to fan themselves off from the constant, sweltering heat of orange-sky Arizona.

My father sensed he wasn't reaching the people, but he'd heard of a great, inexplicable, and sudden desire for preachers in the rumbling cities, so to the rumbling cities he went, but not before burning his church down. I know why he did it. He believed this: "If a man has a sick lamb, it is a merciful man who kills it and makes his dinner with it. It is a cruel man who wastes life healing it, so that it might get sick again."

I never asked who in their right mind would eat a sick lamb.

The second church my father had was the one I remember from my early childhood, perched on the high coasts of Californ-I-A. It was made of flame red bricks, each one flecked with gold paint, four oblong blue-green

windows cutting into each side of the church. A white steeple thrust up from the pointed roof, glaring vengefully down from the smoke-gray clouds into the colorful mishmash of civilization. The inside of the church was adorned with draperies and tapestries, and had a remarkable hand-carved marble baptizing font, but what dominated it was the great ivory organ. Technically, an organ can't be made of ivory, but technology has its ways. I imagined little white elephants lived in each of the pipes, trumpeting His Praises out every Sunday morning. Reality was less interesting. Our organ player was a grubby little man with a pointed nose who always looked positively overcome by his elaborate scarlet robes. His wife was high-society, like my mother, making the fashionable most of her husband's profitable profession. I remember wondering if her giant ruby earrings would some morning tear her red-feathered skull in two, dying her cap another shade of the same.

When my father realized the people of the city weren't actually any more receptive to his teachings than the people of the land, he went to the Coastal Weather Control Office and paid some amount to have a spot hurricane wipe the church into the ocean just after Sunday sermon. The great black waves reached up out of the sea and clawed, white-tipped, the stones away from the earth, the parishioners looking astonished from their stances in the parking lot, car keys in mid-turn. The last we saw of the church was the white steeple sinking, defiant, into the ocean. No one knew what to do at first, but, all of a sudden, everyone was singing and clapping and dancing. My father admitted he didn't know if it signified a spiritual breakthrough or further evidence of paganism.

My father's third and final church was built on Sin-seh-kyeh Station, orbiting Mars. We were not popular. People who lived in space, my father found, were neither in need of Sunday air conditioning, as it was in Arizona, nor desirous of trendy lifestyles. Space was no civilian outpost. Scientists and diplomats and military types and the occasional wealthy artiste and dilettante resided in or briefly, expensively, and casually toured the far-reaches of human exploration. Therefore, it didn't take us long to run out of money, and, for a time, the only things of worth we owned were the jewelry my mother refused to part with, and those left with her after a time, too.

IV.

Listen to this:

We were saved by a man of peculiar breeding, being both young and heir to riches, yet possessed of a sense of purpose. He, Levushka Ushakov, did not loan my father money because he believed in God or because he thought

it fashionable. He did it because he wanted to see how many other people fell into those two categories.

"You must understand my theory," he said to me once, as he often 'found' me in my few unoccupied moments, "as it is a very important theory."

I understood people with theories. Everyone had a theory. Nothing was fact or belief. Even God had a theory; it was called "The Bible." And when you hear as many theories as you meet people, you learn the art of holding in-depth conversation while neither listening nor saying anything at all, mostly because the theorists don't bother with such formalities either. There is a lot of talking and listening that goes on without anything being heard or said. For all the lights in space, I remember few things illuminated.

But I knew enough to listen to the "very important" theories of rich men who funded my father and his God.

Our savior brushed his pale knuckles over my hair over and over again as he spoke, smiling just a little with his shiny yellow teeth as he told me how God was a lie.

V.

Listen to this:

Levushka Ushakov laughed a lot. His nostrils flared, and he gave a small bark of laughter, like a man choking on a chicken bone. But Levushka Ushakov was a vegetarian, and chickens hadn't been grown with bones for decades.

"Girls and their weight," he said once, reclining on a black couch and sucking on black grapes, "aren't they strange? I have yet to meet a man who would take a girl forever throwing up or never eating at all rather than a perfectly healthy—*Hausfrau*, as the Germans once said."

He chuckled, a little more delicately, and ran the knuckles of his right hand over the top of my head. He was always doing that, and he made it seem like it was his way of apologizing for being a brute.

"Girls and their weight," he said again, "they are like man and his God. We made Him, He made us; we need Him, and He needs us."

I glanced at the floor. The carpet was Christmas-red, like in our room. I imagined my mother's lime-green heels on it, clicking against the metal door frame as she stepped out into the world again. I realized I was hearing my own shoes against the door frame, and I looked back at Levushka Ushakov, and held back the apology I didn't want to give. He smiled at me in the way I knew meant a frown.

"What is man without his God?" Levushka Ushakov said, squeezing a swollen grape between thumb and forefinger of his right hand. "He is himself. The question is: Who is Man?"

I left, but as my white sneakers carried me down the

hallway, my mind was imagining the sticky black juices running over the ridges of Levuskha Ushakov's fingerprints, leaving his pale, veiny skin purple-blue-red.

VI.

Listen to this:

I wrote something once, with the first and only pencil I ever found on the station. The words were clumsy and blind, but the spirit still holds true. I wrote it just after my father died and they closed the church and hung a sign that said "Storage Center Under Construction" over the cross in the doorway. It was a sentimental image for my sentimental mind:

Dear Whomever,

They buried God in a shroud today, and shot him out towards Sol, the Father Light. I sold my mother's silver watch today. She left it accidentally. She never sent for it.

My mother was a realist and my father was a believer, and where does that leave me? My mother left for Earth, and my father died, his memory polluting space even now, and yet I am still here. Where does that leave me? Stripped of body, stripped of mind; suspended between grace and the fall, I am the fruit. Make of me what you will.

Amen.

Amen.

VII.

Listen to this:

I am sitting in a cold, bright room, filled with white lights and white sounds. My jacket is drenched with sweat

from the heat of machinery. We have to keep the temperature down or the machines really will overheat, and we don't have the kind of money to fix all that.

I am bent over a keyboard, fingers idle. I am gazing glassy into a glowing screen. My ears are clamped down by bug-eye earphones.

I am listening.

Sin-seh-kyeh Station is a place with only one real function. We are a listening post. We are listening.

The quivering lines on the monitor move in concert with the rise and fall of the static in my ears, and I listen for a distant waltz or tango or sonata. I wouldn't even mind hearing a Top 20 Hit of Today on this channel. Listening is an empty job until you hear something, and when I take my bug-eye earphones off at the end of my shift, there is an evening period when I am desperate for noise and rhythm and pattern, and when I am also desperately afraid of such things. It's like being at the end of a dream, afraid of the masquerade behind you, but equally afraid to wake up for work.

But we are not dreaming; we are listening. We are not listening for you or You. We are listening for *them*. We are in the business of being open to anyone's beat, anyone's rhythm. If you or You wish to play for us *a cappella*, we will listen, but we are not listening *for* that.

We are listening because we have come to the point where we must confess:

We have nothing left to say.

Destiny

Alan Eng

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Third Prize Winner

BSFS 2005 Young Writers' Contest

The horns blazed and the people rejoiced. The sun shone lustrous and exuberant in the morning sky. Trees danced in a gentle breeze and nature sang its joyous song of summer. A general euphoria pervaded the lands of the Hammerduns and Swordlars. Today would be known as The Binding throughout the shattered province of Anjous. For two hundred years, the ravages of civil war plagued Anjous, and now, after ages of flooding the land with the blood of their kinsmen, the feud was coming to its end. Before the war, the Hammerduns and the Swordlars deposed the king and raised the capital of Loiret. All that remained of the great city were plots of shadow and dust, filled with sorrow and despair. Both of the nobles' houses sought to blame the other of the atrocities they had committed against Anjous. Words led to oaths, oaths led to hate, and soon, upon the high honor of both houses, war broke out. And now, all this would end today, with the coming of the Steward Swordlar himself to the castle of the High Hammerdun.

The Hammerdun castle was one of great splendor, banners perching on every available space, with ceremonial guards decked out in regal splendor. The High Hammerdun himself, also in arabesque amour, jubilantly stood at the massive gates of his castle, eager to greet the Steward Swordlar and peace. The castle was a hive of activity, all culminating in the hopes of the peace to come. There with the Hammerduns also waited the High Priest, Silen Dracfodden, in his robes of dazzling white. He was to serve as arbiter over the arrangement. A glow of fulfillment seemed to cascade out of the chosen of the gods, for at last he would fulfill his preordained destiny of bring peace to the lands. Great anticipation ran through the blood of all who lived, and in a few, spirits were heavy on their breaths.

At last the Swordlar company arrived at noon. The mounted steward was at the front, and four loyal retainers at the back. Serene and austere were words best used for those of the Sword, but the slight outline of a smile could be made out on the steward's countenance, for today marked the end of an exhausting conflict.

And so the Hammer and the Sword met at last. With a great sweeping bow, the Hammer bade the Sword welcome. Nodding graciously, the steward dismounted from his steadfast stallion and returned the courtesy with

great precision. It was the High Hammerdun who spoke first, starting the long line of time honored greetings, "Hail to the ones of the Sword, hail to the bearer of the Chisel. Long life to those who come to my land." The Lord of Hammers' voice rang out like a clarion call, seeming to echo from all corners of the world. It was the steward's turn to reply.

"Hail to the ones of the Hammer, hail to the wielder of the Forge. Great fortune be bestowed on those who give such hospitality." Soft spoken, the words seemed to be, but any man a hundred yards away could precisely hear the Holder of Reason's words. So on and on the two lords went, droning away with the proper protocol, not wanting to offend each other, lest honor be marred and avenged. The High Priest stood at the back, knowing that nothing could go wrong, for his destiny was being completed, and fate cannot be changed.

Atop the lowest battlements by the gate were two weary guards. They were both tipsy from the previous night's pre-peace banquet, and were quite amazed that the courtesies had lasted more than a half an hour. Meaning jest, one nudged the other who was sporting a crossbow. "Eh, Bruts, bit yeah can't 'it the broadside o' the cas'le with that sewn' needle there."

"Ha! Is that a wager I see? Well I bet you a flagon of Dakson's finest I can!"

"O'ive gat yea! I'll see to that wager, but I think that it 'ould be quite 'ard for yea to 'it the cas'le when you're in it."

"Well met laddie, I'll just try a 'arder target then. Your pick."

"Ha! Well why not that poppycock down there blabbin' 'is pre'y li'l lips."

"Oh 'im? That's easy, jus' watch."

And with that said, Bruts took aim and let fly without thinking who he was shooting at. The cursed bolt flew straight and true, purchasing into the shoulder plate of the Steward Swordlar. The world seemed to stop, save for the two stumbling souls.

"Ha! 'e's not dead! Looks like I'll be taken' that flagon," exclaimed Brut's companion.

"Hey! Yea said I just 'ad ta 'it 'im, not kill 'im, I'll be keepin' said flagon."

"Wait, the pincushion you just 'it, isn't that the 'portant

lord that was comin' today?"

"Oh well so 'e is. Good thing 'e's not dead."

Perhaps it would have been better if the Steward Swordlar had died. He was utterly shocked when he felt the bolt pierce his shoulder. At this feeling of betrayal, the Swordlar was on the brink of losing control—he was vexed, very vexed indeed. Everyone was stunned. The High Priest Silen's mouth was agape at this seemingly impossible, sudden twist of fate. Ignoring the pain and keeping his composure, the Lord of the Sword said coldly to the stunned lord, "High Hammerdun, do you take full responsibility of your men, in good times and in bad times?" With those words, and the lord's strong sense of honor, there was only one answer.

"Yes, yes I do take responsibility for my men's actions. I await your suitable punishment for me to disgrace you in such a way." The lord seemed diminished now, as if the world had forsaken him. The Swordlar instantly replied, "There will be no bloodshed on this day." The people sighed a relief, but the Swordlar continued his sentence. "I demand a battle, one final fight at the ruins where our beloved Loiret once stood. It is there that my sword bearers and I challenged you, Lord of the Hammers, to the death, along with all your finest warriors. Failure to do so will result in the complete and utter destruction of your line, province, people and anything else that carries your name. Do you accept?"

There was of course, only one answer suitable for the Lord of Hammers, one answer that would lead to either of the lord's deaths. "I accept," the hammer said gravely to the sword. Those words seemed to echo down to the very bowels of the underworld.

The Steward of Swords nodded curtly and replied, "Then it is done. High Priest Silen, I require your services."

The Destined One came out of his state of shock and hurried over to the Swordlar. Under his breath he muttered, "What have the gods done?" With that, he set to work. Concentrating on a prayer of healing, the air shimmered around the wound. The accursed bolt writhed and seemed to melt into the skin of the Swordlar and his armor. In the space of a few moments, it appeared that that tragic occurrence never happened. The steward flexed his arm, and confident with the High Priest's work, he said to the Hammerdun, "We meet at Loiret in one moon." And with that, he mounted his horse, which had remained calm all this time, and headed back into the west to gather his forces.

When the steward was nothing more on the horizon, the High Hammerdun whispered to one of his attendants, "Find those who were responsible for this atrocity, and make sure they pay." He then turned to the priest and wearily said, "Go back to your temple friend, go back and pray to

the gods for a miracle. No peace will come of this. If one of us dies, then that lord's people will rise to arms again, and a new cycle of blood will begin. Please, find some way to end this madness. I am honor bound to meet the Swordlar in battle. Please, go now and pray." The High Priest bowed and hurried for the stables, not knowing what to do. He was so confident that nothing could go wrong. He was destined to bring peace to Anjou, but that had not happened. Why? Were the gods playing some sort of sick joke on him? Perhaps he needed to do something else first to fulfill his purpose. Whatever it was, Silen was still in a state of shock. Meditation might bring some answers and calm his nerves.

The days went by like the chill wind that leaves hearty souls cringing fruitlessly under the covers, waiting for endless cold to stop. Both houses of Hammer and Sword prepared for their battle. Each lord however, chose only a select few of their most valiant men, knowing that with the end of the battle, a new war would erupt if either side lost. The people honored and revered their respective lords; the loss of their leader would bring them to a bloodthirsty quest for vengeance under the guise of justice. And so, the lords left most of their men in reserve, to stem or reinforce the inevitable onslaught of the cold death that awaited them all.

A third party was making preparations also. Silen Dracfodden was locked away in the most holy temple of Serajeven. For three weeks without food drink or sleep he prayed. Only the blessing of the gods and Silen's knowledge that he could not part the world without fulfilling his destiny kept him alive. Silen knew that every being had its own preordained destiny set by the gods, and that they would fulfill that destiny before departing from their beloved world. Silen was fortunate to know his destiny. Bringing peace to Anjous was what he had put every effort into, and he couldn't die without fulfilling his destiny. Walking through fire, breathing underwater, and pierced by a hundred arrows, lasting a season without food or water, all these he had survived working toward his divine goal, but the path was unclear. Ten days were all that were left of peace. The Day of Tears, as the people were calling that date of death, hung over the land, ready to weep blood across the fields, homes and towns. Clearly the Binding was not the way Anjous was to be united, and now it seemed that Anjous would be ripped apart again. The land would be once more drenched in blood and sorrow, with all sense of humanity gone and trampled under a flood of vengeance. While these heavy thoughts rested on Silen's mind, the answer came to him like a flash of lightning. The priest thought out the answer, examined all possibilities and at long last, he smiled. There would be no bloodshed on

the Day of Tears.

The fateful crawled in like the worms and maggots festering on a corpse. A red sun rose out of the east, and the shadows of the ruined city of Loiret reached out like groping souls. Despite the ominous atmosphere, one soul was quite cheerful. Silen sat atop crest, overlooking the fields where the battle would be fought. He looked behind him at the gloomy ruins. *Soon*, he thought, *soon there will be merriment in these desolate ruins, for I alone can bring peace.* Silen still had not eaten or rested since his startling revelation, taking advantage of his blessing. No one accompanied him along the dangerous trek to Loiret, plagued with bandits and marauders, for Silen could not die until his task was complete. Glints of steel from the east and west interrupted Silen's thoughts, prompting him to start his work. Tracing a ritual circle in the blasted ground, Silen Dracfodden began to pray. The despair of foretold bloodshed would bring peace.

The two armies marched grim-faced into the central fields of Loiret. Each was five hundred strong, all on foot, saving the horses for the future battles to come. With each army, their leader carried their sacred weapons. For the Swordlars, the Chisel of Reason was brought forth from its mantle, and for the Hammerduns, the Forge of Order was taken from its hearth. All that could be heard was the uniform rattle of death. Nearing the center of the battlefield, a wave of despair rippled through the ranks. Images of their families, loved ones and country, all ravaged through war trickled into their minds. Soon the images became a torrent of woe. Not able to take the mental strain, both armies fell to their knees.

Silen looked up and smiled, the prayer done and the armies halted, he would address them with his divine grace. Suddenly, a twang of despair ripped through Silen's gut. *No*, he thought, *not now my work is not finished!* The wind whipped from behind him, and the sky grew dark as Silen Dracfodden's soul was ripped out of his body into the

beast's maw.

The soul dragon reared up and took to the sky. A shadow among shadows, the abomination of souls had been awakened by Silen's prayer. Its translucent form held no scales—no, this beast was far worse. The faces of the dead covered its smoky body, blotting out the sun. Down the dragon swooped, with pale eyes of nothingness, onto the two stunned armies. Inhaling deeply, it sucked the souls out of half the Swordlar army and landed with a tremendous crash in the center of the battlefield. With its whisking tail, the Hammerdun's army's ranks were also halved. The dragon reared its vile head and out came the sound of all the tortured souls the monster had devoured. A field of darkness and despair enveloped the combatants, leaving the remainder of the forces to the dragon's mercy.

The Steward and the Lord both miraculously survived the vicious onslaught. Running forth, they both found the abomination feasting at leisure. In roars of rage the Chisel and Forge charged the cadaver's head. The Chisel purchased first into the skull of the beast, and next came Order, hammering Reason into the cursed monster. Both lords were tossed back as the dragon writhed in agony, screaming with a thousand souls. The end of the beast could be seen from the farthest reaches of Anjous. First came the blinding light of the righteous, followed by the tremors of the deafening roar, and last came the stream of souls, freed at last to eternal sleep.

With the beast gone, the armies slowly recovered and awaited for their rulers' judgment. They knew they could not fight. The shock of depression and despair for their quickly departed comrades was enough to subdue them. Sharing in their mourning, the two forces meet and clasped arms in brotherhood. There would be no fight, today, or ever in Anjous again. His work had been done. Silen Dracfodden, or Saint Dragonfodder as he was soon canonized as, had completed his destiny, but not quite in the form he expected.