

KURO: A Dragon Lord's Son

An Isekai Written By: AiraFox

Chapter 1

It's hot. I can't breathe. My body is covered in what feels like sweat, but I lack the room to even wipe my brow. My elbows keep banging into what feels like a plastic container on all sides. If this is some kind of prank, I want out! Now! It feels like my vision will fade at any moment, but given I can't even see what is in front of my face, I cannot exactly say that I'm even conscious at the moment.

CRACK

I heard it just now. A distinct crack around my right elbow. This is my chance! The more I push my elbow around it, the more I feel the surface of this blasted container crumbling around it. There's a cool sensation swirling around my elbow now. Freedom! Now is my chance!

"Push!" I tell myself. "Push! PUSH!" Finally my arm is free. Just great! NOW my legs have finally broken through the wall in front of me. It would have been great if they got through before my arm, because now it just feels weird. But I don't have time to be picky about it. My right arm and my legs are free. As the greater surface begins to crack, I attempt to wiggle my left arm closer to the wall while grabbing the edge of the cracked surface with my right hand. How crumbly it feels now it's odd, like hollow loaf of french bread, though a bit harder.

I can do this! Now... puuuuuuush! "Gwaaaaaah!"

Finally, I'm free! Though I immediately begin to wish I was not. It seems the container blocked my sense of smell because a mix of sulfur and afterbirth amplified a thousandfold hits me. I barely have time to wretch as my eyes lock forward. Instinctively I scoot my butt back a bit against a pillowed surface as I gave forward as the sight of a massive creature.

Standing at least 6 meters tall in a room as large as church cathedral is what I can only describe as a dragon. At least I think it's a dragon. Nothing like the dragons I've seen in games and movies; its shape is too humanoid. As it leans its long neck forward, I get a better look. The dragon's snout certainly resembles that of a typical dragon, but instead of scales it's covered in thin black fur. Piercing yellow eyes gaze over my form, staring into the depths of my soul. The fear I'm experiencing is overwhelming, thoughts of "Is he going to eat me?" race through my brain. Yet, despite my desire to piss my pants right now, nothing in my body is telling me to run away. I'm not sure if I'm just too scared to run or if it's something else.

"Bring me an Appraisal Eye!" the dragon speaks, his voice a deep rumble that echoes through the chamber. Only now do I see a red-scaled lizard walking upright behind him, wearing what seems to be a black robe. Is that a kobold? It has to be! It looks like I've seen in games. Who knew D&D got something like that right! As the kobold shuffles around for whatever the dragon requested, I can take my time better examining the dragon now that his attention doesn't seem to be focused on me.

He is standing upright like a human, longer arms crossed with each finger tipped

with a sharp claw. His upper torso seems to be sporting a black cloth armor with red buttons and tassels, though if not for those, the outfit might be lost on his fur. Thick pads adorned with a large jewel on each sit upon his shoulders, sticking outward like some fancy royal. I assume that armor was originally supposed to cover more of him, but he has a small, yet noticeable pudge protruding from his mid section that I am assuming he was lacking something more fitting. He's not wearing any type of leg wear, but fortunately nothing appears to be showing between his legs or I think I'd be rightly scarred given I am sitting eye-level at his crotch. As for why, it's because he is basically sitting on his legs. Powerful haunches, that's the best way I can describe them. Curious to get a look at his feet, I lean forward to peek beyond the pillow I am sitting on. Leaning on my hands, I'm able to see that his right foot is very unusual, like a human's foot with only three toes and immensely sharp talons. I think it's raised up like a digitigrade appendage.

"Hmmm?"

Oh no! My movement has caught the beast's attention. His eyes once again narrow upon me, slit pupils shrinking to become rounder. He flashes a grin my way, showing over his razor sharp pearly whites. Did dragons brush their teeth? They glimmered enough that it sure seems that way.

"My boy's eager to get up, eh? Patience." he says to me.

My boy? That is a strange thing to call me. Suddenly it dawns upon me to actually look down at my hand. A human hand with a missing finger, dull claws stuck out from the end of each digit. I flex my fingers to see if this is really my hand. It's covered in an incredibly thin layer of silver fur, yet it is so clumped together it feels as hard scales. Panic once again sets in as I begin to feel and glance over my body. Unlike the dragon in front of me, the front of my body is a dull, faded silver, but an uneven pattern causes a diagonal line up my chest where the black of the dragon seems to come in. The lower part of my legs and feet are also black.

No no no! I think over and over again. *This can't be real!* Slowly, I turn my head around, peeking over my left shoulder. A thick tail, thicker near the base, reaches out and curls around the pillow; it has to be half the length of my body. Now it all makes sense. The container trapping me was an egg! I turn my head back around, stunned and at a loss for words. My eyes won't stop shaking and my jaw hangs agape, but despite my internal screaming I don't appear to be making a sound.

It's okay! I just have to think back a moment, remember what happened.

My name is (blank)... That's odd! I cannot seem to recall my own name. How does one forget their own name?! Don't panic, just think! I'm a 20 year-old human. Good! I remember that much. I had just finished my final class of the day at (blank) University! Dammit! Another name I can't remember. It's as if someone applied White-Out to my brain! Whatever... Just keep remembering... My final class for the day had just ended. It wasn't a hard class, an electoral mythology class I took just for the credits. I admit I've always loved dragons and minotaurs and stuff, so I thought it would be cool. Unfortunately, it was more discussing the impact and meaning of stories from the past. Come to think of it, being a dragon would be pretty cool if I had the chance to do this on my own terms.

Anyway, back to what I was supposed to be thinking about. Class ran late and it had gotten dark. I walked back to my dorm same as I always had in the past. The area

was pretty safe and I'm a fairly fit individual, so I never felt as risk for anything. As I approached the crosswalk to head to my dormitory, I... That's where it all goes blank! I remember hearing voices about that time, but everything else is a blur. Was I hit by a car? Did someone stab or shoot me? Did I faint due to the million other things that can happen to a human body? Did I die? Am I alive now and just dreaming?

This seems too real to be a dream. Wait! Could it be...?

Don't tell me I've been reincarnated! Like one of those anime series or novels that seem to be plaguing every outlet of the internet and manga sections of stores? Those were real?! I admit... I've enjoyed my fair share of them. Some of them are pretty interesting, but many feel like they're just trying to cash in on a fad. Well if I really died in such a lame way, I guess I can't criticize anyone.

The kobold finally returns carrying with him what seems like a clear sapphire glass. Even I can see through it. The dragon delicately picks up the sapphire between his claws, small symbols I can't make out light up the edges. The dragon notices my interest in the thing.

"This, little one? This is an Appraisal Eye, one of the tools created by humans," he begins explaining, though I don't think he's convinced I will understand what he's saying based on how belittling his voice sounds. It sounds a bit like he just wants to hear himself talk. Strangely, I kind of want to hear him talk as well. "It's easy to measure one's strength based on appearance, but magic is another matter. A spell is the same strength no matter who casts it, but how does one measure how strong a particular spell is without using it? How strong is it? How much of a person's energy does it use? A spell was developed for just such an occasion, but that wastes energy and is only temporary. Those humans are quite craft and infused their magic in a tool that, when used, displays everything you need to know about a particular spell as long as you under the ancient writings of the gods!"

As he speaks to me, I cannot help but admire just how full of himself he sounds. It's amazing how he's speaking as if he had something to do with all of it, even though I am pretty sure he did not. He seems like he's trying to convince me or at least himself of that. Oops! I was so lost in my analysis of his speech patterns that I almost stopped paying attention to his explanation. I missed the greater details of what he was saying!

"And so in addition to tells us about spells, it works on items and even living creatures, though it is fallible. Using an Appraisal Eye too many times can cause it too overload and break, and given how rare these stones are, we prefer not to waste them."

So from the parts I did hear, I can guess that the stone can be used to display the strength and abilities of anyone or anything like the stat screen in an RPG. Now this is really sounding like an anime! What's next? Am I going to embark on a quest to save the world? I guess that would be pretty cool.

The dragon has finally finished speaking and it holding the stone up to his right right eye, focusing on me. I can only imagine what it says.

"Rank B. Magical Molecules are at around 10,000." He sounds disappointed. "I guess I couldn't ask for much more than that from a child. But he's MY son! With how many females I had to go through to get a single egg, I was certain he'd be more."

"Lord Jathir!" the kobold stammers, trying to appease what I presume is his dragonic master. "You should be proud! Even among your glorious kind, it's extremely rare for a child to be born with a rank greater than C, is it not?" He keeps bowing to the

dragon. "Is it not BECAUSE he is YOUR son that he has a rank of B?"

The keep mentioning rank B. Is that bad? Good? The kobold seems impressed, but this dragon claiming to be my father is acting like I'm a failure.

"I supppooooooooose..." Yep, he's definitely ashamed of me already. I open my mouth to demand he stop talking about me in such a way, but the only sound that comes past my lips is an almost inaudible "Arrr?"

Now I am the one disappointed in me! I cover my face in embarrassment. If this was one of those stories, I'd be closer to my age, capable of speech and everything. This was not the case, so I guess I was just reincarnated in some unrelated manner. Maybe it's not like that after all. Still, regardless of my own physical limitations, my bod is screaming at me to not let him get away with disrespecting me. I had a 3.7 GPA in my school. I'm not stupid!

I attempt to stand. Bad move on my part. My legs lack the strength to hold my body up, and these wings on my back are too dinky to support to my weight to fall backward. I fall forward. The pillow slips from under my foot and I tumble over the pedestal. Not good! My eyes dart to my right to see that the dragon and kobold are still talking. They haven't even noticed that I'm falling. What am I going to do? I do the first thing that comes to my mind.

I scream.

Less of a scream, it was more of a mix between a cry and a roar. In the blink of an eye, four hands appear beneath me. Not only the kobold that was talking to my supposed dad, but two others had dove onto the scene to cushion my fall. At least one of them, a green-colored one, has fallen over completely. I was saved! I sigh with a relief, tear dripping subconsciously from my tiny form. As I wipe away the hazy liquid, I can better see my saviors. The irises of each of them are glowing dimly, zoned-out expressions slathered across each of their faces. I glance toward the dragon to see a wide grin spread across his face.

"THAT'S MY BOY!" Jathir smirks, finally sounding pleased with something. He holds up the stone to his eye again. My Magical Molecules have dropped for about 9,400, but it does not concern my father. "Imperatus Will," I hear him mutter. "Seems to be a lot like my Merciless Will."

As the kobolds regain sense of themselves, they seem to be completely aware of their actions. "What happened?" the red kobold from before asks, holding me up toward the ceiling. "I'm glad we saved him, but my body just moved on its own there."

I am wondering the same thing myself. What did just happen there? Why were their eyes glowing?

"He seems to have been bestowed an 'Ability'. Just like me," Jathir reveals. Before I can wonder what he means by that, he gives the answer. "Imperatus Will. It's a power once held by one of my ancestors. Anyone weaker than the individual has their will temporarily overwritten by the user. It works much better on lizardfolk like you."

"Then..." the green-scaled kobold begins to say.

"Precisely! He's definitely MY child!" bellows Jathir. "It's just like my Ability, 'Merciless Will'! Although it would seem he can't yet activate it on his own." He throws his right arm form, causing a cape I didn't notice before to flap behind him. "Kuro! That is his name! The black and silver dragon, Kuroginryuu, who will become my right-hand! My legacy!"

So now he's giving me a name? Seeing how I can't remember my own name, I guess I can't complain. But is it Kuro? Or Kuroginryuu? If I'm stuck between the two, I think I'd prefer Kuro. It's far less of a mouthful. I feel like I'd bite my own tongue trying to say my own name if it's the latter. Still... I wish I could remember my real name. Now the only thing swimming around my head is the name Kuro and Kuroginryuu.

My name is Kuro! I suddenly think to myself without intending to.

...I hate myself now. Don't tell me... Was my own name just overwritten! What other things did this reincarnation thing take from me?!

Jathir finally reaches over to apprehend me from his minion. The cold touch of the kobold's hand around my waist are replaced with a welcoming warmth from the dragon's touch beneath my armpits. He adjusts my position so that as he bends his left arm, I'm able to sit upon it. Instinctively I cling to his body to keep my balance. It's so strange that this dragon I feared only moments ago now provides me with a sense of security I did not have before. Every shaking muscle in my body has stilled. I... don't want to let go.

"As soon as he's able to walk, we'll begin his training," Jathnir announces to the room. Turning around, I can see that the room is filled with various individuals, ranging from more lizardfolk to even humans. At least, they might be humans. It's hard to tell from over here. This dragon sure is making a big deal out of my birth-hatching... whatever. No matter what you call it, he is making it into quite the spectacle.

"Valka!" Jathir roars loudly. It's the first time his voice was enough to cause the kobolds around him to shudder, though I cannot be certain whether it is out of fear or respect of his commanding voice.

A figure at the front of the crowd makes itself know. This one is a lizardman like the other kobolds, but something about them seems different. Their shape is noticeably different from a kobold, instead, looking more like a cross between a salamander and an alligator. Their scales are a deep albino color, though with the amount of red scars across their face and arms I would not blame anyone for thinking otherwise. If I had to take an educated guess, I would surmise that their color made them stand out, resulting in a lot of fights. Their entire upper and lower body is clad in armor crafted from some kind of combination of iron and ruby. It seems to blend with the scars on their body, making for a good look.

"Yes, Lord Jathir!" the lizardman speaks, her voice gruff, but hiding a tenderness behind it. Her buff appearance and voice together made it seem like she was the kind of person who would beat you to a pulp for bumping into her, but apologize to you after. She kneels down on one knee and bows her head to Jathir.

"General, I expect you'll be ready to add his physical training to your regime within the next 10 days?" Jathir asks her, though his question seems to be more of a command than anything.

"Of course, my lord!" responds the female lizardman, keep her head low and eyes closed. "I am honored you would consider me worthy to oversee his training." I can tell that she is hiding a giddiness behind her words. And if I can see that much, I'm positive that Jathir can too. "This actually works perfectly. The newest recruits are set to begin in 3 days. It'll give him far more opponents to improve against."

"Perfect," Jathir replies with a satisfied nod, but it is clear that Valka cannot see that.

I was so engrossed in the conversation that details of it are only now hitting me.

Ten days?! Never mind walking by that time, that I feel I might be able to do, but being able and ready to train? With HER? Something like that?! I feel ready to faint, unintentionally clinging closer against my father. Again I find myself calling him that. The more I do so, the more I feel I might start to believe it. Even if my mind refuses it, my body seems convinced of its blood bond.

So this is how it begins. This is my life as a dragon. Where others might imagine the awesome of terrorizing kingdoms, hoarding gold and treasure, or bestowing wisdom upon mortal races, I'm about to have the will to live beaten of my body shortly after my rebirth. Whatever god is in charge of my story must be laughing their ass off somewhere.