

KURO: A Dragon Lord's Son

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Chapter 4: Divine Drakes

The Divine Tetradrakes. Even I had heard of them in my studies. While there many deities, their were four big ones said to be above all others. Jald, the God of Fire and Light. Veliam, the God of Water and Void. Zeme, God of Terra and Life. Sirrus, the God of Air and Sound. Together the four of them made the pantheon organization known as The Tetrad.

Each member of The Tetrad was known to occasionally bestow a Divine Blessing upon the denizens of the world to varying degrees, the effects of which depended upon individual. Although there was no official pattern, it was said that each deity would grant a Minor Blessing about every 10 years, a normal Blessing every 100 years, and a Greater Blessing every 1,000 years. The Divine Tetradrakes were different, however... Among all of the creatures to ever exist in the land, they were the only ones ever granted a Supreme Blessing.

So I'm really going to meet them... Strange. Despite how famous they are, father never talked about them to me before. He brags about how strong he is, but I guess there really are dragons stronger than him.

"We'll be there soon!" Jathir announced, disrupting my thoughts. We had traveled a considerable distance and the sun was only just reaching the top of the sky. Although it was a bit hard to tell with the cloud cover moving in. We were steadily approaching a mountain range where I could see a storm brewing near the summit. And were headed right for it!

"Hang on tight, Kuro!" Jathir flexed his wings outward to keep himself stationary in the air. The jolt of the stop was sudden and caused me to lurch forward, nearly knocking the air out of my lungs. Jathir closed his eyes and the image of a glowing yellow barrier wrapped around both him and me. "This should allow us to get through."

Get through? What is he talking about? I had no idea what Jathier meant by that. A simple storm was nothing for the dragon I called my father. There were the Divine Tetradrakes were talking about, though. It was possible that they may have done something.

"Now let's go!" Jathir wasted no more time. Like a bullet he shot through the air toward the storm. His speed was enough to part the clouds a bit, but the layer was so dense it quickly refilled. There were a few flashes of lighting and some hail drops pelted my face, so the barrier Jathir had erected wasn't anything to prevent things from hitting us. Now I was certain that he did it to stop something the Divine Tetradrakes must have done. "We're through."

When I finally opened my eyes from barrage of hail, I noticed that the sky had cleared in the area like the eye of a hurricane. The sky was blue and the sun beamed down hard, but the chill of the upper elevation could not be diverted. My fur and clothes kept me warm enough, but it was still noticeable. It was the next peak over that I saw it. A

jagged rock protruded outward as if acting as overlook to the world below. A metal statue I could only compare to the visage of Thor stood on with a hammer in hand, acting as a lightning rod when the storm surrounded it.

“Storm's Peak. It's said a legendary hero once parted the sky standing in that spot,” said Jathir with a roll of his eyes. “If you ask me, Caerein was too attached to that brat.” The black-furred dragon sighed heavily. “Enough reminiscing. I have a son to rub in their faces!”

Jathir descended toward the opposite peak. As we approached the peak, the form of four large dragons came into view. One towered above the others, a gigantic winged lizard in earthy brown scales. The closer we got, the more they began resemble rocks than scales. Its wings looked like they were made out of diamonds.

The second tallest dragon was long and snake-like, crystal blue scales reflecting the sunlight from it. Their limbs were small for their body size, but not so much they could not support the weight. The wings on the second dragon were almost transparent.

The third dragon was a bright albino color, large feathery wings draped behind them like those of an angel. Their snout was slightly longer than other dragons', and antler-like horns protruded from their skull in the shape of a halo. In terms of size, they were the smallest. Arguably not much larger than Jathir.

The final dragon resembled a traditional dragon from media I'd seen the most. Ruby red scaled dotted their body, their wings large and leathery. Along their spine sat sharp spikes that looked like they could cut a rock in two. Their tail was long and heavy, the tip shining like a blade. As we finally landed, I could see that their face was covered in thick scars.

“Jathir...” the ruby dragon hissed with fiery spit. “I don't recall you being invited.”

“But I'm welcome nonetheless, Ifrit,” my father replied with a smirk. The fiery dragon backed down at his comment. He reminded me of a kid that had serious blackmail levied against them.

“Perhaps if you attended our meeting on more than just a whim, Ifrit would be a little more accepting of your presence,” the rock-like dragon chimed in with a deeper, calmer voice. It struck me as the kind of individual who was very patient.

“Your meetings are always so boring,” Jathir retorted. He lifted a claw as if to imitate a mouth talking. “My god did this. Your god did that. Humans are great. Humans are bad. It's always the same crap! Who cares about the gods asked you to do?! I certainly don't.”

“Watch you tongue, Jathir!” Ifrit growled again.

“Must you two always do this?” the blue dragon sighed loudly.

“Don't put this on me, Levias!” snapped Ifrit. “Jathir is always insulting Lord Jald! I won't stand for it!”

“And yet you do and will,” Jathir reminded him. He stood up as tall as he could, leaning forward to be at the center of all of the dragons. “I know as well you do that your 'gods' won't let you touch me. You all sit here content with your Blessings, yet I'm the only one here with Blessings from all four of them!”

“Normal and one Minor,” Ifrit snuck in under his breath. Jathir ignored him to continue speaking.

“And why? Because they LIKE me! Morals and virtue? Ha! The gods don't care about any of that. I revile them as much as I worship them and they still gave me their

Blessings! You and the humans always think that gods demand the utmost respect, but even they enjoy sleaze. They're just picky about what they do."

Jathir spoke with such assurance that I was as bewildered as the other four. Here he was talking about them as if they were scum, and the four just stood there with mouths agape. Did Jathir really have a Blessing from all four members of The Tetrad? He never prayed from what I saw, and the temples in his territory he had stolen.

"That's enough, Jathir!" the white dragon finally up. "You're going a bit too far."

"NOW he's going too far, Caerein?" Ifrit interjected. "It wasn't when he trashed every one of Lord Sirrus' temples in your homeland? It wasn't when he literally crapped on the festivities held in Lord Zeme's honor? THIS is your limit?"

"Jald sure thought it was funny," Jathir snickered.

My god! Is this seriously what father does? How in the ever-living hell has he not been smited?

"I do a favor for one god, then I stab them back at the behest of another," Jathir shrugged. "Unlike you all who offer your lives in their service, I'm a mercenary for each. As long as long I do something worse to the one who asked me to prank them, they'll continue to grant me their protection."

The largest dragon had not made their say on the matter. While I was left in awe of the conversation and the fact there was nothing that seemed so divine about the dragon given how they spoke, their eyes finally fell upon me.

"And who is this little one, Jathir?" they asked calmly, slowly. Instinctively I hid behind Jathir.

"Little one?" Levias asked with a headtilt. Her eyes settled on me as well. "I've kept my silence to your insults, but even you know better than to bring an outsider to these meetings without informing us first. I don't care if he is your apprentice, you ASK us first!"

"This is my son!" announced Jathir proudly. His hand gently patted my head.

"Son?" This time all four of them spoke in unison. They seemed generally shocked at the notion that Jathir had a child.

"You mean you adopted him, right?" Caerein hesitantly smiled.

"He's my flesh and blood," Jathir assured them.

"Impossible!" Ifrit exclaimed at the top of his lungs, his wings catching fire in his outrage. "How can YOU have a son?! You shouldn't be capable of such a feat! That many Blessings... A power as strong as yours... No female would survive mating you long enough to lay an egg! Not to mention each Blessing reduces the success rate. With four that chances should be almost nothing. Why in Jald's name would any female risk death for such a small chance of success?"

"I'm quite the ladies' man," Jathir answered with a satisfied smirk, placing his claws to his chin and winking at Ifrit.

"Y-You...!" Ifrit stammered.

"Calm down, Ifrit," the rock-like dragon requested, placing a heavy claw between my father and the fiery beast.

"I will not, Genbu!" roared Ifrit. Once again he shouted toward my father.

"There's a limit to depravity, Jathir! What sorcery did you use to enthrall them? This is low for even you!"

"Hey! Hey! I'm not a monster!" For the first time, Jathir was the one who was

insulted. I'd never seen him act this way. "I assure you that each and every female I went through did so of their own free will! And I showed them love that ensured their final moments were ones of heavenly bliss! I wanted each and every one of them to survive!" He calmed down just a little as he spoke about my mother.

"The one who succeeded was something else. She was on death's door, but she pushed through until she produced an egg. She lasted four rounds and still got that far. Ethir was a dragoness that I shall not soon forget."

The surprising kindness in his words seemed to satisfy Ifrit. When he next spoke, his voice had become more respectful. "So what's the little one's name?"

"Kuroginryuu," Jathir answered, reaching over to pick me up in his arms. "My son's name is Kuro. He will be my ultimate legacy. And he is the reason I even came her today." Jathir cleared his throat. "In about 10 years, I will put my plan into action. I trust our agreement stands?"

"We will not get in each other's way," Levias stated, repeating the agreement they seemed to have had in the past. "But pray tell, how in Lord Veliam's name do you plan to succeed? I don't deny your power, but even you are not strong enough to accomplish such a feat on your own. And we will not lift a claw to assist you."

"Your Merciless Will is an impressive 'Ability,' but there are some whose wills you cannot break," Genbu added.

"They're right, Jathir!" Ifrit bellowed. "Even if there were five of you, I doubt you could succeed!"

"Two of me will be enough," Jathir cackled, holding me up high. "Once Kuro here is a bit closer to my level, he and I will be enough." Jathir raised the ridge of his eyes as he looked toward me. "Do it, Kuro!"

Do what? That?! Even if I could control it, it wouldn't work on dragons as powerful as them! I wanted to shout at my father, but it was clear he wouldn't listen if I did. The Tetradrakes had had their curiosity peaked with Jathir's statement. They wondered what I could do. I had no choice in the matter. *Well... here goes!*

I closed my eyes and concentrated. The best I could do was imagine a switch in my mind that could turn on or off the Ability I had been born with it. Once I had the image of the light switch in my head, I mentally flicked it.

"What. Is. This!" Ifrit snapped.

I opened my eyes to find that three of the dragon appeared to be showing great irritation. Genbu was as calm as could be, but Ifrit was grabbing his head like he was experiencing the worst migraine of his life. The others acted similarly. A wave of exhaustion flooded over me and I quickly flipped off the switch. I scrambled within Jathir's grasp until he set me on the ground. Immediately I collapsed to my hands and knees, panting as if I had just finished a 10 kilometer sprint.

"Imperatus Will!" revealed Jathir. "That is Kuro's Ability!"

Simply trying to control dragons as powerful as the Divine Tetradrakes had drained nearly all of the Magical Molecules from my body! No wonder I was so tired. Naturally, it had failed, but the headaches that three of the four had experienced was them bearing the full impact of my Ability.

"You dare unleash it upon us?" Caerein rumbled.

"No, I knew it wouldn't work," Jathir cackled. "But I figured a demonstration of Kuro's power would change your tunes. When he's learned to better control it, when

paired with my Merciless Will, nobody will be able to stand in our way!” Jathir held up a hand, raising a single finger. “10 years! This world is going to change! All I ask if for you to sit back and watch. Success or failure, this will be my ultimate 'deprave' act.”