

A Dragon's First Damsel

Baby Dragon sat on the floor of the cave coloring purple bat wings in his favorite color book. He hummed to himself and occasionally snorted a tiny burst of flame just for fun, but then had to pat out the singes in his book. He rummaged through his box of crayons and looked up when Mama Dragon came hurrying in.

"Put that stuff away now and come with me," she said.

"Why, where are we going?" asked Baby D.

"There's a damsel in distress just down the hill. She's perfect for you. Come on, I don't want her to be rescued before you get to her."

Baby D looked up with big eyes. "Really! For me? I love damsel. But, I've never got my own before...."

"I'll help you, but it's time you started attacking damsels on your own," she said. "Now clean that up before we go."

Baby D picked up handfuls of crayons and dropped them into his box and shoved his book into his toy shelf. "Ready!" he said, brushing his hands against his sides.

Mama D took him outside and stopped. "Now remember how we practiced flying and snorting smoke and fire and roaring a lot?"

"Yeah!" yelled Baby D. He roared a great roar that ended with coughing and wiping smoke from his eyes.

"OK," said Mama D, "just remember not to inhale when you do that."



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Baby D nodded and blinked tears away and coughed some more.

"So, here's what you do," instructed Mama. "She's tied up to a tree down there. I want you to fly over there, roar a lot, singe off the ropes, pick her up in your mouth and carry her back here. You think you can do that?"

Baby D hopped around excitedly. "Wow, my first damsel!"

"OK," said Mama. "Off you go. Have fun!"

Baby D took a running start and stretched his little wings. He dipped and bounced a few times before he caught the wind and began to soar a bit. He heard Mama's feint voice and looked down to see her pointing the opposite direction so he glided into a turn and changed course.

Soon he saw his victim. She was tied to a tree with big ropes, just as Mama D said. He swooped over her head with a roar that only choked him a little but frightened the girl into screams. He circled off and flew back around spewing flames, but because he was just a young dragon, his flames didn't reach very far. The girl screamed again, but stopped when she realized that he was a baby and not doing a very good job attacking her.

Baby D landed with a bump in front of her and roared again.

"Are you serious?" asked the girl.

"Hey, look who's tied up and look who else has big teeth!" answered Baby D, somewhat offended.

"Uh huh," she replied, clearly not terrified.

"Oh yeah! Watch this," said Baby D. He took in a great breath and snorted out a short burst of fire.

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"Hey!" yelled the girl. "What do you think you're doing? You almost got me that time."

"That's the whole point," said the baby dragon. "I'm supposed to attack you. You're a damsel in distress aren't you?"

"Well, yes," said the girl. "But you don't have to take advantage of it. You could let me go."

"Let you go? Why would I let you go?" asked Baby D.

"Lots of reasons," she said.

"Name one," said the dragon.

"I have chocolate," said the girl.

"Chocolate?" asked the dragon, confused.

"Have you ever had chocolate?" the girl asked. The dragon shook his big baby head. "Well, you haven't lived then. I can give you chocolate like you've never had before. Well, you've never had it anyway, so you have to trust me. It's really good."

"Yeah?" replied Baby D. "Is it sweet?"

"Yes!" said the girl.

"Do you have it here?"

"No, I was on my way to get it when the evil prince who wants me to marry him but I won't, so he's mad at me, tied me up here." She rolled her eyes, "It's a long story."

"Oh," said Baby D. He tried to figure out what she just said and gave up.

"So, where's the chocolate?"

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"At my chocolate factory," she said pointing with her chin to her left.

"Should I go get it?" asked the dragon.

"No, you should let me go and I'll go get it," answered the girl. She watched him hesitate. "You'll really like it," she said temptingly.

"OK," said Baby D. He shuffled around behind her and singed off the ropes on the other side of the tree until they fell off.

"Good job!" said the girl, brushing the ropes off and straitening her clothes. "Now, you have to go," she said.

"What? What about the chocolate?" he wailed.

"I'll go get it, but you can't watch me. My factory is in a secret place," she said.

Baby D eyed her skeptically.

"Hmm," said the girl tapping her chin. "I wonder if you'll like the rich dark chocolate or the sweeter light chocolate." She looked at him shrewdly. "For you, dark chocolate, I think."

"Yeah, dark chocolate!" said the dragon. "Get the dark chocolate."

"OK, go!" said the girl. "Come back in an hour."

"OK," said the dragon. He turned and ran and bounced a few times and got air under his wings. He flew back to his cave and landed in front of Mama Dragon.

"Where's the damsel?" she asked.

"She went to get dark chocolate for me," he answered, pleased with himself.

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Mama D shook her head, "Honey, we need to talk. Let's go inside."

A few minutes later, a squirrel hurrying past the cave heard muffled sobs.

"Really! No chocolate?" And then lots of crying.

