Based on Spyro:Reignited Trilogy.

Semi-sequel to Little Spark

As the only surviving hatchling and the only dragon that composes of the new generation, Spyro's fellow dragons assign themselves as pseudo parents and guardians with the intent to educate, rear, and develop him into a proper, young dragon. Of course, such a task must be shared amongst themselves, as the little purple dragon proves himself to be quite the
Numerous one-shots detailing the lives of the five dragon tribes/clans (Artisans, Peace Keepers, Magic Crafters, Beast Makers, and Dream Weavers) and the trials, tribulations, and the rewards of raising a certain little rascal.

Requests are open and encouraged. Mainly family/brotherly love based, a few parings sprinkled within (OC x Canon). PG rated at most.

Notes

Hey guys! Well...I'm attempting this. I'm trying to branch out in writing more than one thing at a time to keep myself from burning out, and, well, the urge to do these little things came to me! I finally got the game for keeps, and I am still loving it, AND all the Dragon Dads/Brothers/Uncles, what have you!

Thus, starting off from where Little Spark ended, this isn't laid out as straightforward, events taking place pre 1st game, post, pre and post 2nd and 3rd game, yet I shall alert you in where exactly it's supposed to take place in the 'timeline' (this one taking place not too long before, but not too close to the events of the first game for example).

And seeing as Spyro himself is an Artisan, I felt that it'd make sense that they'd have the most interaction with him. And given the rather handsome Nestor is the first dragon you find (seriously, for a flying lizard, he's not bad at all, and I'm not the only one to have said that), I thought it appropriate that I begin this with him and the series namesake 'rascal'.

Again, any ideas for future chapters are welcome! Thank you for reading!
The Dragon Realms.

A general, broad term for what was known to be five distinct, diverse areas, each with a different environment. And in each of those areas, five distinct, unique clans have flourished, adapting and cultivating their homelands in a fashion individualized to their prowess, abilities, lifestyle, and philosophy.

The first of these areas to develop, and in turn, assist in the development of the other four realms, is the home of the Artisans…

"…of which is something that YOU should be paying extra attention to!"

His claws flicked the back of the far smaller dragon's neck, immediately gaining a reaction and an 'Ow!' out of him. "Oh please." The larger, flying reptile replied. "I barely touched you."

"Yeah," the little, violent colored dragon retorted, rubbing the area. "Define 'barely'."

The larger dragon simply rolled his brown eyes. He could already tell that this was going to be difficult.

In comparison to the smaller quadruped, he bore scales of yellowish-green, small, webbings on the sides of his jaw, his horns arcing upward and curving back. Also, contrary to the far smaller young dragon, he was garbed in a dark green vest that was linked over his broad, yellow chest, a gemstone of Emerald serving as the fastener on the right side. His lower half held a simple tool satchel around his surprisingly slimmer waist.

"I have an entire arsenal here, little one." The adult dragon gestured to his belt. "I suggest you not test me." 'Not that it'd probably stop you.' He would never go through with such a threat of course, his current 'student' knowing such as well. Of course, this wasn't to say that, should he be pushed too far, the adolescent wasn't going to escape any potential consequences. "So, will you KINDLY pay attention?"

The small dragon, in turn, sighed, a golden dragonfly fluttering by his head. "Yes, Nestor." He droned.

Not exactly the most respectful response, yet they were behind on the lesson as it was.

"Good. Now," the larger dragon, Nestor, directed his attention back to the map stationed on the wall of his shop. The space was small and relatively packed, not to mention cluttered with unfinished projects and planks of cut wood. He could already see the child's thoughts of how unorganized this space was, surely forming in his mind how he was a big fat hypocrite. "Spyro…"

'Make sure to pick up after yourself.'
'You know better than to leave that laying around.'

'How many times have I told you to clean up whenever you make a mess?!

He could see a small, knowing smile curl on the child's lips already! Cocky little…Nestor sighed and stilled himself, Spyro's grin in turn quickly faltering. He was supposed to be the adult here, a teacher no less (of which he was quickly finding to be far more taxing than his true profession), and thus, it was his duty to teach. Difficulties be cursed. Oh yes…they be cursed indeed.

"As I was saying," the carpenter began again, pointing to one particular area on the map, located downward and centered just above the margin of the aged scroll of paper. "Our people, the Artisans, may not hold the strength of the Peace Keepers nor the complex skills of the Magic Crafters- "

"Or the resilience of the Beast Keepers, and only just a smidgen behind the Dream Weavers in perception."

Nestor raised one scaled brow. "Well, well." He found himself smirking. "You ARE capable of paying attention."

"Never said I wasn't." Spyro in turn proclaimed. 'That's what you have to do in order to get out of Astor telling you one of his 'stories'. he dare not say that aloud, given the older dragon and Nestor's relations as father and son. Though the young child HAD indeed heard the green dragon tell Argus how some of his 'stories' could be quite taxing on one's senses. What 'taxing' meant, he didn't know, yet he suspected it meant something along the same lines as 'boring'.

"Then this shouldn't be too difficult." Nestor replied. "As I was saying." he shot Spyro a look. "While we Artisans hold not the more notable traits of the inhabitants of the other realms, we have helped contribute, and in some, and my humble opinion, become the backbone of each realm due to the contributions of our people." Not exactly a 'humble opinion', perhaps, yet he was prepared if the young dragon had anything to say about his rather bold claim. "When I was young, just about, or maybe even younger than you, there was nothing here but vast, green plains and untamed wilderness. We were left with no shelter, nor any means to provide for ourselves, save for foraging and scavenging for whatever we could find."

"What?" Spyro piped up. Normally, Nestor would've chided him for such an interruption, yet in this, the violet reptile appeared, to his surprise, be expressing interest in this subject. "But…but you…we're dragons!" he proclaimed, momentarily jostling the dragonfly that had perched himself atop his head. "We're the greatest, strongest creatures in the world! In the universe!"

"Says Titan and a good number of the other Peace Keepers, I'd imagine." The carpenter said. "And in some respects, yes. We as a people are capable of much, yet you mustn't forget, Spyro, that such qualities do not spare even the mightiest from hardship." The dragon, to the confusion of the younger, felt the need to turn away from him, bringing his clawed hand to his mouth. "In more ways that you could ever imagine…"

"…Nestor?" 

"It…it's nothing. It's fine." The older dragon assured. Spyro clearly wasn't buying it, yet before he could express such, the green carpenter continued with the lesson. "Anyhow, structures from the towers and castles of our home to the fortresses of the Peace Keepers and even the floating structures of the Dream Weavers, almost each and every stone or brick that compose them have come from our very own hands and designs."
"Really?" Spyro asked, eyes widening. Sure, the whole deal regarding the ins and outs of architecture was far from interesting to him, yet to hear of just how much the Artisans, his own race, had supposedly contributed to...well, frankly, it was rather surreal to him. "But... but I thought they were just known for being all artsy and stuff-"

"They?" Nestor interrupted. "What's this using 'they'? Also, 'artsy'?" he wasn't angry, though it was clear that he was somewhat taken aback by the little dragon's comment. "Care to explain? What does 'artsy' mean to you?"

"Well..." the young dragon stammered, not exactly sure how to answer, let alone why Nestor was so adamant in receiving one. "I guess...it's like...well...sort of like-"

"BZT!" the dragonfly hummed, signaling to the larger dragon his larger (but still quite small) companion was stalling.

"No, I am NOT, Sparx!" the insect's 'dragon' retorted, Nestor clearing his throat. His arms were folded, clearly expecting an answer.

"Artsy..." Spyro began, truly this time (albeit still with some difficulty). "It's like...like how Tomas writes songs. Or how Delbin does all those paintings." The green Artisan in turn nodded. "And Gildas too. Though, he kind of of doesn't just stick to painting on canvases."

'Indeed.' Nestor thought. Neither artist's skills could be denied, yet it was clear of whom held more restraint (and sense) when comparing the two. "Go on. Surely those three can't be the only ones."

"Oh, yeah! I forgot!" the little dragon realized. "Nevin paints stuff too! And Nils sculpts stuff!"

"Good, good. Who else?"

"Um...Darius...he's all into theater and stuff. And...would Delvin count?"

Nestor nodded. "I would say decorating pastries and cakes more than counts. Though, aren't you missing some dragons?"

Spyro's equally violet eyes shifted. "Um...no. I don't think so."

"Are you sure?" the carpenter prodded. "What of Alvar? He is just as creative with food as Delvin. Of course, his manner of choice is meats and spices." 'Of which YOU need to be less picky about.' He was tempted to add, but ultimately held his tongue. He was on a roll with Spyro, finally, and wasn't willing to blow it now. "Or Gavin? He is involved in the same field as they, only his talent lies in liquids."

"Well, I guess. But I don't see how-"

"Thor and Astor, my own father? Even in their age, they have much knowledge and expertise in such things. Even more so than all of us perhaps."

"Maybe, but-"

"And Alban's attention to detail, recording every important event that occurs, not only here in our home, yet in all of the Five Realms. Even more, Oswin organizes and logs them all into books, keeping track of every bit of knowledge contained in them. All courtesy of Alban's writings."

"Ok, but I still don't-"
"Then there's the likes of Lindar! Why, without him, I wouldn't have been able to turn what used to
be a tree stump into a clock!" Nestor gestured to the small, ticking, wooden clock hanging on the
wall. "And Argus, one of the most brilliant mathematicians of our age-"

"What are you trying to say?!" Spyro finally shouted, growing more and more frustrated about
continuously being interrupted. If this was meant to be some sort of lesson about him talking over
others, then yeah, he got it. 'Now please, stop!'

"Tell me," Nestor spoke, firmly, yet there was still no hostility or anger in his tone. "Why do you
mention some dragons but not others?" he knelt on one knee. He wasn't on eye level with Spyro,
yet it was as low as he could get (at least without lying flat on the ground). "What about me? Is my
craft not 'arty' in your eyes?"

"N-No! I didn't mean that! I didn't mean to say you weren't-"

"I'm not angry, Spyro. I'm simply wishing to get a point across." The green dragon assured. "So,
tell me, why aren't some of the skills of other dragons not listed?"

"Well..." the smaller child hated he was getting so jittery, yet what his current (albeit temporary)
teacher was trying to get across exactly continued to elude him. "I mean...I guess what you do is
sort of art." Nestor rose a brow. "But...what you do is cool. You use heavy tools and stuff and carve
things out. You build stuff and..." he averted his gaze for a moment. "I guess you and those other
guys...what you do is cool too."

"So, the others you mentioned first aren't cool?"

"No, I didn't mean that!" Spyro answered. "It's not like it isn't cool, it's just...it's just...fancier, I
guess."

"Fancier?"

"Yeah. Like, not to say you can't make fancy stuff. It's just, 'arty', I guess to me, is stuff like
painting and plays and poetry, you know, that sort of stuff. Like, the Peace Keepers are good
fighters, and Magic Crafters, well, can do magic. Beast Makers...live in a swamp?" Nestor allowed
himself to chuckle at that. "And the Dream Weavers...weave...dreams? I...I'll be honest, I don't
really know what they do."

The green dragon was silent for some time, Spyro evidently growing more and more nervous as
time went on.

"Well," the larger Artisan began. "This wasn't supposed to be the exact subject you were to learn,"
he continued, taking notice of the smaller dragon's trepidation. "But," his expression softened. "It is
still an important lesson, nonetheless."

"Huh?" before he Spyro could question any further, Nestor placed his hand on his shoulder.

"Spyro, the title of 'Artisan', while yes, includes a good deal of those 'fancier' things you
mentioned, it is far more than that." His 'student' still appeared confused. "Do you know what
'Artisan' means? Truly?" Spyro thought for a moment, an idea popping in his head. "It has nothing
to do with 'art' per say." Well, that destroyed it. "It means 'a worker in a skilled trade, especially if
it's that by hand'. Also, it can mean making food or drink in traditional, non-artificial way.
Whichever one, there is one defining trait that links them both."

"What?"
"The value in what is being made, both in materials and ingredients."

"I don't get it."

"Artisan isn't a label for one who simply follows the arts, let alone someone who just acknowledges such things at face value." Nestor explained. "When there was nothing here, we all pitched in and provided for one another. With our own hands, we helped sculpt and build this place from the ground up. And in turn, we did the same for the other Realms. Not to simply spread the word of 'art'. It was done as a service to our fellow dragons. True, we have come to be known as those who delve into more cultural pursuits, yet at the heart of it, we are all those who's work comes from our own hands. From our hands to those that it can serve. Painters do not simply paint out of need to show off their talents for the sake of it. They use their skills to channel their emotions and feelings, their inner thoughts and expressions. The writers of songs sing to lift the spirits and entertain. Whether the day be good or bad, as they can brighten it, or make it even brighter. Cooks, scribes, librarians, bakers, scholars, it all applies."

Spyro was silent at first, still more than a little confused. Yet as time ticked by, Nestor could see that it was beginning to dawn on him what he was saying. "So…it's about using that stuff to help out?"

"Exactly!" the carpenter exclaimed. "There is an old proverb that was known concerning us, dating back to even before my father, and his father before that. The worker steadies his hands and looks to his masterpiece. Yet his mind dwells on how this product shall better the lives of his neighbors instead of personal gain."

"Though…a little bit of 'personal gain' isn't bad right? I know if I did something cool, I'd want credit for it."

"Of course, credit should be given where it's due." Nestor agreed. "Yet in the end, it should not entirely be about you. It should be about how you, what you make and present to others, can impact those around you. Is it beneficial, is it helpful? Is it enriching? Or even if its simply entertaining, it should provide something along those lines to others."

Spyro pondered the older dragon's words, surveying the interior of the carpenter's hut. Tables with blueprints lay before him, projects yet to be started. The clock that was on the wall, a duel effort of both Nestor and Lindar, as the latter's dragon talents lied in the field of clock making. And the design of the clock, he wouldn't have been surprised if Delbin or Gildas came up with it. "Okay. I get it. I think."

Nestor presented the young dragon a smile, petting the small area on the right between his horn and crest. "I believe so too." A warmth began developing in his chest as Spyro instinctively rubbed against his hand. "And, while it wasn't what I had initially planned, I believe that is a good enough substitute." He then rose, the urge to stretch his wings becoming harder to push aside. "You're dismissed."

"Whoa, really?"

"Really."

"A-Awesome! Thanks, Nestor!" wasting no time, the quadrupedal youngling darted out of the workshop, Sparx in turn following suit. Though, before exiting, the insect paused and turned to the other dragon, his large eyes inquisitive and curious.

"Indeed, I know not how he shall contribute either." Nestor admitted. "Yet whatever it is, it is a
contribution that, until it comes to fruition, we must foster and nurture it, so that when it comes to be, he shall be ready.” He looked out to the grassy plain outside. "You should get going. I want you to make sure he isn't harassing the sheep again."

Sparx gave a salute of sorts with his set of forelimbs, flying off in the same direction Spyro rushed off in, leaving the carpenter alone in his shop. He turned to the map of the Five Realms, darkly colored eyes centering on the Artisan home world, then to the others. 'The worker steadies his hands and looks to his masterpiece.' He repeated mentally, looking back out to the field outside, the sun able to be seen setting over the horizon, the sky now painted in vibrant shades of pink, orange, and deep blue. 'Yet his mind dwells on how this product shall better the lives of his neighbors instead of personal gain.' Nestor figured that he should get in at least one good flight before the day was over, stepping out of the small space and flexing his back appendages. 'I know not what that means for you, little one. Yet I pray that, for you, it shall be something grand.'
Teaching Credentials

Chapter Summary

Shortly after the events of ‘Little Spark’.

Now that the lone surviving hatchling is steadily growing, discussions on how to best educate the young lad come into question, as well as to whether or not it can truly be done properly.

Chapter Notes

Thank you so much to Dracostar for commenting!

Anyway, while there are only three of these things made so far, yet really, ever since this game came out, there is just so much that can be explored, tapped into, and overall written about that I itch to get into too, specifically about the untold history and trials that the first dragons had to deal with regarding when they were first banished to the new land (spoilers for 3rd game).

And given from what occurred in ‘Little Spark’ (which is just my own version of events, do NOT let it dictate what you personally think or stop you from coming up with your own version), little Spyro is the only young dragon amongst them all, and thus, it ultimately falls on them to parent him. Which in itself, brings with it a slew of problems, as well as a slew of questions, both practical and personal for all of them. This one in particular relates to both what the older dragons can and cannot do in regard to rearing Spyro, especially in the field of education amongst other things. Focused more on the dragons found in Dark Hollow, yet green boi Nestor is prominent in this one as well.

Once again, thanks to Dracostar, and here’s hoping I hear from more of you guys!

“So, let me get this straight.” The pink (or rather, as he preferred to be called, light fuchsia), fair skinned dragon inquired, already distinguishable from the others due to his crest of feathers atop his head, feathered wings that also at the tip of his tail, and on his facial region, the latter giving him something of a ‘mustached’ look. “And, forgive me, Nestor, but I DID hear you correctly, yes?”

The library the four were currently holding this small gathering was lit with candles, providing reasonably visibility, yet still coating some areas of the room of books in the same darkness that lay above them outside. Suffice to say, one amongst them thought, twiddling his writing pad, it made for quite the scene. A mysterious gathering of four figures in the night to discuss some deep dark secret. Granted, their situation was far from anything of that sort, still, the mood was perfect. He made a mental note to write it down.

“No more than you’re hearing me now.” One amongst the four, the vested carpenter stated. “And my mind hasn’t changed since it first came to me.”
“But Nestor, surely you don’t- “

“Need I repeat myself a third time, Alban? I mean exactly what I say.” The green dragon crossed his arms. “And before you ask, yes, I’ve discussed this with all the others. You three are the only ones that have yet to hear my proposal.”

‘Shoot.’ The scarf wearing scribe mentally cursed. ‘He’s already got the popular vote in. He must’ve turned it in his favor before he decided to come to us.’

“If I may,” a blue dragon asked, sporting a blue scarf and a well-kept, blonde mustache and small beard. “And do correct me if I am mistaken, yet what I believe our dear Alban is trying to say is that he may be misinterpreting what you are saying.” Alban in turn began to protest, yet one of the library’s inhabitants quickly shushed him, an orange colored dragon sporting a hot pink turban coated with a small bit of jewelry, his neck adorned with a bronze necklace bearing gold trimmings. “You wish for us to, in your words, educate the hatchling?”

“Exactly.” Nestor answered. It was clear for the get go that Alban knew well what he was talking about, yet if anything, at least there would be no more stalling, thanks to Darius. “Granted, it shan’t just be you three. As I’ve said before, I’ve spoken with and gotten the approval of all the other Artisans. They’ve also agreed to assist in teaching the young one when he comes of age.”

“Will it be?” Alban interjected, the orange dragon ready to shut him up again, yet he was brushed off. “No, Oswin, we all have a right in this.” the scribe then directed his attention to Nestor. “I do not doubt that you are a dragon of your word, Nestor. If you weren’t, then none of us, neither your own father would’ve sworn you in and the head of this realm, and our particular strain of dragonkind. But with that said, I cannot just sit by and accept this proposal on a whim.”

“Why not?” Darius questioned. “It’s no inconvenience to me. Let alone to any of us. If anything, I say that Nestor’s logic makes perfect sense.”

“True as that may be, think for a moment, if you will.” Alban continued. “The prospect of educating the young one is not a concern of mine. If anything, the younger he gets instated and put in his place, the better. That said, there is one thing you have yet to consider, Nestor.”

Nestor in turn huffed, small streams of smoke emitting from his nostrils. “Enlighten me.”

“Quite simply, Nestor, he is the hatchling.”

“Well, that in itself is obvious.” Darius answered.

“No, you didn’t hear me correct. Or rather,” Alban looked to the blue dragon. “You ‘misinterpreted’ me.” A low growl came from the playwright. “The young one is not just a hatchling, Nestor.” As the scribe went on, it steadily began to dawn on the Artisan leader what was being said here. “He is THE hatchling. The ONLY hatchling. The only hatchling in all of the five realms.”

‘The only one that survived at least.’ The carpenter thought to himself, his entire form growing tense. ‘And even then, he just barely made it.’ Barely…though no thanks to him or any of the other leaders.

“And bear in mind,” Alban continued. “While we have indeed come quite a long way from where we had initially started, in many ways, the process of building up our home is not entirely complete as of yet. Several of us are in need of resting places, the treasure hoard needs to be enlarged, along with this very library-“
“And do forgive me for cutting in,” Nestor interrupted, growing more than a little impatient with the other dragon’s seemingly useless meandering. “But what exactly are you trying to get across?”

“What I’m TRYING to get across is that we may not be entirely fit for such a task as this.”

Silence fell throughout the room, neither dragon’s reaction entirely the same as the other. Alban still held his dissatisfaction, whilst Nestor began to seemingly understand the pinkish (fuchsia) dragon’s words, the green carpenter crossing his arms and brows furrowing. Darius seemed to be lost at first, yet he too realized what the scribe was implying. Oswin, however, was left unaffected.

“Fit for such a task, Alban, look around!” the turban wearing scholar stretched out his arms, gesturing to the plethora of bound pages and pages of information all around them. “What do you think all of this is for?! We’re practically here IN a treasure trove of subjects galore!” he then rushed over to the shelves, pointing and grabbing several books out to present. “History, geography, language, mathematics, chemistry, physics, the Encyclopedia of Periodic Properties, need I go on?” Oswin saw the last as a good enough stopping point, putting each text onto the desk with each subsequent retrieval. “If you’re concerned about whether the child’s entire education will fall on us, don’t be ridiculous! Nestor has outright said himself that he has informed all the others of his proposal! You really don’t believe that he would expect all that of us, do you?”

“I agree!” Darius interjected. “If anything, this is something that should’ve been decided from the day the little one finally began to walk!”

“As I have said. Several times.” Nestor stated. It was true, he had held this in mind since it was confirmed that the small dragon would indeed survive, yet his father kept insisting to push it back, to wait until he was ‘just a little older’. And a ‘little older’ came when the hatchling was far from a hatchling anymore. Even with the lengthy lifespans of their species, the simple motto of ‘haste makes waste’ was one he lived by to the letter.

“If anything, you could end up fostering and teaching a future scribe!” the playwright declared, realizing what this potentially meant. “Or perhaps another weaver of dramatic tales and a master of showmanship!” his excitement was perhaps getting a little out of hand, yet nonetheless, the blue dragon’s energy and excitement was becoming contagious. “A protégé! A tale of the student and his teacher!”

“Or, he could perhaps simply delve into the ocean of all that rests right at his finger, er, clawtips.” Oswin stated, gesturing once again to the shelves of books. “Even the simplest reading material is good for the developing mind. It’s scientifically proven!” he insisted, sensing he was already going to get a few looks. “If you’re so desperate for proof, go ask Argus! Me and that drake have been devouring the written word since we were but not much older than Spyro when he was but an infant! And if I remember, you were amongst our little group too.” He pointed to Alban, of whom still appeared unconvinced.

“…or maybe, another builder that could further expand on the structures of our homeland, and others.”

“Yes, see?!” Darius proclaimed. “Even Nestor understands!”

“And none of you do!” Alban snapped, finally having enough. “You don’t understand, nor are you listening! None of you!”

“Then what is it?!” Nestor inquired forcefully, his patience nearing its end. “Why are you so adamant that this plan is either faulty or destined for failure?!”
“I never said it was destined for failure. But it is faulty, immensely so.”

“Then enlighten me. How can we not make it so.”

“Unfortunately, Nestor, we can’t.”

“How?”

“Let me put this in a way that you all will understand.” The scribe sighed. He was more than aware that he was about to tread into territory that they all had, at least from what he observed, were trying to distract themselves from. They had been doing so since their arrival in this section of the world. Yet if he were ever to get them to understand…then he would have to take a step right in it.

“What was life for you when you, when all of us were the young one’s age?”

“Spyro.”

“Pardon?”

“His name is Spyro.” Oswin repeated.

“Yes, well, the point still stands. What was life for us all when we were his age?” he steeled himself, for the reactions to what he was about to say would perhaps not be pleasant. “Back in… the Forgotten World?”

The whole library went silent.

Alban began to regret his choice of words. Despite his overall rejection of Nestor’s proposal, his intention wasn’t to cause his fellow drakes any potential heartache. No more than necessary at least.

“Think back.” He continued, his own discomfort growing. “Think back to when there were more than just one or two generations among the living. Think of what we had built there. Family lines that extended back to near the formation and beginning of dragon kind. Communities of dragons, dragonesses, young ones, elders, all together and harmonizing as one unit.”

“We do no different now.” Darius protested. “We may have our differences, yes, yet those existed back in those times as well.”

“The ways of Artisans, Peace Keepers, Magic Crafters, Beast Makers, and Dream Weavers have been no more different than they have always been.” Oswin added.

“Then if that’s the case, let me ask you this.” Alban questioned. “Who was one of the founding members of the Artisan clan?”

The two dragons simply gazed at the scribe with puzzlement. “What sort of question is that?” Darius asked. “What does that have to do with- “

“Answer the question. Who was one of the founding members of the Artisan clan?” Alban turned to the one that held the position of leading all of them. “Nestor? If I may be so bold…”

Nestor, to the surprise of Darius and Oswin, said nothing. Darius especially. Whilst he knew nothing of a time so long ago, yet surely Oswin must’ve had some sort of information like that in one of the books. And if not him, then surely Nestor! Or….or one of the two oldest dragons that resided here!
“I…I don’t know.” The carpenter confessed, the playwright and librarian left dumbstruck. “And neither does- “

“Neither do Astor or Thor, do that?” once again, Nestor shook his head. “Tell me…” Alban continued, pausing for a moment. Of all the times he would ever find himself bringing it up again, it was now of all things. “Upon our removal from what used to be our home, what were you able to take with you?"

Nestor sensed where this was going. “Listen, I know what you’re going to say, and I- “

“Oswin’s family ran a library there, yet no books were able to be salvaged. And Darius’ favorite pieces of literature, passed down as stage plays, all destroyed. Centuries of history and culture, all gone in a matter of seconds. And I doubt, should such a thing even be possible, that it would still be there, should anyone be foolish enough to try and go back. That horrid witch promised that she’d do away with us and every single that we deemed of value and worth.” Alban momentarily ceased his lecture, a low sigh escaping his throat. “It’d be different, if such things were the ONLY ones that had been taken.”

No one said a thing to counter the scribe. Really, what was there that could be said? He had spoken nothing but the absolute truth. And it would be an entirely different case if he were merely bringing up such things out of spite or maliciousness, yet even with as difficult he could be, Alban was in no way one who drew joy from the suffering of others. No one dare mention it, yet each dragon present could very well guess what was on the scribe’s mind.

Or rather, who.

“And when we had arrived here, with absolutely nothing, mind you, we had to begin everything again from scratch. With nothing to go off of but what we could remember from what used to be our home. Everything was cut off from us. Gone. Never to be retrieved, and to potentially never be known to any future generation again.” ‘And up to now, we were certain there wouldn’t BE a future generation.’ Was about to be added to his statement, yet he abstained. That would simply cause everyone’s emotions to grow out of control. “Everything we have now, granted, is exceptional compared to how we started. Yet, even with all that we’ve accomplished, in the end, this world is not ours. Not really. And we in ourselves, even with what little we know of it from before we were cast out, our history lies in these lands and of our hardships in having to even gain the freedom to create a new life for ourselves.” Alban sighed, feeling himself beginning to lose control, something that he absolutely hated. Far from befitting a teller and recorder of reality, good and ill. Extreme emotion clouded judgement and reason. “We, in ourselves, are in the same position as the hatchling, Spyro, is in now. We may have grown, yet in the end, we cannot truly ‘teach’ him in the ways our fathers and mothers could, let alone the ones that came before him. Never will he truly know of anything outside of this world. Of where the first dragons flew the skies, when the clans were formed, when monuments and testaments to our heritage once stood, proud and tall. He shall see none of that.” He lowered his head, knowing well he had to finish soon. “And even if we tried to replicate some of that here, it would just be that. A copy. A copy attempting to mimic and capture in a piece made in a few days to structures that had stood for a hundred years.”

No one spoke a word.

“Simply put, we are not in any position to teach him. Not in the ways a dragon should be truly taught. Not how we were taught.”

Silence once again consumed the underground library. Though he took no pleasure in relaying any of this to his fellow Artisans, to a degree, he was somewhat relieved that finally, his message was
understood. Darius appeared to be completely dejected, his rose even appearing to falter. Oswin kept shifting his attention back and forth between his companions and the shelves of books. Books filled to the brim with knowledge. But mostly knowledge of what their forcibly colonized home had shown them. Barely, if anything at all, detailed a single tidbit of their prior history. Nestor, however, had turned his back to the trio entirely, though it was clear that the scribe’s words affected him. With a tense posture and head cast down, the drake’s claws rhythmically danced and tapped near the crook of his arm in their folded position.

Then, after what felt to be a literal eternity, the green carpenter spoke. “So be it then.” He unfolded his arms and turned back to the three. Honestly, he wasn’t entirely sure of what he was saying, Alban was right. All the same, did they have any other choice? True, in many ways, they were unequipped for such a task. None of them even suspected that they would all essentially be thrust into the roles of parental figures to a lone, surviving hatchling. But…his conviction remained the same, his mind made up. “We shall do what we have been doing since our arrival here. We will make do with what we have.”

“N-Nestor?” Alban began. “Did you not hear- “

“I heard clearly, Alban.” The scribe’s leader cut him off. “I’ve heard clearly of what we have lost and will never get back more times than I can count. And my father even more. He was there! Do you think that none of us are aware of it?! It is a tragedy. Perhaps one of the most prolific, devastating tragedies to ever plague us! And yet where are we now? Look around! Have we been set back by what was lost? No doubt! Yet had we resigned ourselves to allowing such things to consume us, we would all be extinct! The dragon race in these realms, perhaps all of dragon kind, assuming there are no others, would be no more!” He paused for a moment, breathing heavily. Far be it for him to allow such a loss of composure as this, yet frankly, he had reached his limit. “In much, perhaps in all ways, you are right. No, when it comes down to it, we are NOT fit to teach, much less parent Spyro. And those that are shan’t be here long enough to truly see him grow and mature. Yet in that, should we not honor them in making sure he is fostered into the dragon he could be? Not just them, but all those that had been lost, both in the Forgotten Worlds and here?”

Alban now found himself rendered silent. The playwright and librarian presenting the scribe with reassuring glances. Despite his outburst, something of which he was feel mighty guilty over now, Nestor knew well that the fuchsia colored dragon’s intent was not to inflict pain upon them. Nonetheless, dwelling on such things would impede progress. Progress that they all needed to contribute to, not just for themselves, but for the sole member of a new generation.

“Our survival and continuation of this new life lies not in what once was. It lies in what is,” an image flashed in the leader’s mind, small, purple, and shivering in a box that used to be filled with tools. “And what will be.”
Having gathered the courage to do so, Spyro questions Delbin as to why a certain flying insect is a favorite subject of his.

Hello guys!
Thanks a lot for checking in on this.
Truthfully, these in themselves are sort of tests that are meant to get me more productive in writing, yet I also have to remind myself that these aren't meant to me in the same vein as my longer works. Of course, that doesn't mean I shouldn't try my best: it's just that it's meant for a soothing purpose, and getting hung up on things isn't what it's there for.

Anyhow, I have another one written, as I think I want to have at least one at the ready.

That said, here's the third, and hope you enjoy! It doesn't really take place any particular time, save for being pre-first game.

It was just a small thing he noticed at first. Thus, he felt no need to mention it at first. Yet overtime, he came to see it more and more.

The simple observation of Delbin painting was nothing new to Spyro. That was, after all, his job. Well, ok, not exactly job, but it was, as Nestor had lectured to him not long before, his particular 'skill of his hands'. And he was quite good at it. His canvas, per say, was not as varied or large as Gildas' works, yet from what he had seen, some amongst the Artisans seemed to prefer the smaller scaled pieces compared to whatever, as they called it, 'madness' that was transferred wherever Gildas potentially saw as a good enough resting place for his next masterpiece.

'Yeah, well, I think his stuff is cool.' At least he didn't lecture him making a mess whenever he was having one of his 'lessons'.

Nevertheless, whenever the little dragon caught Delbin painting, he noticed something of a pattern. It wasn't a phenomenon that occurred each time, yet it was, nonetheless, commonplace. At least he assumed so, seeing as Nestor was becoming more adamant about 'expanding' his so called 'education'. Sure, they weren't exact replicas of each other, Delbin and Gildas proudly stating to Spyro that the art of painting and all related work is as fluid as the running rivers, but there was a link between them. A link that, now that he had the red dragon in his sights, he was going to finally ask about and receive some answers.

And seeing as he was right there, no time like the present.
"Hey."

Delbin ceased his work on his most current piece, turning to the young dragon, along with his dragonfly. "Now, what do you think you're doing up at this hour?" he questioned, albeit somewhat teasingly. "Little ones like you need all the rest they can get."

"I could say the same for you." Spyro retorted, a smirk on his lips.

Delbin crossed his arms, he in turn smirking back. 'Well played.' He thought, though he didn't say it aloud. No reason to give the already plucky dragon even MORE to go off of. "You forget, my expertise requires that I capture what I see." He then presented what he had on his canvas. "Whether be the hour."

Spyro approached it, Delbin in turn lifting him up to see. Whilst the reminder of how small he still was tugged at the back of the little one's mind (especially as Sparx was tinier, and could just fly up, no problem), the small portion of the captured environment before him more than made up for it.

It wasn't an exact duplicate of the fertile, green field, let alone of the night sky. Yet, as Delbin and Gildas once told him, such things didn't necessarily have to. The stars and blades of grass were still present, the grass something of a subdued, more darkly colored green, yet the depiction of the night sky was what really drew Spyro's attention. The sky was composed of a combination of swirling blues, indigos, and darker shades of the two (he only knew of indigo's supposed difference thanks to the endless lecture from Nevin of ROY G. BIV), the stars in themselves seemingly bearing tails of light that swirled in with the night sky, as if the two were somehow bleeding in and becoming one with one another.

Spyro was, in no way, shape, or form, an art critic, let alone a consumer of such, as Nevin put it, 'high caliber displays and knowledge of both the palette and the use of the brush.', but he knew well enough what he considered good work or not. And frankly, he had yet to see a piece of Delbin's that elicited anything aside from awe. And whilst their work was indeed different, he found himself reacting the same way to both Gildas' and Nevin's pieces as well. Somewhat surprising, given how different all three's styles were (much less how different each dragon was), and he found himself unable to choose. None of the complex or overly long terminology meant anything to him (like really, how was he supposed to know what 'Post-Impressionism' or 'Dadaist' was just by looking at it?), he just knew that if he liked what he saw, then it was good to him.

"Super cool!" Spyro exclaimed, leaning over slightly in Delbin's grip to get a closer look before being put back down. Of course, upon the earth beneath being felt under him, the little drake remembered what he had even come out here for. "Hey, Deblin?"

The red painter didn't look away from his work, but he still answered Spyro without missing a beat. "Yes?"

"It's sort of…" Spyro began, though upon rethinking it, he found the question to be, for lack of a better word, stupid. "No, forget it. It's fine. I should probably go to bed anyway. Nestor's going to kill me if he finds me out this late."

"Well, Nestor isn't here right now, is he?" Delbin answered, placing his far larger hand on the boy's far smaller shoulder, apparently leaving his work. "And it's clear that you've been itching to say something ever since you got out here."

"No, it's fine. It's a stupid question. I've- "
"Look, if Nestor comes out here and finds you up, I'll just tell him that you've been giving me some 'feedback' and didn't realize what time it was," he paused.

"And…what?" Spyro asked.

"If you go and tell me what you've come out here to talk about."

Shoot.

"Well…" ugh, it sounded so embarrassing. Especially more now that he was going to have to say it out loud. "I've sort of been wanting to ask it for a while, but…like I said, it's stupid."

"And for being something stupid, it's been on your mind for more than a short time, so it has to have some weight to it."

Ok, no more stalling. He…he was just going to say it. "Why do you paint dragonflies so much?"

"…you're going to have to speak more clearly than that."

"Why…do you…" his plan had failed. Then again, really, how WAS Delbin supposed to understand that? "…paint dragonflies so much?"

Silence.

"Yeah, it's stupid. I told you it was-"

The larger artist began to chuckle, said chuckle becoming a laugh, which then evolving into a full-blown cackle, the dragon's boisterous, hearty voice echoing throughout the entirety of the Artisan valley. "Is that all?! You were shaking like a leaf over something like that?"

"H-Hey! I was NOT!" Spyro protested, lifting his chest up in a display of dominance (albeit a poor one).

There was the Spyro he knew, Delbin thought. Yet as his attention went back to the little one's question, he found he was rendered silent once again.

"Delbin?"

"Well…honestly," the red, winged reptile tapped one claw on his broad chin. "I don't exactly have a clear answer for that."

Spyro quirked a hairless, scaled brow. "How do you not have an answer?" he inquired. "You paint them a lot, so you've got to have a reason."

"Well, yes. I mean, there IS a reason." Delbin admitted. "Or…several."

"Like what?" the smaller, violet scaled dragon pressed. "You think they're pretty, or cute, or something? Or is it because they can fly like us?" he continued on and on, listing each and every potential possibility for the older painter's fixation on the small, fluttering insects, ranging from how their eyes had 360 vision (a fact told to him courtesy of Argus) to how the artist must've not liked butterflies all that much. That one made him crack up.

"It's not as simple as that." Delbin answered, rubbing the back of his head, running his claws through the fibers of his short, garnet mane between his yellow horns. "It…it's kind of all those things and more. Aside from the butterflies. I just don't have as many pieces of them because they barely sit still for more than a few seconds."
Sparx gave a sly glance to his purple charge, of whom steadily got what the golden insect was implying. And he simply gave a buzz filled giggle when said charge tried to swat him. He once got close to doing so, yet the dragonfly went and perched himself atop of Delbin's shoulder, reveling in the vantage point he had over the smaller dragon.

"Well, for one, they're plucky little things." The painter began, giving the insect a small scratch on his head, Sparx in turn leaning into the claw, a grin forming on his small face. "This one here being a perfect example."

"And annoying." Spyro muttered, though he was clearly louder than intended, noticing Delbin crossing his arms at the remark.

"Or, from another viewpoint, tolerant." The painter remarked in turn, the dragonfly fluttering back to the smaller dragon's side, of whom presented the insect with an apologetic look. "A dragonfly's duty is the protection of their dragon, and for their dragon, in turn, to care and provide for them. If anything, they are one of most, if not THE most important thing in a young one's life. And they've been a part of not only dragon life, but have become ingrained into our culture due to their contributions to our lives."

It could've just been his imagination, yet Spyro could've sworn that he saw Delbin's expression falter upon saying that. As if he had just recollected something he had wished to not have to think about. That said, what the adult had just told him brought up another question. "Well…why is that?"

"Hm?"

"Why is it that a dragonfly is so important?" Sparx huffed. "Hey, not saying you're NOT important to me, but do you see any other dragonflies around?" Spyro saw the 'look' come to Delbin's features once again. "Delbin?" Sparx 'shushed' him, gesturing to the artist.

"No, no, it's fine." Delbin then said, dismissively waving away any growing concern. "If anything, it's something that should've been said sooner." He then glanced back at his newest piece, then to the smaller, younger dragon. "And, I won't lie, I'm not exactly a bonified 'expert' on the topic, yet I think I know enough to give you some information." He beckoned Sparx forward, the insect coming to rest on Delbin's finger. "Besides, if anything, Nestor will be pleased that you've been paying attention."

Well, that was somewhat true. It wasn't exactly one of his 'required' lessons in his 'education', yet it was, nonetheless, him learning something new. Besides, Argus and Oswin would perhaps be impressed.

"It wasn't always this way." Delbin began. "Yet overtime, it came to be that each and every young dragon had a dragonfly as a companion." That wasn't exactly a very informative start. Dare say, it was quite cryptic. But Spyro was finally getting something of an answer, so he kept his mouth shut. "Yet this dragonfly wasn't just chosen on a whim, let alone based on aspects that the dragon themselves liked about them, such as their color, their wing size, etc. It went much deeper than that."

"Like, how deep?"

"Very." Delbin simply stated. "In fact, had it not been for them, even more of us would've been…" he stopped, growing cold as he just realized what nearly slipped from his lips.

"Would've been…" Spyro began, waiting for the painter to answer, yet he simply remained silent.
"Delbin?"

As if on a whim, he seemingly came up with something. Something that he deemed acceptable to tell the young child. "Well, think of it like this." He then gestured to his piece, taking it off the tripod and presenting it to Spyro, all the while careful not to touch the surface, lest he spoil his work. "You know how the stars light up the night sky?" he asked, pointing to the more stylized depiction on the painting.

"Well, yeah." Spyro answered.

"That's a good way to describe what dragonflies are to us. They are, in a way, our own, personal stars."

The young one was more than a little confused. "But aren't stars just glowing balls of gas a billion miles away?"

"Technically light years, and to an extent, whoever told you that- "

"Argus. He also told me that because of that, wishing on them doesn't do anything."

Delbin rolled his eyes at that. 'Old fuss pot. Forgive the kid for actually WANTING to still have some wonder present in the world.' "Yes, well, there's a good deal that he DOESN'T know. Though I can trust that you won't tell him I told you."

Spyro in turn shook his head. "It also helps that I like you better than him." He replied teasingly.

"Anyway, while yes, stars in themselves ARE balls of gas light years away from us, they've been far more than just that. And not only for us, but for many, many races and creatures." Delbin then directed Spyro's attention up to the sky, the darkened abyss filled to the brim with sparkling, iridescent astral bodies that, despite only being gas, displayed themselves as much more than that. Even if Spyro was, in no way, a fan of 'flowery' language, he would agree, not aloud though, that stars in themselves were indeed beautiful. "The skies have been looked to for guidance and direction since the beginning of time. Astrology itself is based and studies the very nature of stars and the constellations, believing that each sign relates and influences a being's very life. And each constellation has a name, a purpose for its naming."

"You sound like Lateef."

Delbin paused. "Hm...yeah. Yeah, I guess I do. Course, I hope I have my head screwed on a little bit tighter than he does.

"Yeah, you do." Spyro assured. Granted, it wasn't as if either of them held a distaste for the head Dream Weaver, yet it was quite a well-known and accepted consensus that he was, for politeness, odd. And for brutal honesty, outright crazy. Yet sprinkled in his rather oddball, regularly crazy concepts and penchant for speaking in riddles, there lay some undeniable wisdom.

"Anyway, I like to think of dragonflies like our own personal stars, because, like the stars, they too guide and direct us in life. Like, when you had nearly fallen off of that tower over there, not minding the fact you had no business being up there in the first place, who went and got me and Tomas to help you get down?"

"Oh." Spyro openly declared. "I think I get it."

"And, while we weren't there for it, who also probably told you that you shouldn't have gone up that high, let alone to try gliding for the first time without anyone to watch you?"
"Ok, ok, I get it." The purple dragon noticed Sparx nodding in agreement to Delbin, shooting a coy look his direction. He in turn just rolled his violet eyes. "But…" he had just remembered something. "Even if he told me the same thing, Oswin said that some stars, er, constellations were also responsible for saving lives."

"Oh, really now?"

"Well, he didn't say it EXACTLY like that." Spyro said, retracting some of his former claim. "But he did say that a star called Polaris, or the North Star, has been used as something of a guide for as long as both dragons and other races have gone out in the world. He said that it's more accurate than any compass." The little dragon continued. "So…"

"So what?" Delbin asked. Yet, unfortunately, he realized just then what was going to be asked of him.

"So, if that's true, and if, like you said, dragonflies are like our stars, does that mean they- "

"THERE YOU ARE!"

'Oh, thank the stars. Literally.' The painter thought, Spyro and he whirling around to see quite an irritated, green carpenter making his way towards them, specifically the smaller, more purple one of the two.

"Do you have any idea what time it is?! Let alone how many dragons I had to ask as to whether or not they've even seen you?! You've got lessons with Lindar on blueprint reading first thing in the morning!"

"...it's not like I would just up and leave, you know." Spyro answered, though this wasn't the answer Nestor wanted. Not that any answer would've pleased him, really.

"That doesn't matter! Even if this is Dragon Land, Artisan Land, that doesn't translate to it being entirely free of potential danger! Lest I remind you of the rather nasty fall you would've had, had not Delbin and Tomas managed to get to you in time."

"Yeah, I know." Spyro groaned. "Not like you haven't reminded me a gazillion times already." He muttered.

"What was that?"

"Nothing, nothing!" the little dragon raced past the two older Artisans. "Sparx is getting tired, I'm taking him to bed!" a protesting 'buzz!' emitted from the glowing insect, he, nevertheless, following his charge in suit, the two leaving the carpenter and painter alone.

"So," Nestor began, folding his arms. "What excuse do you have for him this time?"

"Oh, no. He was just out here helping me- "

"Don't pretend as if he was really out here for that. Let alone make any excuses for him."

"...he just came out here to ask me what I was doing." Delbin answered, gesturing to the painting he had set back on the tripod. Of course, he might as well remove it, seeing as he would be turning in soon as well. "And he had some questions to ask about some of my…inspirations."

Nestor turned his head slightly. "Such as?"
"He wanted to ask about my work involving dragonflies."

The carpenter froze, but steeled himself. "And…what did you tell him?"

"I didn't tell him anything about- "

"I trust you didn't." Nestor interrupted. "What DID you tell him though?"

"Simply that…like the stars, dragonflies are our guiding light. And, hopefully, all that did was get him thinking that's why I paint them so much."

Nestor remained quiet for a few moments, the night, despite the pristine scenery, grew tense and uneasy the longer the head of the Artisans went without saying a word. Though finally, thankfully, he found his voice. "It sounds like he learnt something new tonight." He simply said. "That's good."

"Yeah, that's what I said." Delbin replied. "If anything, I told him you'd be happy with that at least."

"I'm…moderately pleased." The carpenter confessed. "Even if he has no business being out this late." He turned to the red skinned painter. "Anything else?"

Delbin in turn shook his head. "I told him nothing. Nothing about how we came to adopt the dragonflies in with us."

"Good. Thank you for keeping him out of trouble." Nestor thanked him, turning to go and see if the rascal actually did go put 'Sparx' to bed. 'Yeah, right.'

"Though, Nestor," the artist's voice reached the green dragon's ears, realizing that he was now right beside him, paining and tripod in hand. "When do you think is the best time to, you know, tell him all of that?" the other dragon simply shook his head, not having an answer, and utterly despising himself for it. "I understand that he's still young. He hasn't even gotten the hang of gliding yet."

"That's an understatement."

"Yeah." Delbin chuckled. "But still, one way or another, he's going to have to know about all those things." The humor in his voice died. "What it was like for us when we all first came here, dragonflies as a whole, why we're even here now, and why there aren't any other- "

"I'm more than aware, Delbin." Nestor answered, though it was clear he wished to discuss it no further. "And I know that he'll have to become aware of such things eventually. It's just…" he sighed. "I suppose I'm still unsure of where…let alone when to begin." He looked up to the night sky, the stars numerous and endless in number. 'Better yet, hypocritical and detrimental as it may be, whether or not I even want to.'
Chapter Summary

Argus has Spyro today, and explains to him the brief history and functionality of one of the most common sights in the Dragon Realms: portals.

Chapter Notes

Hey guys.
I'm think that for the first parts of this, I'm going to go through the Artisan line before branching off onto other dragons, as while I have more ideas for this than simply Spyro being stuck in one place and learning artsy stuff, I sort of feel that it'd be better if it was built up to in comparison to being thrown out just like that. Sort of the same logic for some OCs that'll be popping up (yes, yes, they're in here too). If anyone's interested in getting a small sneak peek at this, you can check them out on my DA account-RockmanGurl (assuming that Ao3 doesn't allow links in the A/Ns).

This is also semi-based on Sheila's dialogue from Spyro 3, regarding what happened upon all the dragons leaving the Forgotten Realms.

Hope you enjoy!

Portals: An Exploration of Their Functionality

The sun had risen above the fertile, green hills and far off mountains, bathing the world below in its life-giving rays. The flora that had closed off their petals just hours prior began to peel back, welcoming the incoming heat. The fauna, whether they be small like the fluttering blue birds, or one of the many wooly sheep, had become awake and alert, the tasks of today ready to be started. Ranging from the gathering of twigs and small, broken off branches to simply dining on the plethora of thickened blades of grass wet with morning dew, each living creature in the area was awake and alert.

Which made the sight of one dweller amongst them stand out like a sore thumb.

“BZZT!” and made the small, glittering insect with him grow more and more impatient with him.

A small jolt met his backside, Spyro’s drooping, violet eyes shooting wide open as he turned to Sparx near his rump, the first of his six forelimbs folded over one another as if he were crossing his ‘arms’.

“Yeah, I know, I know.” The young dragon moaned, the drawl in his voice more than enough evidence that, once again, he had neglected to turn in at the proper time. Which in turn left it up to the dragonfly to rouse him, again. And after minutes of this, it was then that, in a half-awake state, the adolescent remembered that he was scheduled for a session with Argus. Of which he was
running late for. Again.

“BZZT…” Sparx buzzed, shaking his head.

“I go to bed on time!” Spyro in turn protested. “These lessons are just too early!”

“Then enlighten me,” a far older voice began, startling the both. “Because from what I’ve always been aware, ten o’clock is just a mere two hours away from noon. As in, the middle of an entire day.”

Before them both stood a large, portly specimen of a dragon, his scales a similar shade to Spyro’s albeit with a slightly bluer tint. A thickened scarf of violet was wrapped around his broad shoulders, and a pair of small spectacles rested on the bridge of his snout. Heavy set in comparison to some of the other Artisans he may have been, he, nonetheless presented the air of an analytical mind and composed temperament, just some of the traits highly prized by their clan. The gold ring that was pierced through the webbing on the right side of his head was somewhat out of place compared to the rest of him, yet overall, his appearance fit for what purpose he was here for.

As well as for one tasked with educating and broadening the mind of an adolescent dragon.

“Never mind.” The older dragon stated. “At the very least, you’re only a minute or two late.” Being on time was what the young one should’ve been aiming for, yet ultimately, any small victory was still just that. “So, best we get started then, hm?”

Spyro lifted one leg, gesturing forward. “Lead the way.”

And by ‘lead the way’, the larger dragon seemed to believe this meant taking him to the stone archway stationed in the green field near the main castle.

“Argus?” the twelve-year old flying reptile questioned. “What are we doing?”

Argus in turn directed his attention towards his ‘student’. “Beginning your lesson.” He then glanced back at the archway. “Today, I shall educate you on the functionality and history of a sight that you’re more than familiar with.”

It made no sense to him at first, yet pondering Argus’ words just a bit more made everything ‘click’. “You’re going to teach me about…portals?”

“Catch on quick, don’t you?” the older scholar jested.

“But I already know about portals.” Spyro answered. Contrary to a whine he could’ve expressed, he seemed more befuddled than anything that this was what he was going to have to be devoting his time to. “Everybody knows about them.”

“True, everyone perhaps knows what they are, in the sense of general basics,” Argus explained, adjusting his small glasses. “Just as you’re more than familiar with the sky, the sea, even the very grass.”

“Where are you going with this?”

“Give me a moment, and I’ll tell you.” Argus rolled his eyes. Whilst he was already proving that today’s lesson would probably be rife with questions and misunderstandings, the violet dragon’s
main source of growing discontent was in executing said lesson. His clawed hand rested on his broad chin for a moment, thinking and contemplating…until it finally hit him. “Or rather, you tell me.”

Spyro quirked his brow. “Huh?”

Argus ran his claws along the archway’s foundation. “This is a portal, yes?”

“Uh…yeah?”

“So, if I were to ask what it was, what would you tell me?”

“Um…” Spyro paused for a bit. ‘You’re acting a little weird, you know?’ “Portals are…well…” he found himself beginning to stammer. “They’re…uh…things. Like doors, only, they don’t have to be in a wall.”

Not entirely correct, yet not entirely wrong either. “Go on.” Argus said.

“Well…they have like, this weird, blurry picture you can see if you get close enough.” As if to demonstrate, the smaller quadruped drew closer, an image, blurred and not entirely clear coming to be seen. Small shapes of rolling hills and mountains swished and dipped, as well as a clear, blue sky and smaller structures of stone, the entire image looking as if it were underwater. “But there’s a name for where it goes up on the top,” Spyro pointed up with one claw, the words ‘Stone Hill’ etched into the archway. “So…you don’t have to just rely on looking…I think?”

Hmm. Well, it was something. And, if anything, at least the little one just provided him with a perfect way to introduce him to what he had in store.

“But what if I were to ask where they came from?” Argus questioned, Spyro’s eyes growing wide.

“Well, not. Or how they were built? Let alone how they came to lead to the specific locations labeled on the archways? Surely they didn’t just ‘become’ gateways to them overnight.”

“Well, no. But…” Spyro bit his lip, completely run dry of anything else to say.

“While it’s true that you and several others are familiar with portals, there’s far more to them than simply being able to take you to one specific place.” Argus then moved closer, urging the young dragon to do so as well, his hand passing through the unstill, ever moving image present in the archway’s confines, the image’s surface rippling as if he had just broken the surface of a large body of water. “Which reminds me,” despite not knowing what he was going to say, the small dragon found himself hopping with joy, sensing that whatever it was, he was going to like it. “I forgot to mention that today included something of a small set of field trips.”

“YEAH!!!” bouncing quickly evolved into outright prancing, Spyro diving right through the thin veil, not even accounting for the fact that he had just up and left Argus behind.

“Grand Creator help me should anything explode. I’ll never hear the end of it…”

Thankfully, there was little here that could explode, though the scholar didn’t doubt that his student wouldn’t find some way to make it possible. Sometimes, he swore, the little creature’s very
existence was a trigger for some brand of mayhem. That said, aside from a small bit of tardiness and going off ahead of him, Spyro hadn’t caused Argus any extraordinary grief or trouble, having regained some of his senses and waiting by the portal’s entrance upon his arrival. True, he received correction for doing so, yet the larger dragon knew well that the child meant nothing malicious by it. He was just…as Nestor and others somewhat laxer with him said…‘exuberant’.

‘If that’s the case, then hopefully he’ll at least have some of that for today, otherwise this will be more of a chore for both of us.’

The lush landscape before the both of them wasn’t a far cry from the Artisan’s main section of their realm, yet the environment definitely held a far more inclined, mountainous structure. A wall of aged, grey stone surrounded the area, similarly build towers and fountains placed throughout, all taken and carved from the very rock that the natural formations around them held. If anything, the title ‘Stone Hill’ couldn’t better describe or represent this place.

“This area, for example,” Argus began, he and Spyro having taken the high ground atop of one of the towers to get a full view. “Is technically able to be reached through traditional means of travel, a la flying or transportation via Marco’s services.” He then pointed to the far-off entrance that they had just come through. “Yet such journeys, especially if it is located halfway across the land, could take hours, perhaps near a full day to reach. Thus, the construction and maintaining of portals has become quite important.”

“So…” Spyro piped up. “These things were made because no one wanted to walk too far?” well, ‘walk’ was perhaps not the most accurate word, yet his point remained. “Like, just how far ARE some of these places?”

“Well, Stone Hill here isn’t too far off. It would take around an hour or two traveling here without a portal, give or take a few minutes. Yet areas such as Dark Hollow or even the Town Square take even longer. And even traveling to a place closer such as this, or anywhere for that matter, is determined by factors such as wind intensity, weather conditions, all sorts of phenomenon that needn’t be accounted for thanks to portals.”

“So, you’d have to go fly, even when its thundering and all that?” Spyro questioned, Argus in turn nodding. “That sounds like it sucks.”

“Language, little one.”

“What? Sucks isn’t a bad word!”

“Neither is it articulate or an indication of a decent vocabulary.”

The younger dragon inwardly groaned.
in the schoolhouse crossed Spyro’s mind more than once, yet whenever it was brought up, it
seemed that everyone around him either changed the subject or outright refused to talk about it.

Something of which Argus had taken to doing right about now.

“Portals in themselves have been part of the lives of dragonkind for generations, their initial
creation somewhat muddled and having a variety of versions to it, yet it is the general consensus
that the first portal to be publicly known and displayed was the creation of one of the founding
Magic Crafters, Prospero.”

The larger dragon glanced at his charge, his wide, violet eyes still situated on the far off, small
building.

‘The schoolhouse.’

“Of course, this isn’t to say that portals can simply transport one to anywhere. There ARE limits in
to how far one can travel by such a method. Such as, one couldn’t simply utilize a portal to hop
back in forth between the realm of the Peace Keepers. Every portal, in essence, whilst there is a
possibility, they could extend a further reach, we’ve yet to find a means to do so. Thus, to avoid
any potential strain on the magical energy radiating through them, the maximum requirement is…

His student continued to eye and study that building.

“You had better pay attention.” Argus reprimanded. “Bear in mind, all of this is going to be on the
test next week.”

“Huh?” Spyro turned, his teacher’s disapproving face seen. “Oh, yeah! I-I’m paying attention!”

“Really? Then who did I just say was the one responsible for the first publicly known portal?”

“Uh…it started with a ‘p’…”

If Town Square was jarring, the sight of the sun beating down on the enclosed sector of the well
kept gardenscape was near unbelievable to the little dragon. Indeed, it was the furthest thing from a
‘Dark Hollow’ at this hour. Somewhat ironic as well, as despite its namesake, it was perhaps even
closer to the main dwelling than Stone Hill.

“Well?” Argus’ voice questioned, finally managing to catch Spyro’s attention. “Aren’t you going
to ask about any further contributions in the development of portals?”

“I thought that’s what you were here for.” His student answered, Argus in turn crossing his arms.

“From what I’m aware, a lesson is an interactive experience on BOTH ends.”

“But you already know everything! Couldn’t you just tell me?”

“Yes, I could. But I choose not to.”

Sparx, who had been relatively silent throughout the entire ‘field trip’, released a small, buzzing
chuckle. Spyro simply sighed. “Fine. What other guys went and did stuff with portals?”

“By ‘other guys’, I’ll take it you mean who else contributed and increased the production and
strengthened the need for them.”
“Uh…yeah. Sure. I think?” really, Spyro thought, why couldn’t Argus just use ‘normal’ words?

“Glad you asked.” The heavier set scholar proclaimed. “In truth, a good deal of other dragons took Prospero’s original concept and made their own additions and improvements. For example,” he pointed to the portal that they had just come through. “It’s common among Artisan portals to have the lower portions carved from thickened, mountain stone whilst the upper portion has a décor of sorts” he then gestured to the golden trims and long, turquoise jewel affixed on top. “The Artisans also designed the shape of the archway as the standard build for portals, as it provides both enough space for the energy to flow and be equally distributed, yet also is sturdy enough to not risk collapse. The design in of itself was first conjured by Andrea-“

“Andrea? Isn’t that a girl’s name?”

“Andreas. His name was ‘An-dre-as.’” Argus continued. “And he was one of the finest Artisan architects in history. Each realm and clan has implemented not only his design, yet the additions made by several others to their own respective land’s portals.” He adjusted his spectacles. It was nearing lunch, and he had a craving for a particular, green melon, so he wished to get the last bits of the lesson over and done with. “The Peace Keepers, make use of volcanic rock that has been cooled to supposedly ‘ignite’ the portals’ energy.”

“They use rocks from volcanos? Cool!”

“Though it’s debatable whether or not this actually does as intended. In contrast, the Magic Crafters imbed their portals with crystals that transfer and distribute energy between the other in a circuit. The Beast Makers follow more in line with the Peace Keepers, though they annually add to the already standing foundation with natural materials to supposedly ‘strengthen’ it.”

‘Ok, not so cool. And kind of gross.’

“The Dream Weavers…well, truthfully, while they claim that their portals are maintained via a collection of their own transferred energy and ‘vibrations’…I find parts of their claims rather difficult to swallow. Don’t tell them I told you that, mind you.”

“No problem.” Spyro answered. A good deal of what Argus had just told him just made his brain hurt, yet even with that, he found one particular question forming.

“All right, I believe that should wrap things up. Besides, I shouldn’t keep Alban waiting. From what I’ve heard, you still need quite a bit of work in your calligraphy.”

“Wait!”

Wait? Did Argus just hear correctly? As in, what the smaller dragon actually displaying interest in what he was learning?

“What about the…” the little dragon stammered, struggling to formulate the proper words to best describe what he was trying to get across. “You know, the…the magic stuff that’s in the middle-“

“The energy?”

“Yeah, that!” Spyro proclaimed.

“What about it?”

“Well, where does THAT come from?”
The answer that Argus had prepared was completely obliterated. Indeed, while he hadn’t expected the child’s question to be anywhere near his level of thinking, what he had just asked, even if he didn’t know it, held the very question that he and many others before him had tried to decipher and explain.

“Truthfully,” a question that, even now, seemed to be further and further away from answering. “No one knows.”

Both Spyro and Sparx titled their heads in confusion at this response. “What do you mean no one knows?”

“Exactly as I said, no one knows.” Argus repeated, he and his student making their way through the portal. “Come, best not keep Alban waiting.”

“But wait!” Spyro called out, the two emerging back in the Artisan’s main dwelling. “You just said that we built the portals and how they looked! You didn’t say anything about where the energy comes from!”

“That’s a question I’m not exactly equipped to answer, Spyro. And I doubt anyone in the five realms is.”

“What do you mean?”

“It’s…” the scholar began, remaining silent for a short time before releasing a heavy sigh. “It’s complicated.”

“How?”

“Listen, Spyro, I think it’s best that you get going. Alban’s waiting for you in the castle, and I don’t think I need to remind you that he isn’t exactly the most patient of dragons.”

He didn’t entirely understand it, yet ultimately, the adolescent dragon resigned himself to go onto his next lesson, if not just to save himself from the ‘wrath’ of the stuffy scribe, racing off with the golden insect following close behind.

Argus looked on as his student scampered off, turning his gaze towards the entrance to Dark Hollow, reaching forward and running his fingers through the ever flowing, concentrated energy that allowed them such a luxury.

‘Indeed, where DOES it come from?’ it was not one of his main subjects of study, yet it was one that he delved into from time to time. He only didn’t visit it more often mainly because, as stated before to the little dragon, the same question had been studied before, and even after centuries, not one, clear answer could be found. Even with his knowledge of his race’s and clan’s history, Argus had, as Spyro, simply knew portals to be additions and things of everyday life. Such a question came not to him until far later, and it was mainly from the questioning of others that came far before him. There were theories, yes, plenty of them. And there were experiments, just as many as theories. Yet not one, clear, concrete answer could be found.

Though, even if it was just that, a theory, Argus remembered one particular writing of Andreas the Builder that he had stumbled upon once in Oswin’s library. It was small, practically a footnote, yet upon seeing it, he couldn’t help but wonder. Wonder…and in turn, as the others had before him, theorize.

‘Perhaps it is not the structure, nor the manner in which the portal is constructed and installed, for even with the Magic Crafters or the Dream Weavers’ magic, it appears that the strongest surges of
energy occur when the population of dragons is in higher numbers.’

It was possible…yet it was so simple an answer. Too simple, maybe. Too simple to just readily accept, if so many other things were so complicated.

‘Perhaps, the magic of the portals…is tied, in some way, to some sort of magic within all of us.’

Yet if that was the case, then would the number of dragons affect such a thing. After all, when he was but a hatchling, there was a bevy of phenomenon that were simply part of daily life. Some sheep would take to the air as if they had sprouted wings (and from what he remembered, some of them actually had), and the lush, green forests that surrounded the Midday Garden were said to have been able to actually sing. The rocks in themselves in some places, should one skip them over the water, produced a series of whistles until they lost traction and sunk.

Granted, since they had all come here (albeit forcibly), neither Argus or anyone had seen or noticed such things. And even now, those small, pleasant little anomalies were nothing more than simple memories. But if his prior hypothesis was true, in that the number of dragons DID, in some way, affect the supposed amount of ‘magic’ of the portals, and perhaps even more…what would happen when their numbers would inevitably go down?
Chapter Summary

Tomas' attempts to teach Spyro to play the lute aren't garnering much success. Though after a small talk, he thinks that the little dragon would be better suited for something more along the lines of his own current capabilities.

Chapter Notes

Hello! New one here! I've also done some one-shots on my DA, though I'll probably add them in later, as I want to cover more of the Dragon Elders and their lives/interactions with Spyro.

This one is a little less of a 'lesson' or 'reflection' of what was lost by the dragons or world building, and kind of more slice of life-ish. Granted, it has a little bit of a sad undertone, once you sort of research and know of the development of runt puppies/kittens/ basically any animal (of which, if I haven't made it obvious, Spyro clearly is).

Plus, while this is just my interpretation, Tomas seems like the guy who, while he means well, sometimes unintentionally makes things worse and/or says the wrong thing at the wrong time. As when he tells Spyro in the game to 'not be afraid', then goes on to explain some of the dangers, the dragon seems to have a look of 'well, I WASN'T afraid until you told me that.'

With that said, hope you enjoy!

The Dos, Res, and Mis

‘Do’

“Mm hm.”

‘Re’

“Good.”

‘Mi’

“Very nice.”

‘Do’

He winced. ‘Not again…’

“Do’ is at the beginning and end. Not the middle.” The larger, yellow dragon speckled with lighter
Spyro in turn simply groaned, wings drooping down in disappointment. Atop of one of the towers of Stone Hill, Tomas, the Artisan who served as something of a bard and the smaller, purple dragon sat, each with a lute in their possession (albeit Spyro’s was a good degree smaller). And, from what the bard had just heard, it was clear that this was going to take a little longer than initially expected.

“I don’t get why I have to do it like this.” Spyro complained, gesturing to the tightened strings on his instrument. “I mean, couldn’t I just play the notes on a drum or something easier?”

“Drums don’t produce the necessary notes.” Tomas informed him. “And ultimately, I doubt we’ll be able to find a steel drum anywhere around here.”

“Then why not a xylophone?” the smaller dragon questioned. “I could just hit the little block things and make noises that way.”

He meant nothing by it, Tomas knew, yet to hear what his craft was being referred to so inaccurately irked him somewhat. “They’re not ‘block things’, they’re called bars.” He corrected. “Furthermore, playing such would require you to make use of your forepaws even more, whereas here, one is clearly making more effort than the other.”

Spyro’s features sullied, his plan for salvation ruined. Even more, pondering Tomas’ words, the older dragons was probably correct in his assumption.

When the adolescent had heard of the bard’s intent to teach him of the musical arts, he had immediately assumed that this was what he had meant. Apparently, Tomas initially believed so as well, yet, of course, ‘someone’ had to go and alert him that it would be better for the little dragon to get yet another history lesson on the subject. According to Nestor (and while he wouldn’t admit it, this had Alban written all over it), it was ‘important’ for him to learn of subjects such as Solfege system, the historical significance and contribution to music each instrument held, the difference between each of them (a la why a tuba wasn’t classified as a woodwind), and a slew of other things that Spyro had trouble keeping track of. And that was just Tomas! And then he had to somehow remember everything else that everybody else was trying to teach him? It was near enough to make his head explode!

In all of it, however, he found that Nestor, despite the one instructing Tomas and the other dragons to do so, wasn’t exactly wielding an iron fist when doing so. He could’ve been wrong, yet there was a lingering sense, at least to Spyro, that the carpenter was attempting to ‘prove’ something. Not in the sense that he was some sort of prop or bragging right (though he wouldn’t reject any praise, he’d outright encourage it to continue), but rather, in that he was part of some larger issue. An issue that everyone seemed to be adamant in making miniscule or completely obsolete.

Or it could’ve just been that dragons just got weirder when they got older. And if Astor and Thor were anything to go by, then REALLY old must’ve meant REALLY weird.

“Spyro?”

“Huh?”

Tomas huffed some air out of his nostrils, though it was clear he was more bemused than irritated. “It’s true what they say. You DO drift off in your own little world.”
Unbecoming as it was, Spryo couldn’t do anything other than present a sheepish grin. “Sorry.”

“Simple redirection.” Tomas said. “As advised.” He held his lute up, claws grazing over the strings, a harmonious little tune emitting from the vibrations. “If anything, perhaps it’s an indicator that you’re a good brainstormer. Could be useful in the future.”

“Really?”

The bard nodded. This seemed to perk Spyro up, he going back to trying to pluck at a few strings on his own instrument, Sparx having perched himself at the top of the pegbox.

“Of course, I’d advise that you do it when playing. Hate to tighten a string too much to where it’ll snap and slap you right in the eye.”

SCREECH!

Later That Night

Perhaps he should’ve worded that differently. “It—it rarely happens though!” Tomas assured. “Stringed instruments are actually some of the safer ones to handle! You’re more likely to choke on the windway of a recorder or develop lead poisoning from a glass armonica!”

‘Why?’ Nestor inwardly sighed, shaking his head. ‘Why would you go and tell him that? Now he’s never going to want to go within twenty feet of them now!’

Do…re…me…fa…ti!

“Ugh!”

Though a part of him had begun to wish that was the case.

SCREECH!

If not just to save his ears some grief.

The green dragon sighed. While he had been standing outside of the small dragon’s room for some time, he was debating when exactly would be the best time to make his presence known, let alone if said presence would’ve been received well.

Since Tomas’ lesson earlier today (as well as his oh so lovely informing of the potential bodily harm that could come with playing a variety of instruments), Spyro had taken to cooping himself up in his room and going to town on the smaller lute.

To everyone’s dismay.

“That please, Nestor, I’m begging you.” He remembered Nils pleading to him. “Ever since that ungodly racket started, none of us can even see straight!”

‘Let alone carve straight.’ The Artisan leader thought to himself upon seeing the interior of Nils’ quarters. Had one been none the wiser, they could’ve outright sworn that the entire floor was literally composed of broken off shards of stone and halved faces of what once were intact busts.

And it was far from Nils that had leveled a complaint. Let alone was his the angriest.
“Do you know how many canvases I’ve got through already!? And my entire palette is nothing short of resembling vomit!” Nevin looked about ready to turn his brush into a sharpened instrument.

Alvar had essentially wasted all his breath already, though through his wheezing, he had made it clear that someone’s head would meet his clever if something wasn’t done. Delvin was similarly disposed (thickened icing coating his face), yet his rather uncharacteristic glare indicated what he wanted. The only members of the clan that weren’t throwing themselves at his feet or outright threatening him were Delbin, Thor, and his own father, Astor. Though the latter two didn’t exactly have the best of hearing due to their age, and frankly, Delbin had been fortunate enough to have to go and collect some new paints, as his supply was running low.

Of course, that left only one dragon he had yet to see tonight. Where in the world was-

“Ah, Nestor! There you are!”

‘Speak of the devil…’ the vested carpenter turned to the approaching bard, holding onto his hat to keep it from dislodging from atop his head as he trotted forward. “Good evening, Tomas.”

SCREECH!

Both dragons winced. If anything, it was a miracle that no one’s ears were bleeding yet.

“I…see, er, hear that he’s practicing.”

SCREECH!!

“Yes.” Nestor answered, voice strained. “And I’m wondering when the best time is to go in and get him to stop.”

SCREECH!

Tomas pulled his hat downward in an attempt to block it out, yet through the audible assault, he began to notice something. The shrill scratching, unpleasant as it was to hear, appeared to not simply be that. Mostly, but not all. The scratches in themselves seemed to range in pitch. “Do…” he said quietly to himself, listening in as much as he could. “Re…Mi…”

Nestor raised a thickened, hairless brow. “Tomas?”

The bard directed his attention back at the other Artisan. “I believe I’ve deduced what our budding amateur musician is doing.” He placed his hand on the door’s frames, the other dragon following suit, pushing forward.

They had decided to make an entrance just in time, as from what they could see, Spyro was just about to continue. He and Sparx took immediate notice of the two older dragons, the latter nearly having brought to tears. Finally, his prayers had been answered! He was saved!

“Uh…” Spyro nervously stammered, lightly nibbling at his lower lip, then he turned to the dragonfly stationed beside him. “I guess you were right. Maybe it was just a smidge too loud?”

The insect didn’t even respond. He had finally received a moment of bliss, and he wasn’t going to squander it.

“To an…extent.” Tomas answered. It was clear that Nestor was near about to fully deliver to Spyro as to what he had up and caused (if not just to relieve some of his own frustration at the fact
everyone was throwing their problems onto him), yet a look from the bard made the green dragon
think better of it. Besides, pondering it more, it would ultimately be an action he’d later regret for
sure. “But tell me,” the yellow, spotted dragon continued, observing the smaller, purple adolescent,
finding the reason as to why, instead of a note, a near deafening screech was coming from his
instrument. “Why are you trying to play with your tail?”

Nestor looked, and sure enough, Spyro’s tail was where his fingers on his forepaws should’ve
been. The lute wasn’t even being held, it was on the floor. Sparx flew over to the object and
motioned to the strings, his small, arboreal feet fastening themselves around the thin, fine pieces of
nylon (with a bit of some undisclosed part of a sheep, though had the dragonfly known what part,
he wouldn’t even be sitting on it). Spyro looked to the dragonfly, surprised that he was willing to
demonstrate. The insect simply covered his ‘ears’ and gave an expression that read ‘please, just get
it over with.’, all the while pressing down on the corresponding spot on the pegbox.

Spyro in turn obliged, albeit at a far quicker pace than before. Resting the hardened, cone shaped
end of his tail under the first string, he lifted and ‘plucked’ it. And by ‘plucking’ it, he had flicked
his tail end up and dragged it until it the string had come off, resulting in yet another agonized,
more than recognizable sound.

“Y-Yes. That.” Tomas confirmed. His question didn’t exactly imply that he wanted the young
dragon to do it again. Nestor’s own disapproving look only confirmed such. “But…why?”

“To keep it from hitting me in the eye.” Spyro stated.

Oh, if looks could kill…not, scratch that. Nestor had a bevy of other means to do so, Tomas
practically seeing some diabolical plan for his demise forming in the leader’s brown eyes.
“Spyro…something like that can be completely avoided with making sure the pegs around wound
too tightly. And even should a string snap,” the other, vested dragon gave a look that said, ‘you had
better be going somewhere good with this’. “It usually does so on the bottom, near the tailpiece. As
in, nowhere near the face.”

All right, he would accept that, Nestor thought. Still, there was a sense that Tomas’ unintentional
little ‘slip’ wasn’t the only problem at hand. “As much as I’d like to remind you of how doing your
homework at this hour is far from a smart move,” the Artisan carpenter began. “Why are you
playing the lute with your tail? Aside from the low possibility of it striking you in the eye.” Even
though he had remedied his mistake, Nestor still made it known to Tomas it was far from
something he should’ve told the young one in the first place.

“It…” Spyro began, trying to piece together an explanation, or at least one that sounded, well,
‘grown up’. Only to realize that, frankly, it didn’t matter to him anymore. “It’s these things here!”
he proclaimed in frustration, bringing up his forepaws for the two elder dragons to see. “They…
they just don’t work!”

“Work?” Tomas questioned, not entirely understanding what the clearly irritated adolescent was
getting at. “Work as in functioning properly? Because, well, the way you’re wriggling them
indicates that there’s no nerve damage-

“No, not THAT kind of ‘not working’.” Spyro clarified. “It…well, I just can’t get them to do what
you want me to do with them! I can’t get them to…” he paused. There had to be a better way to
explain this. “Here.” He reached for the lute, not grabbing it per say, yet more or less ‘dragging’ it
towards him. Sparx immediately flinched. “No, no, I’m not using the tail.” The dragon assured. He
positioned the lute up as if he were going to play, wrapping his forelimbs around the fret and
placing his right fore-foot on the strings.
'Do, Re, Mi, Fa…' he hit the notes, lightly plucking each string, though when he began to try for the others, it was then that an evident struggle could be seen. It wasn’t as if he couldn’t reach that far, as it was far from any sort of great distance. But his toes, for lack of a better term, just seemed unable to do what he had wished them to. ‘Do’. Spyro groaned upon hearing the screw up once again, the urge to take the stringed instrument and toss it across the room rising. Though should he, he knew well the green dragon present wouldn’t tolerate such behavior. Still, he didn’t say anything about expressing it verbally. Ok, yes he did, yet what else was there for the dragon to do? “See?!” Spyro exclaimed. “I just can’t get it! I can’t get them to do it! I don’t know whether it’s because they’re too short, or they just don’t ‘feel’ like it, I…” his voice began to lower, clearly defeated. “I’m sorry, but I can’t do it, Tomas. I can’t play it.”

The bard’s guilt was immediate, his upper teeth biting down on his lower lip. His green eyes dare not look in Nestor’s direction, though another wave of the gut-wrenching feeling came to him. It was simply reflexive, as his leader was already not exactly pleased with him. True, to a degree, the bard was only doing as he was asked in teaching the young dragon. And yes, these lessons WERE important. Not only in educating the lad in the art of music, yet a far more practical purpose.

Though it was clear that said lesson wasn’t exactly going as either elder dragon had hoped.

The bard flinched again upon feeling Nestor’s clawed hand place itself on his shoulder, though upon analyzing it further, it was clear that there was no hint of aggression or rage in the gesture. It was firm, something of which, given his profession and overall nature, Tomas had come to expect from him, yet it wasn’t painful. “Come.” The carpenter whispered. “I’ll need you for this one.” Tomas didn’t protest, following Nestor as the other dragon approached Spyro, sitting himself on the floor to better bring himself down to the young one’s level. The bard followed suit. “Spyro,” the green Artisan sighed. “I told you before that lessons such as these weren’t simply concocted by us to give you something to do.”

“Or get you out of our hair.” Tomas added, intending for it to sound comforting and positive, yet Nestor silently urged him to not speak for a moment.

“These lessons are important in more ways than one and hold more purpose than to simply teach you some new subject and skill every other week.” Nestor then gently took hold of the smaller child’s forepaws. “For example, every young dragon begins life as a quadruped,”

“Something that goes on four legs, right?” Spyro interjected. “Oswin told me.”

“Right.” The carpenter confirmed. If anything, at least it was clear that the child was getting better at retaining information. “And you’re around the time where your forepaws are in the process of transitioning to being used as hands. In that, you’re transitioning into becoming a- “

“Biped.”

“Yes. Exactly.” Nestor answered. He wasn’t sure whether the young dragon was attempting to impress him or show off. Heck, knowing him, it could’ve very well been both. “Though, I’ll admit…” the green dragon’s darkly colored eyes averted themselves for a second upon giving Spyro’s forepaws a second look. “They should be a little…longer by this point.”

Spyro didn’t need much to get what he was saying. “It’s because I’m ‘small’, right?”

“No, no, I wouldn’t say that.” Tomas interjected. Nestor was somewhat reluctant in letting the bard speak, yet the yellow, spotted draconian continued on. “It’s not exactly an issue in size. In fact, other dragons have had something of a ‘slow’ developmental cycle. Some of them dragons you already know, like…” he stopped for a moment, a claw tapping against his ‘beard’ composed of
feathers. “Ah, yes. Did you know that Gavin was once one of the tiniest dragons around?”

Spyro’s eyes widened upon hearing this. “Wha-, Gavin? Really?” Tomas nodded. “But…he’s huge! No way!”

“Yes way.” The yellow, spotted draconian confirmed. “And Delbin wasn’t exactly the biggest guy around either. In fact, he outright said that he would NEVER be a painter because of how much he struggled holding the brush.”

“Delbin? Really?” Spyro wondered something. “Well…how’d they get…bigger?”

“Well, a bevy of things.” Tomas said. “During the process of developing and transitioning from child to adult, a slew of changes begin to occur in the body. Such as the development of testosterone and a variety of other chemicals that signal the beginnings of- “

“Essentially, what Tomas is trying to say,” Nestor interrupted. He was NOT going to be delving into territory such as THAT. Not yet anyway. Though ‘when’ had yet to be decided “Every dragon develops differently and at a different pace.” He brushed one of the finlike features upon his face. “And though you SHOULD try to push yourself and allow yourself to grow and challenge what you can do, sometimes, such things need to be done slower.” He held up one of Spyro’s paws again. “And I think playing some instruments is something that’ll need more time to get ahold of.”

The purple dragon found himself somewhat conflicted. True, if this meant getting out of having to try and play with that impossible thing, then great! Yet still, getting out of it or not, it still served as a bit of a blow to his pride. “Could I at least try something else? Something that maybe I don’t have to use these for?”

Tomas thought, remembering a small bit of their conversation before earlier in the day. “Well,” he began, a smile coming to him. “There’s no law that says you can’t play a xylophone only with your hands…”

The Next Week

‘Do, Re, Mi, Fa, So, La, Ti…’ Tomas watched and listened with bated breath. ‘…Do!’ the mallet between his student’s teeth dropped to the grass. “I did it.” He said aloud, as if he could scarcely believe it. “I did it!”

“Oh, fantastic!” he exclaimed, his student bouncing up and down. “See? All we needed was a different method-“the bard’s words were cut off, a small shape charging right into his gut.

“Thank you, Tomas!” Spyro shouted. “Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you- “

“All right, all right! Settle down now!” the older dragon chuckled, pulling the smaller boy off him, holding him up in his arms. “Now, yes, you did well.”

“That was awesome!”

“Yes, yes it was. But don’t forget what these lessons are also for. Well, one of the things they’re for.” Spyro nodded, looking at the small mallet he had just used. “But it’s nothing that needs to be rushed.”

“Maybe…” the younger dragon began. “I could try ‘holding’ it next time?”

“…maybe not next time. But we can try working on the form of your grip, if you want.”
“...yeah. Yeah, I think that’d be a good start.”

Tomas smiled. “So do I.”
A New Cuckoo Bird

Chapter Summary

Lindar has a new masterpiece he is constructing, yet in an effort to see what the problem is with it, Spyro finds that perhaps things are better left alone...

Chapter Notes

Hey, guys!

This one's going to a be a little different, as it (technically) is a two-parter. Also, it's based on one of the pieces of concept art for Reignited.

Now, I sort of wanted to do something like this mainly to show that while Spyro, at heart, is a good kid, that far from means that he's infallible, let alone someone who doesn't get into trouble. I hope to show that for all of the dragons as well. Sometimes serious trouble. Heck, the series this is part of HAS 'rascal' in the title, so some of it extends past simple, harmless mistakes. That said, rest assured, things WILL turn out all right in the end.

Again, this is pre 1st game, yet not really in any specific order. Perhaps before the one dealing with Argus and Tomas, if I had to place it. That said, hope you enjoy!

A New Cuckoo Bird

“Soooo, when’d you get THAT one?”

The barista flexed his left arm, attempting to find where the young dragon was pointing to. “Oh, this one?” he asked, claw positioned above his deltoid, the adolescent in turn nodding. Said marking was a triangular shape with arching strokes going upward. “Well, that one’s mainly from the days when I was experimenting with possibly becoming a mathematician.” He traced the claw over one of the arches. “It’s not exactly representative of any of the formulas or types, but it was just a little something I came up with to signify what I thought I was at the time.”

Spyro tilted his head. “What changed?”

Gavin adjusted his mustache, careful to not pull on the ring in his nose. “Well, the shorter question is ‘what didn’t change’, I guess.” He gestured to another tattoo, a flower with quite a long, stretching stem. “Thought I would try taking up gardening, so I got this here.” Then another tattoo, this one seemingly bearing the shape of a dragon head. “Then a historian.” he brushed the left side of his head, stroking the deep, blue frills. “Then, frankly, I sort of was all over the place, experimenting with everything.”

No kidding, Spyro thought. The guy’s entire arm was covered with ink.
“It was then though, that I realized: there wasn’t any law that said being a barista wasn’t fitting of the ‘Artisan’ image. And it was something I was told I always had a knack for.”

“Is that why you’re so big?”

“Eh…maybe.” Gavin said. “I’ll admit, Argus and Alban might be right about caffeine intake- “

“Or watermelon intake.” Spyro whispered under his breath.

“With that said, I guess it depends on the dragon.” The barista explained. “For one, Lindar can’t get through the day without at least one mug. And Darius’ told me a good majority of his scripts are written during all-nighters.”

“All-nighters?”

“Basically, eight hours of sleep is either severely compromised, or outright neglected.”

“That sounds awesome!” Spyro declared, lightly hopping up and down. “You can do all that with coffee?”

“Yes.” Both he and Gavin were given a light start. “And Nestor said not to bother asking. You’re far too young for any of that stuff.”

The child and barista turned to see another blue dragon, albeit with a far slimmer frame (in comparison to Gavin’s muscular, barrel-chested figure) and brighter color scheme, sporting a spiky mane of light, blonde fibers. Fashioned around his neck, wrists, and waist were belts bearing small, ticking clocks, each set at the same time and going at the same pace, neither different from the other. Also, in comparison to Gavin, he sported a pair of goggles that rested above his eyes, two metal ‘horns’ were attached to said goggles. Though he hadn’t seen the dragon without the particular set of eyewear, Spyro also remembered that he had yet to truly see the dragon’s ‘horn’s per say. Did the larger extensions simply mean he had none?

“Hey, Lindar.” The smaller dragon greeted; the clockmaker folding his arms in turn.

“Hello to you.” The blue dragon answered back. “Forgive me if I’m mistaken, Gavin, yet if I were to recall correctly, wasn’t someone supposed to come by my shop to assist in cleaning some gears for me?” his tone indicated he was far from genuinely confused. “And, I could be wrong, but wasn’t someone, a particular barista, supposed to alert me when said gear cleaner arrived at Stone Hill?”

A Short Time Later

‘Well, given that you usually come in to pick up a mocha, I thought that the kid could just wait here for you.’

‘And be five minutes late was waiting because if he showed up when I wasn’t there, it’s not as if he has a key to let himself in.’

How long the verbal match between the two went for, Spyro held little idea, mainly because by the end of it, he was practically begging to go to Lindar’s shop. True, cleaning clock gears wasn’t exactly an activity he looked extremely forward to, yet the talking and back and forth on whom should’ve done what was driving him up the wall. Dare he say, he’d rather have to sit and hear one of Astor’s ‘stories’ than listen to either Gavin or Lindar any longer!

Thankfully, eventually, it ended, both dragons making peace (albeit with Lindar still insisting he
was the one in the right), the clockmaker taking the purple child with him. And upon entering the small shop and personal quarters of said clockmaker, Spyro and Sparx found themselves taken aback by what they saw.

Lining the walls of the small abode were hundreds, if not thousands of clocks: analog, cuckoo, pendulum, swagger, hand painted, clocks with intricately decorated borders of various metals, ranging from bronze to what appeared to be gold. Heck, there was even a clock embezzled with small cuts of gems on the border, the heads of six dragons on the border hold an individual cut in their jaws.

It was only due to the awe both he and Sparx were in that Spryo didn’t even take notice of how each and every one of these clocks were each reading the same exact time and ticking at exactly the same pace.

“A small tip for later in life.” Lindar suddenly spoke up. “There’s never such a thing as too much preparation.” He then gestured to the wall full of his work. “And while some are more likely to need it than others, I can guarantee: there is ALWAYS a dragon somewhere in the Realms that needs at least one.” That ‘one’, of course, being one of the clocks. More preferably, one of HIS clocks. “Anyway, I need you in here.” Spyro saw Lindar moving to an exit out of the display room, the blue dragon in turn looking over his shoulder to the smaller pre-teen. “What? Surely you don’t think I do my work in here, do you?”

“Oh, no! Course not!” Spyro responded, Sparx buzzing in turn. “Did not!” the dragon hissed, the insect giving a smug smirk.

Lindar raised a brow, the two of them seeing such and getting the hint. They all moved along to their true destination, the workshop area of the building. This portion of said building didn’t hold a display of clocks, yet it was clear that despite the shape, size, or look, casual or heavily decorated, each and every one of them held the same assembled bits and pieces resting inside each of them. A lone, but long table of wood held a bevy of blueprints, they ranging in size. Spyro simply assumed this was such to the clock they were showing the details for being larger or smaller. Cabinets lined the walls akin to the clocks in the previous room, though some had the doors open, displaying a small peek into what rested in them: gears of various sizes, analogs, springs, whatever could potentially be put in or on a clock.

It was everything that Lindar could, and perhaps would ever need for whichever project he was or would be working on.

“Hey,” and how ironic, seeing as, just then, Spyro took notice of a tall object stationed in the corner of the room, resting on a small stand bearing wheels and a handle of sorts. “What’s that?”

Lindar looked in the same direction, a grin coming to his lips. “That didn’t take you long.” He observed. “Well, as an answer to your question,” he went over and pulled the stand out, maneuvering it over in the open via the handle. “This here is my newest and, should everything go according to plan, my best work thus far.”

Best? Well, really, the collection he had just seen would perhaps all be his best, yet Spyro had to admit that what lay before him was indeed worthy of such a title: a large clock composed of darkened wood was stationed on the wheeled platform, the young Artisan likening it to that of a grandfather clock. Only, there was a good number of details that separated it from those he had seen before. True, it still held the circular shape and traditional analogs of a traditional clock, yet its general shape seemed to be a smaller, more tall replica of a house, having a tiled, slanted roof and brown, small planks of wood stationed on a lighter colored stone above the bottom portion. Segmented, almost robotic looking arms and hands held the clock upright, a large bell sitting atop
of it, and to Spyro’s surprise, there seemed to be no pendulum in the center. Instead, only two, shut panels.

“Well?” Lindar began, “What do you have to say?”

“Uh…like a bunch of clocks smushed together?” Spyro said, essentially not even filtering his words.

Surprisingly enough, this seemed to please the blue dragon. “Exactly!” he declared, running a claw over the rim of the large bell up top. “I suppose I don’t need to explain that while I’ve had to become familiar with the intricacies and ins and outs of various clocks, yes?”

“Yes?” Spyro answered, though he pondered his answer soon after. “Or no?” ‘I don’t know.’

“Well,” Lindar apparently deemed his answer acceptable. “Over the years of working with such a wide variety, a thought came to me: what if there was a clock that was able to combine all of the elements of different clocks at once?” he gazed up his handiwork. “Well, ALMOST all of the elements.”

The little dragon and insect overlooked the piece of work as well, taking in everything. “So, why is it still in here?” Spyro questioned. “Looks pretty much done to me.”

“Well, it would be, if not for one little thing.” He gestured towards the small door panes. “I don’t suppose I need to tell you what these are for.”

Spyro was surprised. “You’re making this thing a cuckoo clock too?”

“Yes.” Lindar confirmed. “At least, that’s the idea. Only thing is,” he then gently pulled the doors open and pulled down a small platform, a mechanical blue bird sitting atop of it. “The bird and everything are in place, yet whenever it’s time for it to emerge,” the blue dragon pushed everything back inside and reached for the analog portion of the large clock, opening the clear, glass panel that protected it from the outside elements. He hesitated at first, absolutely hating to do it. Yet given it was still yet to be fully finished, perhaps he could allow it. Just this once though. He turned the analog to the next upcoming hour, each hand landing exactly on the number.

Everything went off at once: the bell rang at a near deafening volume, a low, chime akin to that of the typical grandfather clock joined in, the two distinct sounds creating a piercing harmony that couldn’t be ignored.

The bird, however, didn’t pop out.

“Guess it’s a little shy?” Spyro joked.

“Or it’s being stubborn.” Lindar opened the doors again and pulled down the panel. “I’ve checked and re-checked it again and again, yet I simply don’t understand why it isn’t coming out.” He sighed. “Oh well. A few more tests might answer as to why.”

“Wait,” the purple child was confused. “You’re not working on it now?”

“Can’t.” the clockmaker answered. “I have a plethora of orders to fill for the Peace Keepers. All of which need to be delivered to Marco for pickup.” He then rolled his eyes. “I swear, that lot can’t seem to get it through their heads that anything but the kitchen sink shouldn’t be used as cannon fodder for the Gnorcs.” He muttered something else under his breath about how the other dragon clan might’ve already ‘used a kitchen sink’ to sling at the green oafs. “So, that’s why I called you here.”
Spyro was puzzled. “You…want me to fix the clock?”

“What?!” Lindar proclaimed. “Goodness, no! Absolutely not! You’re not to lay one claw on this!”

“But…why’d you ask for me then?”

Later

Gear cleaning. Gear cleaning!

Of COURSE it’d be something like that! He was supposed to come here for a lesson, and boom! Something was shown right in front of him that could perhaps lead to something. But no! No lesson about clocks or how they work, nothing! He was just called here to wipe off gears with paws/hands that he had yet to even get a full grasp on how to use!

“This sucks.” He said aloud. If there was one good thing about this, it was that no one, save for Sparx, was around to hear him.

It wasn’t so much the fact that having to do this was what irked him so much. He just failed to see, let alone understand what good this would do him. His ‘schooling’, as the other Elder Dragons called it, while not his favorite thing in the world either, ultimately had some sort of purpose to it. Whether it be history, geography, playing an instrument, or even his least favorite thing, ugh, calligraphy, there was at least SOMETHING there to be learned. According to the ‘teachers’ at least. Spyro believed that some of those things simply existed to be torturous for the sake of it.

Still, even then, he wasn’t sure whether calligraphy was worse than this. Sure, simply wiping down the grime off of gears was far from complicated, let alone as taxing. Holding a gear in his paw or flipping it over if it was too big to hold, was far from trying to hold a quill and write, but at least he was learning how to with the latter. What was this doing for him? Teaching him cleanliness? As if he wasn’t reminded again and again at the castle with his room.

“Bzzt!” Sparx chirped, Spyro in turn groaning.

“Halfway there? Some good news, finally.” He rested his head on the table, the rest of him sitting up on the stool below. “So bored…” his eyes drooped. He was NEVER usually this tired in the afternoon. He should’ve asked for some of Gavin’s coffee before Lindar came to collect him. Not that the barista would’ve GIVEN him any (having been given strict orders not to do so), yet if this went on any longer, he would-

His violet eyes caught Lindar’s newest piece of work in the corner of his eye.

“Hmm…”

Hopping down from the stool, the small dragon made his way over to the large clock, looking and taking it in.

‘This thing IS pretty cool.’ He thought, his eyes falling on the door in the middle. ‘Shame about the cuckoo part not really working.’ He went closer, eyes not leaving the door.

Sparx was puzzled at first, yet when his charge began to draw too close for comfort to the clock, the dragonfly flew right in front of his face, shaking his head side to side.

“No, I’m not going to mess it up!” Spyro told him, lightly pushing him to the side. “I just want to see how it works is all!”
“Bzzt! Bzzt, bzzt!”

“Yeah, but he said that because he thought I would screw it up! And I won’t!” he propped himself up on the large clock, inserting one of his claws in the small, open space between the frames. “Besides, he said he was having trouble with it. And he’s not here, but we are. Why not see if we see anything?”

“Bzzt…” Sparx could sense that it was useless to try and stop him now. Still, he couldn’t help but feel that this would end badly.

It took some effort on his part, yet Spyro managed to open the small door and saw the board instantly. Grabbing the stool, the dragon climbed up and began to pull down on the board, the task clearly proving to be more taxing than he initially suspected. He pulled and pulled, struggling, until-

POP!

His goal had been achieved, the little dragon sent rolling back head over tail until he slammed into one of the table legs, the impact jostling his senses. Sparx flew over, fluttering in front of him.

“Ugh…” Spyro groaned, shaking his head, the haziness that once overcame his vision fading. “Yeah, I’m fine.” He assured Sparx, attempting to rub the back of his head, his legs unfortunately not able to reach back there. Indeed, the transition from quadruped to biped was NOT an easy one. But on the plus side, he managed to get the clock open, the blue bird able to be seen. Ok, great! He drew closer, maneuvering around the board and peeking inside to see what was inside.

The space was relatively empty, yet from what he could see, everything seemed to be fine. The board was far from too long or short if it was able to come through the door. And by being pulled down of all things. Yet still, there had to be some sort of problem. Lindar was many things, one of which was a perfectionist. And while this hodgepodge of different clock mechanics, it was clear that, judging from the plethora of the things in the room they had passed through, the blue dragon was surely one who knew the ins and outs of each and every piece and bit of what went in and where. So, what was the problem?

He’d have a better time looking in if that bird wasn’t so heavy…wait.

“Sparx?” Spyro asked. “You’re smaller than me, you go- “

“Bzzt!” the dragonfly shook his head.

“No, I told you! I want to see what’s up with it! Besides, wouldn’t seeing what’s inside be a better ‘lesson’ than wiping down gears?”

“Bzzt!”

“…fine.” The dragon sighed. “I’ll just do it.” He grabbed the stool and drug it to the side of the board, sitting atop it and peering inside, able to get a better view. The space near the bottom was relatively empty, save for two weights, probably to make room for the bird. Yet as he looked up, he could see a plethora of gears and various bits and pieces that he knew not the names of, yet was sure he had just cleaned off not too long ago. Still, he had no way to test his theory-

SNAP!

Spyro found himself flying forward, his head slamming into a flattened, wooden surface, his backside suffering the same as the light that once lit the room he was in was snuffed out, he now
shut in a tight and darkened space.

“BZZT?!?” Sparx dashed towards the door, the panes having shut upon the board flipping back up and going inside the clock.

What the, how in the world did THAT happen? Did Spyro lean on it some particular way, or did it simply retract to there being too much pressure put on it? The insect was no idiot, yet he was aware of his limits, in that when it came to complicated mechanisms such as these, he had no idea how they worked, and even less of an idea of how they were put together. Yet ultimately, that far from mattered now.

‘You idiot!’ he wished he could vocalize in something clearer than buzzing. True, Spyro could understand him fine due to their bond, yet still, if he had a ‘clearer’ voice, then maybe the foolish little thing would actually heed what he had to say once in a while!

Suddenly, sounds began to emit from inside the clock. Clinks and high pitched whines, as well as things being thrown about and bouncing off the walls inside. ‘Oh no…oh, what have you done?!’

Later

Honestly, Marco was nothing short of a saint.

And those Peace Keepers were nothing short of a continuous source of utmost frustration.

‘No respect.’ He thought, shaking his head. ‘Or a concept of what ‘fragile’ means. Honestly!’ this wasn’t to indicate that he held any sort of resentment towards the Peace Keepers in any sense, yet it was perhaps a little too obvious to say that one could only take their wares being broken so many times before frustration set in.

Ah well. At least now he could focus his efforts on what would surely be his grand master work.

Making his way to Stone Hill, and subsequently, his shop, the clockmaker was nearly jostled off his feet by a small, golden, glowing object nearly flying headfirst into his face.

“Sparx?” the dragonfly was obviously frazzled. “What’s gotten you all worked up-“ Lindar didn’t get another word out before the insect started pulling on his hair, pain radiating in small portion of his scalp the fibers were connected to. “Ow, ow, ow, ow!” he caught the dragonfly in his claws, gently, yet firmly pulling him back. “Ok, ok! What is it??”

Sparx flew into his shop. Lindar following in suit. They reached his workroom, the sight of his newest, and perhaps most ambitious work in front of them. As well as the absence of someone that had once been here.

“Where’s Spyro?”

Sparx bit his lip, gesturing to the large clock.

“…he didn’t.”

Lindar went to the clock and forced open the door, reaching in and grimacing. Oh heavens, please. Surely he wouldn’t be that stupid. Surely he would just up and go ‘take a look’ when he had been told NOT to-

He pulled it down.
A flood of gears and springs came tumbling outward, spilling onto and bouncing off the floor. Along with a little, purple dragon. The bird, however, remained unscathed.

Spyro didn’t look up from his place on the floor, nor towards Lindar’s shocked and horrified face. He simply turned his face to the ground, the full weight of what he had just indvertibly done crashing down on him.

He was dead. He was so, SO dead.
Of Your Own Hubris

Chapter Summary

Dealing with the consequences of breaking Lindar's clock, the clockmaker becomes convinced that the destruction of his work isn't the only thing eating at the little dragon.

Continued from A New Cuckoo Bird.

Chapter Notes

Note: Hello! A shorter one this time, mainly because, as I was going over this, I think that this would be better as part of a series of events taking place over a span of time, particularly (at least in this series of one-shots universe) near the beginning of the timeline and ending near when the events of the first game begin. Of course, my main goal is to have at least one entry for each dragon before delving into anything in the timeline of the 1st game, then when that’s reached, going from there onto the dragons of the other realms, going into the 2nd game, and vice versa.

Also, I’ll be sure to alert you when said one shot takes place in the timeline. Thus far, it follows like this (so far with what is up).

Teaching Credentials
History Lesson-The Artisans
Portals: And Exploration of their Functionality
A New Cuckoo Bird
This one here
The Do Re Mis
Guiding Stars

There will be more after, before, and in between, but I’ll be sure to let you know. Please alert me if you’re confused.

“What in the world were you thinking?!”

“I wasn’t- “

“Obviously not!”

The moment he tumbled out of the hybrid clock, Spyro knew well that everything that was to come. And, as predicted, it happened as such. Still, it far from prepared him for it.

Now here he was, confined to his room and deprived of the everyday things he realized were luxuries he had been granted: the fields outside, traversing the rolling elevations of Stone Hill, simply taking in the sights and sounds of Town Square, heck, even simply enjoying the clear, night
sky best viewed at Dark Hollow. It was funny how simply being forced to stay in one place made someone really consider what they truly held access to before it was stripped away.

The young dragon found the bitter pill almost too much to bear.

Since the incident regarding Lindar’s newest project, Spyro had been sentenced to staying in his room for the entirety of the day. For a month. Not a week, not two weeks, for thirty days straight. Rather convenient that the clock incident took place at the end of May, so he got able to be spared one more day of his punishment. Even if it meant that the beginning of his summer would be spent mostly indoors.

Not that it mattered, as really, the little dragon had been nothing short of completely miserable.

The first days of his ‘sentencing’, Spyro had attempted to explain himself. After all, it wasn’t as if it was his intention to break it! He was just trying to see why it wasn’t working the way Lindar wanted it to! He was just trying to help!

“Well, your ‘helping’ isn’t working!” he remembered the blue dragon shouting, the younger pre-teen seeing small bits of moisture in the corners of his eyes. The clockmaker then left the castle, saying that he simply ‘couldn’t do this right now.’.

Whether he saw it or not, Spyro’s heart sank upon seeing that.

Lindar himself scarcely came to the main hub of the Artisan homeland, situating himself to mostly staying at Stone Hill, probably undoing the damage the younger dragon had done, yet Nestor made it clear that Spyro WOULD be compensating for what he had done.

That was another part of his grounding: the small task he had originally been sent to help Lindar out with? Now, instead of just a pile of gears, it was every single gear that the clockmaker held in his shop that hadn’t been input in one of his products. And not just gears either: springs, weights, bits and pieces he didn’t even know the names of, anything that basically went into a clock, it was his job to make sure it was sparkling clean and to be taken to Lindar by the end of the day. The young dragon, thankfully, didn’t have to do this task, one of the others taking the box full of polished items to Stone Hill (if not simply for the fact that there was no way he could haul it there himself). Frankly, even though the clockmaker spent most of his time there now, whenever he DID come to the castle, Spyro made sure to stay out of sight. Never in his life would he believe he’d have to be afraid of one such as Lindar.

Then again, nor did he believe that things would turn out so badly.

By now, it was the fifteenth of May, halfway through his punishment, and, oddly enough, he had nearly run out of anything to polish. Lindar apparently had nothing else in the shop that needed cleaning, so at least there was that. Yet ultimately, Spyro found that he’d rather take sore paws in comparison to how dejected and heartbroken the elder dragon sounded that day.

He didn’t mean to. He REALLY didn’t.

CREAK

Spyro nearly leapt out of his skin when he heard the door to his room open, a small, golden, glittering insect flying through the small hole carved in the upper part (essentially a ‘dragonfly doggy door’) and a larger, pear skinned dragon wearing a shamrock colored vest.

“…hey.” The little dragon greeted, it very clear that he lacked any semblance of his usual chipper nature.
Nestor nodded in acknowledgement. He still held firm to his conviction that the child was to see his punishment through, no exceptions, yet that didn’t necessarily translate to him taking in pleasure in delivering it to him, let alone seeing him in such a state. True, in the beginning, the pre-teen was defensive about it, saying that the accident was just that, an accident, and that his intention was NOT to dismantle a good portion of the inner workings already put into place. In fact, he possibly found what the problem was in that the cuckoo bird was too heavy, thus, the board it was attacked to couldn’t lift itself up. Yet Nestor made clear that his decision was final and would not be revoked. Should he continue to fight it, he’d extend it to a month and a week.

That seemed to get his message across.

Spyro had made it clear that he thought the whole thing wasn’t fair. Not verbally, the carpenter having warned him that complaining would make him consider extending his punishment. So, the adolescent did what he was told, begrudgingly at first, yet as the days rolled by, his animosity towards his task and what he had been deprived of faded, Nestor noticing the dragon steadily growing more and more sullen. Sparx was told not to try and justify Spyro’s actions (not that the insect would, he lecturing and getting onto the child just as often, perhaps more than the carpenter himself), yet the dragonfly found he couldn’t stand the sight of his charge like this anymore. Thus, the elder dragon was led to his room, and what he was presented with…well, suffice to say, perhaps some intervention was in order.

“It’s dark in here.” The lime skinned dragon noted. “Do you need a few candles?”

Spyro shook his head. “No.” he answered. “I’m about to turn in anyway.” He then slunk away to the corner of the room and plopped himself down, stomach flat on the ground.

Nestor sighed. True, he had somewhat accomplished what he intended, and to incite guilt over what the other, younger dragon had caused was intended. But only just enough so that there would be an understanding and something learnt from it.

“I…” the carpenter began, brain trying to conjure a decent enough starting point. “I see that you’ve only got a small amount left.” He gestured to the small pile of pieces and bits stationed near the empty box, its contents having just been delivered to Stone Hill and brought back.

“Yeah, I guess.”

The elder dragon shook his head. “Spyro, do you want to talk about- “

“No.” Spyro answered in turn.

“…if you want to know, Lindar has already completed his hybrid clock.”

Spyro’s head lifted up. “Really?”

“Yes.” Nestor nodded. “And he actually is interested in letting you see- “

“No thanks.”

The carpenter and dragonfly were quite stunned at how sudden he gave such an answer. Though, the reason why was quite clear. “Spyro, he’s told me that he’s no longer angry about it.”

“…really?”

“Really.”
There was silence for a moment or two, Nestor and Sparx hoping for some sort of response to come from the little dragon.

“So…he doesn’t want to kill me?”

“Kill you? Why would…” the green dragon slapped his palm against his forehead. “Spyro, honestly. You should know better than that. And that’s NOT to mean I believe you believe he’d, literally, kill you.” A low huff escaped his nostrils. “He’s simply said that he would be interested in you seeing it. It’s no requirement on your part.” The carpenter explained. “Although, I think that it’s something that’d be quite beneficial for you.”

Spyro didn’t answer at first, simply laying flat on the floor and facing the wall, completely disregarding the small, circular cushion and pillows stationed against the eastern wall of his room. Yet just as Nestor was about to exit, his ears picked up a small, tired voice.

“Maybe…but…not right now.”

The end of June was quickly approaching, and Spyro had each and every piece polished. And even when asked whether or not he needed anything more to send, Lindar simply stated that was all he needed. Plus, even better news, that he was ready to present his newest work to whomever had set up to purchase it first. The going price was around one-hundred-and-fifty gems, yet should anyone wish to bid for it…well…all those components he worked with didn’t buy themselves.

And, as luck would have it, to everyone’s surprise, Thor was the lucky winner. Even if he was just as surprised when he found that he was actually the owner of said clock. “Eh?” he exclaimed. “I thought this was a funding for Lindy to make it for real! You sure that thing isn’t just one of those prototype-whatevers?”

Baffled as he was, the ancient dragon didn’t hesitate in taking it, if not out of the simply gesture that he saw that refusing it would’ve been rude. Perhaps it was a good thing, seeing as the old drake was clearly losing his hearing, as well as a good number of his other senses. And continuously forgetting of how the clockmaker detested being called ‘Lindy’.

Nevertheless, his work was complete, and, in the end, its purpose was to be utilized. As far as Lindar was concerned, everything was right with the world.

Well…almost everything.

Since the auction, the clockmaker had made his way to the castle. He could’ve been wrong, yet he sensed that the long absence of a certain, young dragon held more to it than him simply being busy with cleaning gears, that having been taken care of a good deal before the clock was sold. He had a theory, though if said theory was correct, then simply addressing, let alone solving it, would perhaps be more difficult than initially suspected. And it would have to be solved with precision and accuracy, otherwise he’d do nothing more than push the small drake further and further away.

Who, what, when, where, and why, well, that could all be answered and solved. The only one left was ‘how’.

It wasn’t as if he hadn’t tried, having to go to the castle to deliver Thor’s clock, and lo and behold, he saw a small blotch of purple in the corner of his eye. Said small blotch moving back at first, but then coming forward.
“Hello, Spyro.” Lindar greeted, the smaller dragon straightening his posture and holding his head high. Yet it was clear that there was a nervous look in his eye.

“Hey.” The adolescent greeted in turn, Sparx’s eyes shifting back and forth between the two. “So… how’s the work coming?”


“Oh, yeah.” Spyro answered, his own, violet eyes shifting back and forth. “That…that’s cool. I guess.”

Well, he had got him talking at least. Now…it might’ve been too soon, but it was worth a try.

“Truth be told, you didn’t do that much damage.”

The little dragon was baffled upon hearing this. “Really?”

Lindar nodded. “Granted, what happened could’ve been avoided, yet when I got back to the shop to assess the damage, I found that it wasn’t as much as I had initially suspected. Truth be told, I didn’t even need to use half of those gears you had polished.”

‘I could’ve guessed that.’ Spyro thought, though he didn’t speak it aloud. Frankly, he was treading on eggshells, even if Lindar was trying to make it clear that such a thing wasn’t necessary. Let alone wanted.

"And you were right. The bird WAS too heavy. So, I had a new, smaller model put in its place."

"Oh. Well...that's good." I guess.'

“If you want, given Thor’s out at the square right now, maybe you’d like to see- “

“Uh, no thanks!” the little dragon answered immediately. “B-Besides, I’ve got to go to Alban’s class! He always rags on me when I’m late!”

“Spyro- “

“Thanks for stopping by! Maybe some other time!”

“Spyro, I- “

Lindar got no more in, Spyro racing off down the hallway, surely making his way towards the entrance. The blue skinned clockmaker sighed. Of all times where he’d not care about timeliness. ‘Well, THAT was a roaring success.’ Still, at least he was able to make conversation with the boy. All the same, however, it was clear that this would take a little bit of work.

Something that, frankly, was odd for the little dragon.

And while, as stated before, Lindar could’ve potentially been wrong, yet he couldn’t help but get the feeling that Spyro’s general discomfort and avoidance of the clock tied in with something more than just guilt over breaking it…
Old Man Ramblings

Chapter Summary

Visiting one of the elderly Artisans (albeit out of obligation), Spyro overhears a particular bit of information amidst Astor's ramblings that draws his attention, as well as unintentionally brings up a subject that the others have been avoiding.

Chapter Notes

Hey, another one-shot here! This one takes place not long after the ‘Cuckoo Bird’ and ‘Hubris’ one, so no need for an order listing here.

A small confession: I thought it’d be interesting to hear about some of the early lives of the dragon leaders in their youth and some of the misadventures they got into. But I think that things like that should come later, after going through all the Artisan dragons at least. I’m about through with covering Stone Hill, which leaves me with Town Square and Dark Hollow. It’s kind of a bit of a slog, as there’s some stuff I really, REALLY want to get to, yet I don’t want to waste it right away, as I feel it’d better fit for later installments.

Though, there WILL be mentioning of a certain individual that, for readers of ‘Little Spark’, they may remember Astor mentioning.

Also, next few one will be less angst filled. Granted, angst is delicious to me, yet having something like this be all 'brooding' all the time would burn people and me out. Thus, the next few ones will be more on the lighter/warm side. As well as my poor attempts at humor.

That said, hope you enjoy!

---

He dare not say anything in protest.

Frankly, what good would it do?

True, it had all been made well and clear that the incident with Lindar's new clock wasn't intentional. And to a degree, the problem regarding how exactly the little dragon model was supposed to function was remedied due to the little draconian's small tumble inside.

It wasn't as if he argued or protested against his punishment either. Sure, punishment and discipline in general weren't, and were always probably going to be some of his least favorite things, yet...why this? True, cleaning all those gears off AND making sure each and every clock in the clockmaker's shop was ticking at the exact same pace and rhythm as the other was far from pleasant, but it was fitting, he guessed. It certainly did the job of making him NEVER being within ten, no, twenty some feet of one of Lindar's works again! Heck, he could be the happiest dragon alive if he NEVER had to interact with a cuckoo clock for as long as he lived!
The lesson of 'respecting rules' and 'the property of others' had been more than learnt. So then, why was Spyro told to go to Stone Hill once again? Let alone to see someone that was clearly NOT Lindar?

He could only suppose, as least from what Argus had told him, that there was always an opportunity to teach the value of 'unmotivated acts of kindness'.

Though, at least from how the little dragon saw it, an opportunity to get him out of their 'hair' and have a few hours of peace and quiet. Ironic in a sense-

"Ah, THERE you are, my boy."

For the next hour or so would be anything BUT quiet.

Sitting in a small clearing away from the namesake, rolling hills of fertile green and overlooking a vast, blue ocean was another dragon, though in contrast to the likes of not only the inhabitants of Stone Hill, but the majority of the Artisan clan, the winged reptile obviously had more than his good share of years underneath his belt. An elderly dragon of bearing a complexion of light mauve stood near the border that separated the clearing from the cliff side, a shepherd's crook resting under his chin and folded hands, keeping the dragon standing upright (albeit with a slightly hunched posture). A 'beard' of sorts was fashioned on each side of his face, wrinkles and creases prominent there and a good few other areas on his form, a la his joints. Around his neck rested a simple necklace, a hat sporting a long, curling feather of white atop his head, and a pair of eyes that, despite always appearing tired and worn down, held a semblance of some energy from years gone by. Dare Spyro say...they almost appeared 'child-like' in a sense.

"Hey, Astor." the little dragon greeted, approaching the older dragon, Sparx perching himself atop of one of Spyro's upright horns.

"Yes, hello." Astor in turn greeted. "...wait a minute. You were coming today?"

It took everything in him to not let his violet eyes roll. It was undoubtedly going to be one of THOSE days with him. "Uh, yeah? Don't you remember?" the mauve dragon still presented him with a blank look. "I got stuck in Lindar's clock the other day?"

"Eh? No, I don't know of anything new Lindar's making." Astor replied. "Heaven knows that boy's always tinkering on something, though...."
"Uh, no. No, that's not-

"Oh yes!" the older Artisan proclaimed all the sudden, giving both Spyro and Sparx a start. "You made yourself into a little cuckoo bird, didn't you?"

Spyro averted his gaze, yet another reminder that it hadn't even been two weeks since said incident occurred. "Y-Yeah. Look," he wasted no time in changing the subject. "The guys are worried whether or not you're lonely out here, so they wondered whether or not you needed some company."

"The guys..." he blanked out again. Please, Spyro prayed. Please don't let this be the routine of today. "Oh, you mean-"

"Yeah!" the young dragon confirmed, not exactly willing to let the older's mind have yet another lapse.

"Oh, well, you can tell them that there's no need to be so concerned!" Astor answered, giving a dismissive way. "Those boys worry just because my joints aren't what they used to be!" he gave his cane a small tap. "How many times do I have to keep telling Nestor that I'm not going to be cooped up in the castle or somewhere else when I'm still more than capable of..." the old dragon continued on and on, musing on about a supposed lack of respect for an 'old man's wishes', then, ironically enough, going on about how he wasn't as old as the other dragons made him out to be. "Why, I haven't even reached one-thousand-and-ten yet!"

"Uh huh..." Spryo began, steadily backing away. "Well, good for you on insisting on your independence! I'll just tell the others to not bother you about it anymore-"

"Why, I just remembered!" the purple dragon stopped dead in his tracks. Both Spryo and Sparx glanced at each other, utter despair etched into their features. "This reminds me of something that happened around eighty some years ago! Or...was it seventy?"

Two Hours Later

(A/N: While not required, I find imagining this read in the mock Jacques Cousteau voice a la Spongebob somewhat enhances little tidbit)

"...and that was how the we came to realize that the two-thousandth-five-hundreth-sixty-ninth brick in that tower over there wasn't painted on one particular corner, something that had to be
removed for Gildas to patch up."

Had anyone else simply walked into the scene, one would've assumed that the little dragon sitting on the grass had up and died, simply sitting upright due to early onset rigor mortis. Heck, Sparx himself was wondering whether or not his charge was still among the living, fluttering in his line of sight, waving one of his legs in front of him akin to someone waving an arm. Ah, good, an eye twitch. At the very least, he was still clinging to life.

"Course, personally, I think things like that don't really matter. But I wasn't the one overseeing the blueprints. And Alban wouldn't stop raising a fuss over it until it was fixed." Astor stated, satisfied with the completion of his tale, though it was then he just realized something. "Wait." he just remembered. "That happened around SIXTY years ago, not eighty! Or seventy?" he pondered, tapping a claw against his chin. "Spryo, my boy, you wouldn't happen to know which one it was, would you? I could've sworn I remembered right an hour and a half ago..."

Nothing.

"Spyro?"

Spyro still said nothing. He was aware something was being registered by his ears. The mauve blob was saying 'something', but his brain (what small part of it was still functioning) was struggling to decipher what sort of alien language it was speaking.

“Spyro? You still there?”

Sparx bumped him in the side, the sudden yet small bit of pressure jostling the small dragon out of his stupor, the world around him coming back. “H-Huh? Oh, yeah! Sure!” he insisted, nodding his head. “You were saying something about tiled floors?”

Astor raised a brow, then brought a clawed finger to his chin. “Was I?” he pondered. “Or was it about the time Nestor up and made that birdhouse that looked like a wheel barrel?”

“Uh, no. You…” Spyro paused. “Wait, he did what?”

“Huh? Didn’t I tell you?” Astor questioned. “Nestor up and made a birdhouse that looked like a wheel barrel.”

The dragon and his dragonfly were confused. “That…doesn’t make any sense.”

The mauve, elderly drake nodded. “I didn’t believe it when I saw it either.” He confessed. “Bear in mind, he was young, not much older than you.” He paused. “Maybe not much younger either. Maybe around the same age…”

“Uh, yeah! Same age, right?” Spyro but in, praying that there wouldn’t be another session of the old man trying to figure out what he may (or may not) have forgotten.

“Yes, I think you’re right.”

“Phew!”

“Phew? I don’t smell anything.”
Spyro froze. “Phew…you…you were saying?” good thing the older dragon seemed to buy it.

“Oh, yes! Well, Nestor was always like that when he was young. Always wanting to try something new, always making things with whatever he could find.”

The purple adolescent quirked a brow. “Oh really?” this was, surprisingly enough, beginning to get interesting.

“Yes.” Astor confirmed. “Sticks, mud, clay, rocks, he tried to make something out of anything he could find. Did I tell you that he tried to build a birdhouse that came out looking like a- “?

“Yeah! Wheel barrel, right?”

“Why…yes, that’s right!” the elderly drake responded. “I don’t know why the others seem so adamant at being so concerned about your lessons. You’re a good enough listener from what I can see.”

“Oh, really? Thanks!” though it could’ve potentially been debated whether or not Astor’s words were entirely (if at all) accurate, the smaller dragon wasn’t going to protest. “At least someone else thinks so.” There were others, yes, yet ultimately, they were few.

The other dragon was silent for a small while, Spyro wondering whether or not he had up and fallen asleep on him (it’d be far from the first time it had happened). Yet instead, it seemed that the mauve elder had simply decided to peer out at the expansive ocean that lay beyond the borders of Stone Hill, the sky clear and bearing only small speckles of vapor amidst the horizon.

“Yes. Always wanting to make something…” Astor mused, a light breeze making the feather in his hat lightly fall back, the ivory tip waving in the air.

There was more, yet a good portion of it was under his breath. Spyro could barely hear it, if he was lucky. And was considering trying to sneak off as he usually would whenever the old dragon rambled on or had fallen asleep (or even more common, had done both), yet something that came from the elderly drake gave him pause.

“…at least that witch couldn’t take you away from us. Let alone my son or the other four.”

“Wait.” Spyro turned back to Astor, he and Sparx, ironically enough, going up to the old dragon instead of away. “What was that?”

“Hm?” Astor looked down. “What was what, my boy? Did you say something?”

“Uh, no. But you did.”

“Oh, I did?”

“Yeah. Something about a witch, and ‘four’ somebodies- “

The mauve elder froze. Spyro and Sparx could scarcely believe it, yet the rapid, almost nonexistent transition of emotion, from a perpetual, light haze of confusion to outright shock was more than a little disconcerting for the two, especially given that it was this dragon of all others to present it. Old, forgetful, yet mostly calm and easygoing Astor.

“What?” he averted his eyes for a moment. “What witch?”

“You just said it.” The young purple drake told him. “Something about a witch.”
“Uh…no. I don’t seem to recall.”

“You just said it though!” Spyro protested. “You said ‘witch’! Someone was a ‘witch’ and how they couldn’t take someone away!”

“I don’t think I said that.” Astor began to turn away from him and go in the opposite direction. “Besides, I just remembered. She called herself a ‘Sorceress’.”

“Sorceress?”

The mauve dragon clapped a clawed hand over his mouth.

“What’s a sorceress? Is it the same thing as a witch?”

Astor stopped in his tracks, Spyro in turn puzzled, yet also steadily growing worried. This was so unlike the elder who was usually so eager to tell him literally anything. The light breeze was the only sound that seemed to make itself known throughout the entirety of Stone Hill. Even the blades of grass lightly rubbing against one another produced more of a noticeable noise than the once talkative dragon.

“Astor?”

A long, heavy sigh escaped the other dragon, his hands clasping firmly to the handle of his cane. “My boy,” he finally spoke. Spyro in turn awaiting what he would say, Sparx too listening with bated breath. “Did you hear about the time Alban got the bright idea to try and cut the grass here to exactly two point five inches- “

“Yeah, sounds cool! Speaking of Alban, I’m almost late for calligraphy! See ya!” with that, Spyro ran off, Sparx about to go off as well, though the insect paused for a moment, his large, bulbous eyes taking notice of the old dragon turning back to gaze out at the ocean. He said (or rather, buzzed) nothing and simply followed his charge.

While thankful that he dodged having to answer that particular thing he so foolishly allowed to slip out, Astor suspected that this would far from be the last of it. True, the fact he had ever done such would’ve potentially escaped his mind, yet it wouldn’t escape the young dragon’s.

Far from it.

‘Maybe it’s time he knew at least something of our old life. About all of that.’ Astor paused. ‘Well…maybe not ALL of it. Not yet anyway.’ Still, the issue remained. Young as he still was, Spyro was growing each and every day. And if the younger elders were so insistent on educating and rearing him in the Artisan way, then perhaps such a thing extended beyond that. Yet there were things that were simply the fundamental basics of every way. Honesty, trust, and acceptance.

And while the other two were a bit more unpredictable in how the young dragon would maybe take it, Astor could at least trust that the first could be implemented.

Of course, there was still the issue of ‘when’.
Inspiration for Flights of Fancy

Chapter Summary

Gildas proposes a new project where each Artisan will contribute.

Only Spyro doesn't exactly know what he'll put.

And he reminisces on his first official 'meeting' with a particular figure with a hot air balloon.

Chapter Notes

Hello! Another 2 parter here! Though this one sort of is unique in that it doesn't take place directly back to back.

Rather, part one takes place after 'A New Cuckoo Bird' and 'Old Man Ramblings', yet the latter part will take place near the end of the first series of Artisan one-shots.

Also, I wanted to give more spotlight to one of the more minor, yet prevalent characters in the game, as without him, you wouldn't be able to progress past where you started.

It was by pure chance he saw him. And it was clear that he wasn’t a dragon.

A short, bipedal figure bearing a pair of brown trousers with straps and a red scarf concealing his mouth with goggles was delivering a small stack of books to Oswin, whom had surprisingly come out of his library in Dark Hollow. A large, hot air balloon had landed on the dock, the massive, expansive ocean that surrounded the Artisan Realm ebbing and gentle in its motions.

“Thank you kindly for this.” Oswin told the strange figure, the smaller, purple dragon peering at the two behind the wall. “You have NO idea how long I’ve been wanting to add these in!”

That balloon was huge! He had never seen anything like it before! Was that what he used to get around? He certainly didn’t look like he belonged here. Not that they wouldn’t allow someone to live among them, but still. Whoever this was, he sure was different.

“Well, all in a day’s work!” the scarfed figure replied, rubbing the back of his head, a pair of goggles atop it and what seemed to be an aviator’s hat situated under them. Though how those goggles could fit over such big eyes. “Really though, it wasn’t that hard! The Magic Crafters know a thing or two about putting things together!”

“Oh, believe me, I’m more than aware.” The turban wearing librarian confirmed. “Lucas’ research was something I HAD to have a copy of the moment I saw it. Of course, transferring words from scrolls to book paper is probably something only they could accomplish without going mad.”
“Heaven knows that no one here would be able to.” The mysterious figure said aloud before realizing what he just said. “Oh, I-I mean, well, I’m sure that Artisans are a dedicated and more than articulate enough race- “

“Oh no, please, believe me.” Oswin waved his apology off. “Do you know what would’ve happened had I asked anyone to do this? Argus would’ve run me out in a heartbeat, and Alban…” he paused. “Well, Alban MAY attempt something like that, yet knowing him, he’d probably try to match the font, spacing, and everything other detail verbatim. I’d be near Astor or Thor’s age, no, maybe even dead by the time he got it done.” Oswin chuckled. “Of course, that’d probably mean HE’D be dead too, so…” he stopped for a moment, realizing he had just put himself in a corner. “Anyway, thank you so much for this. Please, give Cedric, Lucas, oh heck, give every one of those dragons my regards. Oh! And your brother, Tuco!”

The figure laughed. ‘Will do! Truth be told, he actually told me to get these here, as he said that there was no way he was lugging all these here!’ he then altered his voice. ‘He was all like ‘No way, Marco! Do you know what it’s like having to drag an entire marble slab over a span of hundreds of miles does to your basket?! It’s a miracle that I made it out of that delivery alive!’’ the figure, Marco, folded his arms. ‘Yeah, rather convenient that he left out the part where I had to be the one to take it here from the Peace Keepers’ here. I swear, he makes it sound like he’s the ONLY one that has to do any heavy lifting!’

The librarian and the humanoid figure, ‘Marco’ apparently, laughed it up whilst the smaller dragon watched them, both completely oblivious to his presence.

“Spyro? Spyro!”

“Huh?! What?! What happened?!”

Sparx buzzed a light giggle while rolling his eyes.

“Heh, head in the clouds again?” a larger, sky blue dragon bearing a beard of strawberry blonde questioned. “Well, all the better!” he proclaimed, quite proudly. “That’s were I usually find anything and everything I’m looking for!”

Spyro was caught between producing a giggle at that and sighing in relief. True, while he WAS in the middle of a lesson today, as well as a task given to him, he was more than thankful the head of said lesson and task was clearly one of a laxer nature. At least, that would be until they actually reached where they were going to be performing what needed to be done. According to the dragon in question. Simply put, to a majority of the Artisans, he was one of a more ‘eccentric’ and ‘unique’ nature. Yet if one were to catch them in private, then ‘eccentric’ and ‘unique’ would’ve malformed into ‘crackpot’ and ‘unhinged’. And those would’ve been some of the kinder words used.

For while he thought no such thing of him, Spyro had to admit that the older members of his clan perhaps would attach words of that nature to the blue dragon. He had dabs of paint all over him ranging in various colors, and his apron, of which was ironically worn to prevent such messes, was just as covered as other parts of him. Certainly, a far cry from the likes of Nevin, he was.

“Speaking of which,” the paint covered dragon began again. “Best be on our way, right?”

“Oh, y-yeah! Sure thing!”
He was there again, though apparently going back to the balloon instead of forward, seemingly having finished a delivery.

“Bzzt!”

“I know, I know. And I’m going to just go up and ask him!”

“Bzzt?”

“I-I don’t know! Whenever…” the dragon bit his lip. “Whenever I feel like it, that’s when.”

The scarfed figure clapped his gloved hands together, dusting them off. Not that there was any dust to be cast off, the Artisan Realm was relatively clean (these guys knew how to better keep up their areas better than the Peace Keepers and ESPECIALLY the Beast Makers). Marco stretched out his back, surprisingly not feeling any nicks or-

CRACK!

“Oof!”

Spyro and Sparx winced. THAT sounded bad.

“Ah! Oooh…” Marco groaned, his large eyes widening. “Oh geez.” He tried to move forward, yet his posture was horribly misplaced, arcing backward. “Oh man, this is bad. This is REALLY bad-“he hopped around, finally taking notice that he was being watched. “Oh! Uh…hi.” His eyes fell not on the dragon, but rather, his horns. Frankly, because nothing else mattered to him but those pointy, but undeniably hard growths atop his head. “Say…uh…heh. You wouldn’t mind doing me a favor, would you, little guy?”

“All right.” the massive paintbrush hit the stone below as if it were a staff or cane. Though given how proudly he carried the thing, the younger drake likened it more to Cosmos’ staff than Astor’s walking stick (though he was more familiar with the latter). “This is where each and every one of us shall make our mark, for us, and for the future generations of budding artists to see!”

“Gildas?”

“Hm? Yes, my boy?”

He then realized.

“Oh! Yes, right.” Standing in front of the wall would be better for when he presented the finished project. Turning around, the painter surveyed the blank, stone wall, adjusting his spectacles. “Now, THIS is where we…well, I don’t believe I need to make the same statement again.”

“Nope.” Spyro confirmed. “We got it.” Sparx in turn nodded.

“Well then,” Gildas said, gesturing to the wall. “I suppose I should explain.” The wall had rested on the side of one of the large structures in Stone hill, said wall composed of rubble plastered together with cement, said rubble large chunks of stone. Quite convenient, he thought. Lucky too in that it was facing more towards the ocean then out in front for everyone to see. Otherwise he’d be out of a wall to do it on. Nestor made it specifically clear to have it NOT in the open, lest it clash
with the rest of the area’s ‘image’. ‘Bah.’ Gildas thought. ‘If anything, this place could USE a bit of color aside from just grey and green.’

“So…you want me to WHAT now?”

“Just give me a little ‘wham’ right here-ow!” the humanoid figure motioned to a particular place upon his back. Right before pulling something. Again.

“Oh, like, ram you there or something?” Spyro questioned. He looked to Sparx, the insect too finding it strange that the guy actually WANTED to be treated in the same manner his charge treated the local sheep. And it didn’t matter how many times Spyro asserted that he was simply ‘playing’ with them.

“Y-Yeah! Just, keep the sharp ends, well, you know.” the figure clarified. He wanted his back put back into shape, not turned into a kebab. “You think you can do that?”

“Uh…sure.” The little drake assured, though uncertainty was plastered on his face. Sparx also buzzed in concern, flying a small distance away to better gauge his charge’s ‘operation’.

Scrapping his hind foot against the ground, claws tapping against the wooden deck, Spyro readied himself, violet eyes centered on the spot shown on the balloon traveling individual.

Heaven help him…and himself, should he miss, Sparx thought. Wincing for a moment, the dragonfly forced his eyes back open, realizing then, that he had already been too late.

The dragon charged.

“So, everyone is going to put something here?”

Gildas nodded. “Exactly, my boy! Each and every one of us is going to make an individualized statement in each of these stones!” he tapped one of them with the end of his large brush. “Granted, whenever they have time to do so. Seeing as not everyone’s got the same schedule.” He took a moment to adjust his spectacles. “Of course, I’d LIKE to see them at least TRY to make some time for it.” He mumbled. “Heaven knows that SOME will deem it unnecessary or useless. But…”

“Gildas?”

The blonde, blue scaled painter was jostled from his brief sense of dejection. ‘Always count on you for a bright spot, little one.’ “Ah, yes. Anyway,” he pointed to another of the stones on the wall. “I should also probably clarify something else. Your, or anyone else’s little ‘mark’ doesn’t have to exactly be that, given that not everyone is exactly skilled with the brush.” He chuckled. “Heck, a good number here even think I’m not all that skilled with it! That said,” he picked up a smaller stone on the ground. “It doesn’t have to be a painting. It could simply be a small carving in the stone,” he then proceeded to make said small marking on one of the stones.

Then realizing what he had just done.

“Um…I’ll just cover that up. That one’s mine.”
“YAHHHHH!!!”

The impact and resulting pain that followed was immediate, the hardened extensions of yellowed keratin slamming directly into the small of his back.

“OW!!!” as well as the small dragon’s nose.

Spyro’s eyes closed, his snout already engulfed in a heated sting, jostling his senses.

“Bzzzt!!!”

“Wh-What?” of which was NOT helped at all by Sparx tugging and pulling on his wings. “What?”

The dragonfly pointed outward to the water ahead of them...a small collection of bubbles rising to the surface able to be seen.

It was later in the day, the sun setting and bathing the sky in a gradient of orange, hot pink, and purple. And due to having finished his lessons and expanding his education (or having an hour or two to torment him, Spyro thought), the little dragon made his way back to the blank wall, save for the small marking on one of the stones.

He didn’t entirely understand at first what Gildas wanted, yet the painter made it clear that such a thing wasn’t to get done right away. On the contrary, this would take a good few weeks, perhaps months, given how many of his (and Spyro’s) fellow Artisans were able to squeeze in time to make their way over to make their own ‘statement’.

Of course, that brought forth a small conversation Spyro had before he had been forced to leave for music lessons with Tomas.

‘What do I do?’

‘Anything.’ Gildas told him. ‘Anything you see fit to.’

‘Well, like what?’

‘Anything, my boy. Anything means anything.’

Even with Gildas’ more lax nature, the darn guy could’ve been so unnecessarily vague. Still, the young boy found his mind pondering: what exactly WOULD he be putting here?

‘Also, it should be something that is yours.’

Spyro didn’t get it at first. ‘What do you mean ‘yours’?’

‘Yours. Something that is yours and yours alone. A reflection of you.’

Reflection…what did THAT mean? Let alone, how would he best communicate it when he barely understood it. Did that mean something he wanted to do? Something that he liked?

What?
Chapter Summary

Still unsure of what he wants to put on the wall, the past events regarding the strange balloon riding figure continue.

Chapter Notes

This one sort of takes place not long after the Flights of Fancy 1, though the second one will probably have some of the past one-shots take place in between that and the second one here. Just a heads up. If you’re confused about the order, let me know. Also, I decided that I’d make Sparx’s dialogue more understandable, though he still speaks in ‘buzzes’. I am NOT having him talk normally, and while I’m thinking of explaining it later, I sort of theorize that a dragonfly is only understood by their dragon alone.
And it also ties into my hatred for Legend of Spyro Sparx. Oh, I wanted to STRANGLE that guys (no dissing on those who like LoS, or LoS Sparx, just my own personal tastes being displayed).

Thanks for all the kudos! Please comment as well! Thank you!

Oh no. Oh no. Oh no, no, no, no, no!!!

“I killed him…” while the obvious had clearly been stated, it wasn’t until he allowed the words to slip out did the full realization truly hit him. “I killed him!!! I flipping killed him!!!”

Though he couldn’t be seen, the bubbles continued to rise to the surface.

“Bzzz!!!” (You killed him!!!)

Bloop..bloop

“Well…well…you could’ve stopped me!!!” Spyro retorted to the dragonfly, of whom gestured out to the ocean.

“Bzzz! Bzz, bzz, bzz, bzz!!!” (Who killed who…whatever! Do something!)

“Like what?! Jump in?!”

Bloop...

“Bzzzt!!!” (Yes!)

“I can’t do that!” the purple dragon retorted. “My water allergy- “

“Bzz, bzz, bzz, bzz!” (How many times do me and everyone else have to tell you there’s no such
“Yes it is!” Spyro argued.

“Bzzzt!” (Uh uh!)

“Yeah-huh!”

... 

The bubbles had stopped. Their voices died instantly, the ocean gently rolling in and out with the smooth tide.

Why was this so hard?

The candle had been burnt down to half of it had once been, and the dimming light was far from the biggest of his current problems.

“Grrr…” The adolescent dragon growled, forepaws holding a bundle of crayons that were scribbling furiously on a small piece of paper before him. “Why are these things so hard to use?!” he hissed, though he kept his voice to little more than a whisper. If Nestor or really, anyone else in the castle caught him up this late, they’d have his head for sure.

“Bzz. Bzzz, bzz, bzt, bzz.” (Well, you COULD maybe start with holding just one instead of ten of them all at once.)

Well…yeah, maybe. But still, really, he had more than enough, dropping the crayons and abandoning the paper. Even if he had taken Sparx’s suggestion it probably wouldn’t have gone too much better. Honestly, why was trying to use his front paws as hands so difficult for him?!

Better yet, why was THIS so difficult in general?!

Going over and quite literally throwing himself onto the small collection of cushions that served as his ‘bed’, Spyro released an agitated groan, of which was mainly drowned out and muffled due to the fact he had thrust himself face first into the cushions. Sparx fluttered to his perch near the upper portion of the pile, lowering his wings and folding his legs under him. Even if the little dragon was perhaps (no, it was most definitely) exaggerating and making a far bigger deal out of this than needed, that didn’t necessarily translate to the insect taking pleasure in seeing him struggling, let alone being put in such a sour mood.

Still…maybe it was best that he left Spyro alone for now. Knowing the little guy (well, little in comparison to everyone else save Sparx himself), he’d be better in the morning.

Had Sparx not seized the cone-shaped end of his tail, he would’ve fallen right into the water, having taken off in a mad sprint to reach the end of the pier to perhaps spy some further sign of life from whom he had just possibly murdered.

Nothing.

Oh, what was he going to do, what was he going to do, what was he going to do?!
It was then that he caught a large collection of bright, vibrant red in the corner of his eye, said collection causing him to turn his head to the large basket and the even larger balloon it was attached to.

“Oh geez, how long is it going to take you to pick yours out?!”

“A moment, if you please!” the rose colored, feather ‘haired’ scribe shot back at the far more irritable Artisan behind him, scales appropriately red, small streams of smoke flowing from his nostrils. “Really,” the former dragon muttered to himself. “It seems even for a race such as us, only a select few have the slightest concept of fundamental manners.”

“I heard that!”

Alban rolled his eyes. “Then repeat it to me!”

The red scaled dragon scowled. “Well…” he huffed. “I…I didn’t hear all of it- “

“But it was definitely you mocking me!”

“Honestly, do we need to do this now?” Argus sighed, adjusting his spectacles. “It’s simply the matter of picking a certain stone on a wall. You both treat it as if your very lives were dependent on it.”

“Well, SOMETHING depends on it!” the red dragon retorted back to the scholar.

“Enlighten me then, Alvar.” Argus challenged. Honestly, despite the chef sharing a place amongst him in this realm, he would’ve fit right in with some of the rowdier and more aggressive Peacekeepers. If anything, that cleaver of his would’ve gotten him somewhere amongst their ranks.

“The fact that it’s OURS, that’s what!” he then gestured to the one he had already picked out. One that was, as luck would have it, stationed right beside where Alban was furiously scribbling something into his. And was taking his sweet ol’ time doing it. “We’ve got only ONE out of all these here, and each one has to be ours and ours alone! A clear and concise representation of who WE are!”

“…you’ve just quoted Gildas’ speech verbatim.”

“Well, it’s true, isn’t it?!” Alvar argued, stopping for a moment to take a few breaths, smoke coming out from his throat.

“A little winded, are you?” the scholar questioned, the hot-blooded chef growling in response to hearing a small snicker from behind him.

Without even thinking and seemingly by sheer reflex, the pitchforked tail of the red drake shot forward, striking right into one of the stones just mere inches from Alban’s head.

“What the blazes, man?!” the scribe shouted, thankful more for the fact that he had paused in his ‘marking’, lest the situation be made even worse. “Have you gone mad?!”

Alvar turned to see where his tail had ended up, his eyes softening, and seemingly lighting up as he analyzed where the forked end had just made its indent. “On second thought…this one’s better.”
He proclaimed, tapping the marked stone. “Some red paint and it’s perfect!” he then remembered Alban. “Oh, yes. Well…carry on.”

From afar, Spyro and Sparx witnessed the entire scene. “Bzz, bzz, bzz.” (Looks like we’ll have to come back later).

Spyro in turn nodded, both he and the dragonfly turning away. Though, really, he was sort of happy about it. Seeing as even now, he STILL had nothing to put up on it.

“Bzzt, bzz, bzz?” (Do you even know how this thing works?)

“Well, YOU got any other ideas?”

The golden insect said nothing.

Jumping in the balloon, Spyro looked around. Even if it was clearly pumped up and more than full enough, there had to be something weighing it down. It was then that he took notice of the large bags stationed in the bottom of the basket. Taking the top part sealed with a tightly wound cord, the little drake couldn’t even lift it an inch of the ground. It was just a hunch, and frankly, he was just guessing off the top of his head, yet given how there were multiple bags in the basket, this was probably what was keeping the balloon down.

Yet…how was he going to do this?

He couldn’t simply ‘lift’ them out. He didn’t even know how to properly use his ‘hands’ yet, let alone, even if he did, they were FAR too heavy to simply lift up! Yet he had to do something! But what-

SCRITCH!

His claw got caught in the rough material of the bag, he in turn dragging it out, grains of what appeared to be sand pouring out of it.

Lots and lots of sand.

Lots and lots of sand that, as it made its exit, the bag got smaller and smaller. And presumably less and less heavy.

“Bzzz…” (Y’know, looking at that wall isn’t going to make something just draw itself.)

Spyro slumped his shoulders, not even in the mood, let alone muster up any motivation to give the little dragonfly a small flick with his claws. It was halfway full now, the drake’s violet eyes scanning the multitude of carved, painted, or held at least some individualistic marking that corresponded to the dragon that made it.

Even if he was the designated leader of their race and, in turn, the realm, Nestor decided that it’d only be appropriate to wait until everyone else made their own ‘statement’ upon the stone before he made his own. Frankly, Spyro thought, that should’ve meant he got to go first. He knew well that’s what he would’ve done if he held the carpenter’s status. Still, the green dragon was firm in
his decision, no matter how many times Gildas or any other Artisan questioned him about it.

‘Well, that probably means he won’t do it until I go ahead too.’ The violet adolescent realized. ‘And a lot of the bigger spots are already taken.’

Half of the residents of the Artisan Realm had claimed various portions on the wall, and while the sight of them didn’t make Spyro’s mood lighten up any more, he couldn’t deny that the ones who DID make their marks did indeed make them unique to themselves.

Delbin’s was easiest to spot perhaps, the sight of a small flurry of dragonflies painted on his stone, ranging in various colors, seven in total. A particular lesson he taught some time ago, something about the visible spectrum that their eyes could detect (simplified to ROY G BIV or something) came to his mind, though it seemed the yellow dragonfly was stationed in the middle, surrounded by six others of the other six colors. And, of course, despite Delbin’s assurance that it was simply painted as such for a ‘structural harmony’, Sparx immediately proclaimed that stone as his favorite.

Thor, bizarrely enough, was one of those to immediately pick a spot and complete his, yet that was probably because he intended to coat his stone with a brown paint and top it off with white and golden stripes and dots, the stone resembling that of one of his pots. It certainly bore more of a shine in comparison to the other stones, given that he coated it with some clear glaze. Something of which every other dragon thought was a brilliant idea, and thus, everyone was getting in on coating theirs with the same thing. Something of which Thor, upon realizing he had himself something of a business venture (and that he was in need of some more clay), he began charging five gems a container of glaze. Granted, it was dirt cheap, and frankly, if Spyro was him, he would’ve perhaps charged more.

Nils’ was easy to spot as well, having outright carved his own face into the stone, the portions that weren’t chiseled to resemble his face sunken in.

Tomas’s stone held a lute and a series of musical notes emitting from the strings on it, the notes apparently from one of his favorite ballads, though Spyro wasn’t much of a note reader.

Alvar had flamed and charred the stone that he had already ‘marked’ with his tail, a flame of red and yellow painted over the blackened rock, a small bratwurst seemingly roasting in said flame.

Alban STILL wasn’t done with his, yet it seemed he too was carving some sort of testimony in the stone. Though knowing him, it’d probably take forever.

All the dragons that had mainly done their work/business in Stone Hill had put their place on the wall. Lindar’s held a small clock and a series of gears lodged inside a cut out section of his stone, they all surprisingly spinning and functioning as they were supposed to. Spyro didn’t lay one hand (or paw) on it.

Astor, albeit with Alban’s help, scrawled (in tiny little letters) the story of Nestor’s birth. Something of which the carpenter wished he hadn’t done, yet he wasn’t going to up and stop his own father (even with the snickers of some of those who actually stopped to read it). Alban wasn’t particularly a fan of assisting the old coot either, mainly because he kept forgetting and changing things during various times when etching into the rock. True, upon seeing what WAS on there, Spyro had to admit it was pretty funny.

Gavin’s was a bit disappointing to the purple dragon. True, it fit him in a sense, bits and pieces of broken glass fashioned to resemble the shape of a coffee cup, glued to the rock and glazed over with Thor’s supply, yet Spyro would’ve preferred to see maybe at least half of the barista’s tattoos on there. He swore, one day, he WOULD find a way to get a tattoo of his own!
Gildas was quite a sight to behold. Granted, surprisingly, it was just a standard, miniature self-portrait, yet the manner in which it was done immediately drew the eyes of many. Despite appearing to be a collection of paint haphazardly splashed all over the place (he having Nestor actually put a small fence around the stone to keep it from getting on the others), the paint, despite said manner it was applied, did indeed look as it the painter intended. Maybe, Spyro thought, that would be something he could do…on second thought, nah. It just didn’t feel ‘right’ for him. Just his face? No, he wanted something…more.

‘Bzz?!’ (You want me to WHAT?!!)

‘I can’t do it!’

‘Bzzt, bzz!’ (Water allergies don’t exist!)

‘Do too! You’ve got to or he’s gonna drown for sure!’

As ridiculous as the little dragon’s claims were, ultimately, the dragonfly couldn’t argue. If something wasn’t done soon, then that poor guy would end up as a skeleton at the bottom of the ocean. Or maybe eaten by whatever lived down there.

And as much as that particular thought chilled the small insect, what other choice did he have?

Diving in headfirst into the water, Sparx’s large eyes scanned around everywhere, nothing but a foggy, blue abyss all around him. Oh, it was impossible to see anything in here! Let alone anything could’ve been swimming underneath him and ready to swallow him in one gulp. He shook his head, no time for that now! That guy and Spyro were counting on him!

But where in the world was he?! He could’ve been anywhere-

BLOOP...

Oh, that was easy.

All he had to do was look down.

Sparx saw that, while the humanoid was below him, slowly sinking more and more towards the ocean floor, he was at least seemingly conscious. Perhaps, with that in mind, he wouldn’t have to rely solely on his wings to do all the work getting back up. Flapping the small, transparent appendages, Sparx suspected, yet still was distressed to find that the usually rapid appendages were greatly slowed down in the water. Thankfully, as he continued to move slowly on downward, the guy seemed to notice the insect’s presence and, while seemingly confused at the sight of him diving down, wasn’t going to waste a potential chance like this, immediately reaching for the small dragonfly. His weight, even in the water, was more than a little of something Sparx couldn’t have hoped to prepare for, yet all the same, he had to deal with it. Flying (or swimming) up with as much strength as he could muster, the guy thankfully was able to move his arms and legs somewhat, apparently still plagued with that cramp in his back, but it made Sparx’s job at least sort of easier.

Sort of.

Suddenly, something broke the surface of the water.
A long, coiled rope was seen dangling above them, yet said rope wasn’t stationing, it slowly being pulled further and further away. Wasting no time (and surely pulling a wing or too), Sparx and the guy swam as fast as they could to the surface, and to the rope, the dragonfly sighing in relief and exhaustion as the humanoid figure seized it, at long last.

“Ok! Sparx, I need help!” a voice, to the guy’s shock, shouted from above, his eyes widening and shock increasing upon seeing his own balloon up in the air above him. “Help me pull him up!”
No Safe Pastures

Chapter Summary

Despite the pristine, green hills of the Artisan lands, there's danger lurking around every corner...

Chapter Notes

A small interlude before the conclusion of the small tale of Spyro and the Balloonist, this one doesn’t really have a set place in the timeline, as really, she could go anywhere without disrupting much (though I suppose she wouldn’t really fit during Spyro’s punishment of cleaning gears, so perhaps sometime before then or after, not too sure). But what would Spyro ‘anything’ be without mentioning some of the world’s most common, yet notorious residents?

This may be a bit shorter than the others, but she’d be a crime not to give these guys some well deserved attention. And yes, I do plan to do more with them later, especially one particular member of their species.

UPDATE-Minor change near the end, as I realized Sparx’s characterization here contradicts what was seen in the first one-shot.

Kneeling her darkly colored head downward, she took a bundle of a nice patch in her teeth and turned her head to the side, ripping the blades from their places. The grazing, domesticated Bovidae sighed in contentment, the mid-morning sun shining down and providing nutrients for the plethora of greenery that resided in her natural habitat. The day for she and the rest of her fellow, feasting companions, had essentially just begun, yet as far as she was concerned, the day here had begun perfectly.

And yet…

Her large eyes traveled over the fence line, seeing nothing but the expansive, blue sky and the nearly endless plains of green before her.

Maybe today, she would be fine.

The small, gentle ringing reached her ears, she in turn lifting her head upward and spying the only one among them that bore such a thing. Not much larger than the rest of them, this member of their kind bore a strange object tied around his neck that made a strange sound whenever he made a quick or drastic movement of any kind. It was an odd thing, and she had never seen such before until the One with the Cane had placed it around his neck. It jingled and jangled in a rhythmic chime, and while she and a good portion of her fellow bovines were confused and befuddled by it, overtime, it had become accepted and treated as normal. It was little more than a basic part of him now. Just as much as his other attributes.
Attributes that, come the appropriate time and season…she would find hard resisting. She couldn’t help but wonder if they would get any bigger.

The One with the Cane wasn’t here today. Probably because they weren’t needing to be herded, let alone watched for today. True, while this small area they resided in (well, small in comparison to the total space of the Five Realms) wasn’t always safe (strange, green creatures able to be seen at night sometimes), relatively, there were far more dangerous places they could’ve been. True, she knew none of the language the One with the Cane spoke, let alone that of the others like himself that shared this space with him, but it had been made clear that he and the others could be trusted with their protection.

True, the one with the bell was also tasked with leading her and the rest of her kind, as well as alerting them when danger was around (perhaps that was the reason for the bell), but since the One with the Cane came around (whom had been around for her entire life as she knew it), ‘he’ had essentially become the larger creature’s ‘second in command’. Even better, as that further cemented that they would all be safe.

And really, that was all she and everyone else here would ask for.

Food, shelter, and safety. All of which were able to be provided here. And in turn, her kind would provide material, milk, and meat. True, she knew that her keepers ate them among others like herself, yet there was no ill will against them. It was simply the way of things. As they ate the grass, so the keepers would use them for nourishment. A natural order that she and the rest of her kind, frankly, had a better grasp on than their keepers really.

After all, some among them must’ve gone. Especially given that there were so few females.

Yet it was not her concern. Such things were not of her realm of existence. Few females or no, she and the rest were convinced that the keepers, while they hadn’t always been here, they would continue to dwell here for now. Perhaps forever.

And save for one of them, she held no problem with that-

RING!

Her eyes darted to the leader of their group, he in turn standing to attention.

The message was clear.

‘He’ was coming.

Immediately, the sea of her kind began to register the sound of something coming, a four-legged menace beating its paws on the ground as it surely inched closer and closer. Closer to ‘his’ favorite prey.

She scampered, the tasty plant life underneath her was abandoned and tried to find a safe place in the corner or somewhere where ‘he’ couldn’t get to her. Ultimately, as of now, it was everyone for themselves. Order had been shattered, anarchy had come and consumed any trace of it.

It wasn’t seen, yet from the way one running beside her had his eyes bug out cemented that the monster had either jumped, or was inching closer to the border of their grazing spot. The rest of them began distancing themselves. It was only then that she realized why.

And by then, it was too late.
The horns were felt contacting her rump

With one, firm charge, the fleecy animal was sent flying, a shrill ‘baaaaahhhh!!!’ emitting from it as it flew, it then bouncing on the ground due to the sheer amount of fluff on its body. Still, due to the speed and force of how he rammed into it, it didn’t stop when it landed, continuing to bounce up and down akin to a ball, and then mimicking the rolling motion of the ball.

Right into the rest of the gathered sheep, all of them falling over like a set of pins.

“And…strike!”

Spyro chortled as he observed the fluffy creatures recollecting themselves, getting back on their hooves and dusting off. Well, as good as something with hooves could, the little dragon supposed.

“I think we found a new game we can play!” Spyro declared, Sparx in turn only sighing. Unfortunately, despite his promise to the others, he was once again unsuccessful in stopping one of Spyro’s session of ‘playtime’ with the sheep.

He then lowered himself, tail shaking in anticipation as the fluffy livestock once again began running. Oh yeah, Sheep Bowling was awesome!

Astor sighed in contentment, leaning against his cane as the sun was making it very tempting to catch a quick snooze. It would be bad form, he knew, to simply leave a kid such as Spyro hanging. What did he know of keeping the sheep anyway? Poor kid probably had no idea what he was doing.

Still…the sun felt so nice.

Well…maybe a teensy bit. Just to rest his eyes for a moment. Surely the boy would be fine for that long. And he was a good kid. Honestly, the mauve, elderly drake had no idea why his son or the other dragons were so hesitant on letting him take Spyro with him when he watched the sheep today.

He would be fine. Of course the child would play with them and keep them entertained, Astor insisted.

The sheep loved him after all! Always scampering with excitement whenever he came along…
Inspiration for Flights of Fancy-3

Chapter Summary

As Spyro finds more and more difficulty in finding out what to put on the wall, the tale of the runaway balloon becomes more and more riddled with danger...

Chapter Notes

Note: Part 3 of the Balloonist tale!

And no, I don't view Spyro as an angsty character, but every kid has their moments. And given what I'm planning on doing with him later in how he is in comparison to the other Artisans, this makes sense later.

Thanks for all the kudos! Please comment as well! Thank you!

What felt like a pair of teeth seizing his shirt pulled him over the edge of the basket, he plopping down rather clumsily inside, quite literally folded in half.

“Ow…” he moaned. “Ow-how-ow!!!”

“You ok?” he heard someone ask him. Somebody far younger than the usual residents he interacted with around here.

“Y-Yeah.” He answered, regardless. “I…I think so.” He paused for a moment coughing out the last amount of water that resided in his air passages. “Wh-who are…” it was then that he remembered. “Oh. Is that you, little guy?”

“Uh, yeah.” Said ‘little guy’ confirmed, grabbing his scarf now with his teeth and pulling him up (albeit he had almost caused him to faceplant on the basket floor). “I didn’t mean to! Really! I didn’t know you couldn’t swim either- “

“No, no, it’s fine.” He waved the small drake off, legs still quite wobbly. “I think…” he stretched and cricked his neck. “I think that little flip did it.” He groaned. “Back’s been acting up lately. And I don’t care what either Gosnold or Tuco say. Just because I’m the eldest doesn’t mean I’m getting old!”

The little dragon turned his head. “What?”

“Well, I was just talking to myself. Anyway, thanks for…” his words died down, just taking notice of the small piles of sand in the basket. And the absence of the bags said sand probably were contained in. “…where’s the sandbags?”

“Huh…oh! You mean these things?” the dragon gestured to a sack stationed in the corner, a rather large, unmissable hole in the fabric.
“Uh, yeah. THOSE things. The things that keep the balloon down on the ground whenever you need to land...” his eyes widened, coming to realize that aside from that, there was not even an inkling of sandbags or the material they resided in anywhere, save for one. “You didn’t.”

“Didn’t...what?” the kid asked, he too beginning to steadily realize that perhaps he had just made a grave mistake.

“You didn’t!”

The aviator’s eyes turned to the ocean below, then to the skies above, looking back and noticing that the pier he had previously docked on had all but faded away from view.

What to do, what to do, what to do?!

Really, what WAS he going to do?!

He had nothing! Absolutely NOTHING that he could think of to put up on the wall! And it was already nearly full now!

“Bzzt bzzt, bzz bzz.” (Look, why not just put up a sheep on fire or something?)

“Huh?” Spyro looked up to the dragonfly. “Since when have I set a sheep on…” he paused. Unfortunately, at least for Sparx and the older dragons, the child’s mouth worked faster than his brain. “But that was just ONE time! I didn’t know that wool was THAT flammable! I just meant to toast its tail a bit!”

“Bzz, bzz, bzz.” (Just like how your grounding was just for a bit.)

“Yeah, well...no, I don’t think that’ll work.” Spyro told his fluttering, smaller ‘guide’ of sorts, violet eyes staring up at the numerous markings and painted statements on the wall. “Gildas said that it has to be something that says something about ‘me’.”

“Bzz, bzz, bzz?” (And...what do you think that is?)

“That’s just it though.” He sighed. “I asked Gildas about it, and he just told me it’s something I have to ‘find myself’. Even Nevin and Delbin told me the same thing.” His violet eyes fell on the wall once again. “It’s like they’re wanting me to answer a question I can’t answer.” He sighed.

Or maybe...he couldn’t answer now, or ever.

“No, no!!!” the figure hollered, looking over the edge. “What have you done?!”

“What had I done?!“ Spyro retorted, confused and, frankly, insulted. “I just saved your life, that’s all!”

“You’ve just sent us adrift to who knows where!” the balloonist answered back, continuing to survey the seemingly endless sea and sky above and below them. “And this thing isn’t going to be able to travel forever!”

“Not forever!” the purple dragon shook his head. “This thing’s got to stop eventually! Besides, we
can just…” he paused, the others’ words beginning to set in. Yet still, there had to be some sort of solution in plain sight. “We can just jump up and down to get the balloon to do it too!”

“It doesn’t work like that!” the owner of said balloon groaned. “The ‘hot air’ isn’t air. It’s gas. Gas that, while its ignited now, presumably thanks to you,” he gestured to Spyro with a gloved hand. “And those bags that you’ve ALSO gotten rid of were what weighs it down when I need to land it! Now that they’re gone, we CAN’T get down.” He looked up at the burning flame above, then to the ocean below. “And I don’t care how much literal firepower you have. It’s not going to stay up forever.”

“And…done.” Stepping away from the small cobblestone, Alban beamed with pride at his handiwork. True, it had taken nearly the entire month to get it done, but it was worth it. Anyone who passed it would know that it was a product of him. True, Astor’s little marking had been done with his assistance, yet there was a CLEAR difference between the scribe’s and the old shepherd (even if he only did such a thing whenever he remembered such).

“You went and carved the entirety of your personal autobiography, didn’t you?” a voice stated behind him, the rose colored dragon (NOT pink, as he attested) turning around to see Argus, the portly dragon resting his hands on his wide shoulders.

“And why not?” the scribe questioned, albeit he wasn’t entirely interested in what the scholar had to reply with. “The maniac with the paintbrush DID say it was best if it was a personal marking of ours.”

Argus sighed, adjusting his spectacles as he peered at Alban’s little ‘mark’ on the wall. It nearly floored him just how much text the dragon was able to carve in such a tiny space. And from the looks of it, a good amount of detail regarding the life of said dragon had managed to fit. True, the ‘font’ was quite small, but it was readable. ‘Impressive.’ The scholar thought, though saying such aloud would probably only further inflame the scribe’s ego even more.

“So,” Alban suddenly began. “How many more of us are needed to complete this?”

“Hmm…let’s see…” Argus surveyed the multitude of stones before him, and really, what space had been there was nearly filled up. “Well…there’s space enough for Oswin and Darius. And I think Delvin’s yet to do one.”

“I can’t pull Oswin away from that library of his for one minute. And, of course, Darius claims that his ‘muse’ has been exceptionally demanding as of late. I take it Delvin’s stocking up or whatever he does in that expansive kitchen of his?”

“I don’t know.” The scholar confessed. “More pleasant than Alvar he may be, yet both are still extremely protective over their culinary ‘masterpieces’.”

“Hmph. All the same, they had better make time for this, otherwise Gildas will be hounding all of us for ‘not getting everyone involved.’”

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*How long they had been up in the air, neither of them knew for sure. And frankly, both were still rather sore at one another.*
Once it had been made clear that there was no feasible way of getting back down, lest they wanted to take a little swim, the verbal war between the two had begun. Names were called, insults were thrown, and given that they were presumably miles away from any of the established dragon civilizations, let alone any civilization for that matter, more than a handful of explicit words came from the both. The dragonfly that had been forced to listen to all of this simply covered his ‘ears’ to try and drown out the noise.

Eventually though, thankfully, they had run out of things to say, let alone breath, and resigned to sitting themselves on opposite ends of the basket, neither saying a thing to each other for what seemed to be hours.

And while Sparx didn’t exactly like this, he couldn’t deny it was far preferable than what was occurring before.

The silence, however, didn’t last forever.

“H-Hey!” Spyro suddenly cried out, his violet eyes seeing something coming up from below, amidst the thick blanket of clouds the balloon was surrounded by. “I see something!”

The one who had owned the balloon was far from his friend, yet this announcement, regardless of whom had made it, got his attention. “Huh?” he rushed from his ‘side’ to the dragon’s. “Out of the way!” he ordered, pushing the little drake to the side. Pulling his goggles over his eyes, indeed, he could see that something was approaching them. Or rather, they were approaching it.

It was clear that they were no longer anywhere near the Artisan Realm anymore, the sight of a dry, barren landscape below more than enough evidence of that. There were a few structures amongst the seemingly empty, natural landscape, but for the most part, there was nothing but canyons extending as far as their eyes could see.

It had been something that Spyro had never seen before. Though, unfortunately, his focus wasn’t exactly on viewing it. “Don’t push me!” he told the scarf wearing guy, pushing back against him.

“My balloon, I get top billing!” the guy argued back, pushing the dragon out of the way when the latter tried to move him.

Unfortunately, the last push was a push that was a bit too hard. One that, to his horror, sent the little dragon over the edge of the basket.

Involuntarily releasing a cry of panic, the figure rushed over to find him hanging from the basket with his claws. Of which had stopped his descent, but weren’t going to keep him up forever. He slid further downward, the owner of the balloon leaned over to try and grab him, the dragonfly diving down akin to a bird of prey and getting under the dragon’s rump, pushing upward with all that he could. Still, he could only do so much, his strength greatly spent on getting the other guy out of the water.

“C-C’mon!” the balloonist shouted. “Give me your hand-er, paw, whatever! Give it to me!”

“I’m trying!” the little dragon cried out, evidently growing more and more panicked, slipping further and further down, his hind legs hanging off the edge now, uselessly kicking to try and get back up. “I-I can’t get up! I can’t- “

It was in that second, he became aware that the dragon had finally lost his grip, falling downward. “NO!” the balloonist hollered, leaning practically out of the basket to grab him.

And while he was successful in that, his gloved hand immediately seizing the dragon’s wrist...it
was then too that he realized that now, both were slaves to gravity, the balloon up above them, floating on past.

It was difficult carrying the small basket in his mouth, yet it was clear that he wouldn’t be able to fit anymore in it.

“Bzz?” (What’s up?)

“Tmmking thms omt.”

“Bzz?” (Huh?)

Spyro set the basket down for a moment. “I’m taking this out.” He then looked at the gobs of wadded up paper in the small holding place. “Isn’t that what you’re supposed to do with trash?”

“…bzz bzz bzz…” (…hard time, huh?)

“…yeah.” The drake confessed, sighing before taking the basket in his mouth again.

He and the dragonfly went to the back of the castle, the scent of smoldering earth becoming very, very evident, along with the scent of whatever had been put there at the end of the day. Upon arriving at their destination, a large pile of burnt items ranging from unused food, broken furniture and projects and whatever else that was considered of no use rested before them. All of which had yet to be lit aflame.

While Spyro had simply called it the ‘garbage’, the older dragons addressed the pile as the ‘rubbish heap’, though it essentially served the same purpose. And despite the large pile in front of him and Sparx, none of the Artisans held any intention of simply ‘hiding away’ the trash behind the castle. In fact, the disposal of said trash had been implemented not by Nestor, but Astor in his younger days, when he held the position of leadership among them. Whatever garbage that had been gathered at the end of the day would be burnt to a crisp by one of them, said position cycling out every night. And the ash that was left would be distributed among the field here, at Stone Hill, and Dark Hollow. Town Square wouldn’t receive as much, given that there wasn’t an abundance of plant life there, yet the potted flowers and other plants would receive a helping to what was the remains of a bevy of burnt objects. This apparently was meant to provide nutrients’ the ground, as ash was a good source of such things.

Or so he had heard.

Still, regardless, Spyro hated even looking at the waded-up pieces of paper and wanted nothing more than to get rid of them. Tipping the basket over, the plethora of crumpled sheets fell in with the rest of what was to be burnt tonight. Still, despite his frustration, the little dragon couldn’t keep his disappointment concealed, his dragonfly immediately sensing such, and stroked a feeler down the side of his cheek.

Though, as far as he was concerned, if he had anything to put on the wall, this was about as good as he could do.

Garbage.
Proper Use of Hands

Chapter Summary

After the adjustment regarding Spyro's music lessons, Nestor and Spyro have a small debate regarding the necessary transition from using his paws as hands. Of which has some...humorous results.

Chapter Notes

A small interlude before the conclusion of the small tale of Spyro and the Balloonist, this one takes place during the night of the ‘Do Rei Mis’ (may not be exact name, but hopefully people know what I’m talking about).

Also, a disclaimer. Yes, I’m a fan of this sort of thing. Not in the sexual sense, but this sort of fluff is stuff I go gaga over. It’s absolutely precious!

Course, this entry is something for you all to decide on.

Also, at the end, it's another hint for further entries.

“I don’t get it.”

“Get what?”

“This.”

“You’ll have to be more specific than that.”

“These here. Why do I have to learn how to use them?”

Thus, the debate had indvertibly started, though the green carpenter didn’t register what he had done at first.

After THANKFULLY getting Spyro to cease his ‘practicing’ on the small lute with his tail (as well as putting a stop to that unearthly sound), Tomas and Nestor had decided that perhaps the stringed instrument wasn’t the best place to start in teaching the young drake how to make use of his upper paws, a la, transition from being used as such and adjusting into hands. That said, after the bard made his exit back to his quarters, said young drake began questioning on why they were putting such importance on getting him used to using his front paws in such ways.

“I’ve got all this other stuff you guys are teaching and telling me, and now I’ve got THIS to deal with too?”

It was clear that he was just venting out of frustration. Something of which, given his age, was to be entirely expected. Not encouraged, but some things were inevitable.
“Spyro,” Nestor began. “I understand that these exercises might be taxing, but they are necessary.” He explained. “The transition between quadruped and biped- “

“What?” Spyro in turn interrupted, not getting a single thing the carpenter had just said. “Oh please, don’t start using impossibly big words. I get that enough from Alban and Argus as it is.”

“Vocabulary is also something highly important. Something that you clearly need to study much more thoroughly.” Nestor lectured, though ultimately, that wasn’t the subject right now. “Anyway, the transition between the two, from ‘four-legs’ to two,” he clarified for the young dragon. “Is an important milestone. It opens up a bevy of opportunities that wouldn’t be as accessible to you if you continued to remain as you are now.”

“Oh yeah?” Spyro questioned. “Like what?”

The green Artisan began to realize what he had just gotten himself into. Still, the adolescent asked, so he would deliver. “Well,” and seeing as the child asked, he might as well begin with an obvious, but still fitting answer. “Take my line of work. If I was stuck on four legs, it’d be much more difficult for me to make use of a hammer or saw, or any of my other tools. Then my assignments and overall creations would take far longer, or even more, I couldn’t complete them at all.”

“Couldn’t you just use your mouth?” the purple, younger dragon retorted. “That’s what I would do.”

“Then how would you hold the nail you may need to hammer in?”

“Uh…” Spyro shifted his eyes for a moment. “I…I could…” ah, yes! Of course! “I could just hold it like this!” he then took the hardened, cone-line end of his tail and brought the appendage forward, placing the golden cone in between one of his four toes.

The head of the Artisans huffed, albeit amusedly. ‘Clever.’ He thought. Though, as he would soon prove, not clever enough. “Then I assume that you would do the same for everything else? A table for instance? How would you go about getting the legs fastened on?”

“I…” the younger of the two started, though it was clear he didn’t exactly know where to go from there. “I…just have somebody hold them for me while I hammered them in!” he then replied, triumphant in having apparently made it past Nestor’s road block.

“With your mouth.”

“Y-Yeah. Hey, I can carry loads of stuff with it!” Spyro countered. “I mean, not PUT things in it, but I carry out whatever’s in my waste basket outside every night!”

‘Probably because you finally got in your head after being reminded for the 506th time.’ And yes, Nestor had counted, or rather, Alban had taken the liberty in doing so. Why had escaped him. Perhaps he simply wished to see test the hypothesis that the little dragon’s brain was particularly apt in forgetting exactly what they told him to do, whether by said forgetfulness, or perhaps choosing not to. Perhaps both. A conclusion on said study had yet to be reached. “Let’s move on from my line of work.” The carpenter said. “What if you were to take up after Tomas? Surely you couldn’t expect to play with your teeth?” ‘We’ve all experienced how you’d play with your tail…’ Nestor inwardly shuddered.

“Who says I have to play a lute?” Spyro countered. “Like he said, I can just play a xylophone or anything that can be hit!” he then thought. “Hey! Maybe I could get a drum set and have one stick here,” he gestured to his teeth. “And the other ‘stick’ would just be my tail here!”
Well…he wasn’t exactly correct. Though he was exactly wrong either. The green dragon realized he needed to step up his game. At least if he wanted to avoid the prospect of none of them ever sleeping again. “Delbin certainly needs his hands to paint. Surely you can’t do all of that with your mouth alone.”

“Well, no.” Spyro admitted. “…but I can just step on the tub and have it come out! And I could just mix the pain with a claw! Besides, finger painting’s still a thing!”

“Finger?”

“Even if it technically isn’t using ‘fingers’.” The purple dragon added, not willing to admit defeat yet. Let alone allow Nestor to score points on pointing out a technicality.

This went on and on between the two. From Argus’ theories and studies into unexplored subjects to Nevin’s own contributions to the artistic world, the little dragon seemed to have an answer conjured up for each and every one of Nestor’s examples. This wasn’t to say that they were GOOD examples, let alone logical ones (mainly, he kept repeating the same phrase regarding his mouth being the primary method of use), yet if he had to give the adolescent anything, it was persistence. Or a determination to drive the Artisan leader mad. Of really, perhaps a touch of both.

Even more horrifying, it was working.

Nestor was near spent on what else to throw at the little drake, of whom was proudly puffing out his yellowed chest in accomplishment at seemingly ‘beaten’ him at his own game. Sparx had seen to fluttering nearby, and his resolve too began to dissolve the longer the exchange went on. The insect looked to the carpenter and simply shook his head, as if to say ‘it’s not worth it. Don’t even try.’

And…really, yes. It was useless to continue this any longer. He could go and begin bringing the Peacekeepers into this, though that would only entail how many more dragons to go through. Still…seeing the child grow all haughty and prideful…for reasons he couldn’t exactly discern (or reasons he didn’t want to entirely dwell on), it ‘sparked’ something in him. He tried to keep them suppressed, arguing that the best approach to the little one’s challenge was to conjure up the better point, yet upon thinking such, the urge, the warm, persistent ‘tingling’ from within only grew stronger. In fact, the possibility that had intruded into his mind did indeed fit into the debate. And even more, it was indeed something that he could both demonstrate and present to his opposition. And perhaps cement his victory. Even if it was cheating. Sort of.

In his moment of glory (or as Sparx called it, imitation of a Pufferbird), Spyro hadn’t even noticed Nestor’s lips curl into a grin. A small one, the carpenter not exactly one to display large bouts of emotion (and frankly, the little dragon didn’t know whether something of that sort would either be funny or downright scary), but it undeniably held an odd feel to it. He couldn’t exactly place it, yet it was as if the older dragon was attempting to hide some hidden intention from him. Well, he wasn’t exactly doing a good job, as Spyro could see right through the thinly veiled mask he had just put on!

Or…was that all just part of whatever plan he had?

“Well, well, well…” Nestor began, voice smooth and not bearing a smidge of exhaustion or frustration. “I’m impressed. “he told the purple drake. “While you’re still clearly a novice at making actual, sound points, the firmness in your conviction is quite remarkable.”

Something wasn’t right. Nestor, he…he NEVER acted like this. “Uh…I guess?” What was he up
to? Spyro was torn, his curiosity peaked, yet a portion of his brain was also alerting him of danger, that he had best make a run for it while he could. Of course, there was a third part that, despite his trepidation, held a brimming anticipation as to what was going to happen.

“Although,” the green Artisan continued, the younger dragon just then realizing he was steadily drawing closer and closer. “It’s just come to my attention that neither of us brought up yet another use for hands that paws simply can’t do as thoroughly.”

Sparx tilted his head, more befuddled by the dragon’s behavior than his charge’s nervousness, though, his large eyes then took into consideration that said dragon’s claws began to twitch slightly. As if seemingly jabbing at the air, or…oh. A similar smile manifested on the dragonfly’s features.

“Oh really?” Spyro unconsciously allowed to slip from his lips, not even registering what he had done. And, as Nestor had seen, Sparx held no intention on alerting him of any potential ‘danger’. Good, he had gained an ally of sorts. “Like what?” He…probably shouldn’t have said that.

“Oh, it’s a simple thing, really. Takes little effort in comparison to all we’ve discussed before.”

Spyro gulped. He just made it worse, didn’t he?

“Although,”

He made it much, MUCH worse.

“It is perhaps one of the better displays,”

He turned, attempting to get away. The blasted, bigger drake had blocked his only exit out of here, yet surely, he could perhaps make his way around and THEN bust his way out through the door!

SNAG!

And indeed, perhaps he would’ve…had a hand not taken ahold of the end of his tail and pulled him back. To think, that was one of the main elements, aside from his mouth, that he used in retorting Nestor’s points. Speaking of, Nestor brought the smaller dragon close, essentially pinning him against his larger, far broader chest, the years he had dedicated to his craft evident in just how powerless the child was against him. He then raised his left, free arm high, as if to swipe down at the one he held in his grasp.

“At just how useful hands can be!”

His strike was quick and merciless, the young dragon wincing as the four-digited hand came down at him.

Spyro knew well, the moment he felt the first instances of sharpened claws grazing against his flesh, it was all over. He had now realized the leader’s plans for him, but he, to his regret, learnt them too late.

Sparx lowered himself to the floor, propping his head up with his front set of legs, watching the scene now taking place. Should one had stumbled in and witnessed this without any context, it could’ve been assumed that the middle-aged dragon had up and decided to potentially murder one far younger than he. Yet such a conclusion would probably be shattered upon hearing what was pouring out of the younger’s mouth. Oh, he was crying all right, though they were far from cries of pain.
“W-Wait! No, wait!” aside from the few bits of coherent dialogue that came out. “Wa-await!!!” No! Do-hoho-n’t!!!”

All dragons were gifted with the benefit of sharpened claws at the tips of their digits, both fore and hind limbs bearing them. Sure, care to keep them sharpened was a factor many had to take into consideration, yet said sharpness, if nothing else, could always, in the end, be relied on if the dragon needed them. And while it could’ve been debated on whether they were gifted to the species for this particular purpose, the results couldn’t be denied.

Nestor’s sharpened ends lightly grazed and drug along the violet, scaled flesh that composed of an area just underneath his ‘captive’ s’ underarm (or foreleg), said area, thankfully, proving to still be, after all these years, just as sensitive and ticklish as it had been since then.

“Particularly in regard to the maneuvering one’s claws.” The leader finished, though his assault had only just begun.

Spyro’s smaller form couldn’t keep still, though much of his movement was limited due to the carpenter’s superior strength, a fact he was cursing at this very moment. Chortles and laughs fell from his lips beyond his control, the positioning of his forelimbs above Nestor’s restraining arm making it near impossible to defend himself against the older dragon’s attacks. Indeed, it seemed that he held no other option but to resign to his fate.

Though that far from stopped him from trying to either reach out or squirm out of the way.

“C-Cut it o-hohoho-ut!!!” the little drake demanded, though it was far from anything to be taken seriously. “S-Stop!!!”

His tormenter smirked. “But I have to counter your reasoning with equally solid arguments!” he explained, maneuvering his hand downward onto Spyro’s ribs. “After all, that IS one of the major factors in winning a debate!”

“You-hoo liar!” the little dragon protested. “You’re just sa-hahaha-ying that to keep on…” whether he said anything more after that, the older of the two knew not. Mainly because the younger’s vocals had dissolved into little more than incoherent noises overpowered with mirth-filled laughter.

“And there’s also the simple response of agreeing to disagree.”

This continued on, a swipe or poke in one of the sensitive areas on his upper body and torso and the resulting cackles of Nestor’s target. Oh, he had to admit, this was satisfying. Punishment without pain. ‘Take that, you cheeky little thing!’ he mentally thought to himself, leaving no spot on the small dragon’s upper body. ‘And that!’ true, he hadn’t necessarily done anything ‘bad’ or worthy of discipline…yet Nestor found that such a thing was trivial now. He was actually…enjoying this?

He pushed such thoughts from his mind. Besides, it had come to his attention that his assault had lessened, and this simply wouldn’t do.

Spyro’s momentary relief was cruelly ended when he felt claws raking up his left side, the limited space he was granted not even allowing him to follow through with the instinctual response to throw his head back as laughter continued to pour from his mouth. The option of calling for Sparx to come save him had all but left his mind, as really, what chance did the dragonfly have against the larger dragon? Plus, the little thing was sitting there, WATCHING it happen! Though his anger at the insect simply leaving him to be tickled to death melted away from his mind, along with much everything else save for how his body tingled and surged with maddening sensations. Still, even amidst his ‘torture’, there was a sense of excitement that transferred to his brain. Probably due to
some sort of ‘influx of chemicals’ or whatever sciency explanation Argus would come up with.

“EEK!”

Nestor paused for a moment, not exactly prepared for such a sound to emit from Spyro. Though upon realizing that his hand had migrated to the side of his abdomen. A smile came to him. “Sweet spot, hm?”

“…maybe?” Spyro squeaked. Frankly, it was clear that there was no stopping him now.

“Thank you for your honesty.” The carpenter thanked. Though he went ahead and began focusing his attention on the newly discovered area, the results being more than he could’ve anticipated.

“N-NO!!! NOT THERE!!! ANYWHERE BUT THERE!!!”

The little dragon’s already ongoing and contagious laughter had now risen to that of a madman, his entire form bucking and swinging wildly. Though only his lower half seemed to gain any sort of traction, as his captor’s hold was still strong as ever. Nestor left no space upon his stomach unchecked or untouched, his claws even gliding along the small spaces where the lining in between each section of yellowed skin.

“O-OKEY! OKA-HAHAHAA-Y!!!” Spyro then cried out, lungs beginning to ache, as well as everything else. “YOU WIN!! YOU WIN!! HA-HAHAAAA-NDS ARE BE-HEHEHE-TTER!!!!”

It was also clear to Nestor that the little one was reaching his limit. Still though…a small hint of sadism crept through, to his surprise. “Hm? You changed your mind rather quickly. Are you certain? You seemed so sure of yourself before.”

“YES!!!” Spyro answered immediately. “YES, I-HIHI- ‘M SURE!! P-PLE-HEEEE-SE, JUST STOP!!!”

All right. Even with the desire to continue further, he couldn’t last much longer. Removing his hand from the smaller dragon’s stomach, Nestor set Spyro down on the floor, said adolescent in turn quite unsteady on his feet and starved of oxygen. Sparx finally fluttered over to see if he was ok, though the sentiment wasn’t exactly well received.

“You…you dirty coward…” the little dragon wheezed, though he was in no shape to do anything. The dragonfly, on the other hand, found the entire thing hilarious.

“I take it you’re still among the living?” he heard Nestor ask from behind, turning to face him, flinching as he heard the carpenter approaching.

“Touch me again…” Spyro huffed and wheezed. “And fire’s going right in your face.”

So much for begging for mercy, Nestor thought. Still, he humored him. “And I’ll simply deliver you to an extra five minutes of that.”

The little dragon was silent, yet from the look on the older dragon, it seemed clear that he knew he wasn’t serious. Sort of. Though, that brought a plethora of questions. Mostly all relating to the one that had dealt him such a ‘treatment.’

Suddenly, he saw Nestor’s smile falter for a bit, the green leader clearing his throat and straightening out his vest and golden band that linked the two halves. “Well, then…I suppose you should go get yourself prepared for bed.” He stated, voice smooth, yet lacking the twinge of lightheartedness of before. “If Tomas is taking your offer, then you’d best be well rested for
Spyro tilted his head in confusion. The change in attitude wasn’t exactly smooth, let alone subtle. Though the carpenter’s command for him to get ready to turn in came to the forefront of his mind. “But it’s only—“ the dragon didn’t get to finish, Nestor having already made his exit. “…eight-thirty…”

Did that just happen? Did he just…

A low sigh escaped the Artisan leader, running his hands along the sides of his head, pushing his ‘fins’ back before they went back to being horizontal. He was nearly to his chambers, and thankfully, it seemed he had been able to make a clear getaway from the others. The first concern he had was whether any of the others had potentially heard what had been going on. Frankly, such a thing hadn’t even crossed his mind until now, and really, who wouldn’t be able to hear the sole, young dragon among them all howling and cackling as if he had gone mad?

Thankfully though, it seemed that, thus far, either no one was willing to stop what they were doing to come out and see what was going on, or, hopefully, but unlikely, no one HAD heard what happened. As he continued to walk, his room was just in sight. Perhaps he was in the clear. After all, had anyone heard it, hypothetically, then surely, they would’ve at least noticed his unease upon making his way-

“Going to bed already?” a voice questioned behind him, aged and weary, but still more than recognizable. “It’s only eight-thirty, after all.”

Nestor flinched, steadily turning to see a mauve dragon bearing a shepherd’s cane and hat with a feather stuck in it. “Well,” the carpenter began, his hand traveling upward to rub the back of his head. “The table Delvin brought in today will need to be returned soon, given his profession. You understand.”

“Oh yes.” Astor nodded. “Though what I don’t understand I why you’re so ashamed of it.”

“It?”

“Don’t lie to me.” The older dragon answered firmly. “Even at your age, you know better than that, boy.”

Nestor stiffened. “You…” he cleared his throat, attempting to rid himself of his nervousness. Though it wasn’t exactly successful. “Everyone heard that?”

“Oh no.” Astor shook his head. “I just happened to be passing by, and…well…I’ll say this.” He smirked. “Those little sessions I gave you when you’re younger gave you some tips, didn’t it?”

Unbecoming as it was, the carpenter’s cheeks flushed. Indeed, it was true, and though it hadn’t been tested, he dared not let anyone come close enough to try. Not even his own father before him.

“But again, I ask, why are you ashamed of it?”

And to think, he believed he had been doing so well in being discreet in making his exit. “Well…” Nestor sighed, fidgeting with his claws and tugging at the fabric of his vest. Indeed, should anyone had seen their leader behaving in such a way, they would’ve doubted they were looking at the same dragon. Astor was no stranger to it as well, he being one of, if perhaps the only one, able to
see a Nestor behind the stalwart mask he wore. “It…I don’t know if I would say I was ashamed of it. It’s just…”

“Just what?” the mauve, elderly drake pressed.

“Well…it’s just…not exact regular behavior for me.” His son confessed. “Really, I don’t even know why that I…”

“And the problem is?” Astor questioned. “I don’t recall a little tickle being any issue when the youngin’ was, well, young-ER.”

“Yes. When he was younger.” Nestor argued. “He’s just a handful of years shy from being a young teenager.” That statement, even thought he knew it, felt somewhat surreal when it came from his lips. “And things such as his education and rearing into a proper dragon, let alone a proper Artisan, is more important than ever.”

“As is basic interaction.”

The mauve dragon’s son was somewhat taken aback by this. “Father, of course we interact with him!” he protested. “What do you think we’ve been doing all this time? Me, all of us! We’ve all been working nonstop in teaching him-“

“Nestor, that’s being a teacher.” Astor countered. “And granted, such things are important, but that can’t be the only thing that a child needs in their life.”

The green dragon shuddered, knowing well what was coming.

“They need a parent.” The old dragon then began to make his way slowly past his own child and to his chambers. “And I know it may not be something you want to admit…but I get the feeling you want more than to be simply ‘educating’ that boy.” He went on but stopped for a moment before entering his room. “Whenever you’re ready to discuss it with me, let alone the reason you’re distancing yourself from it, know that I’m always here.”

“…I will. Thank you.”

As he heard the door shut, Nestor released a heavy sigh, leaning back and resting against the wall. He wanted to argue, find some sort of point to retort with…yet he came up empty. “Counter your reasoning with equally solid points.” He repeated to himself. “And there’s also the simple response of agreeing to disagree.”

Though that was just the thing. He DIDN’T disagree. Not in the slightest. If anything, honestly, that was just what the boy needed. Much more than having facts and techniques shoved down his throat.

Only problem was, did he have that right? Did any of them?

Better yet, would that role always belong to the two that the little dragon would never come to know?
Chapter Summary

Landing in what they assume to be somewhere in the Peacekeepers' Realm, the Balloonist and Spyro run into some trouble with some of the local inhabitants...

Chapter Notes

Second to of the Balloonist tale! Also, here’s the introduction of some Peacekeepers and their personalities!

Thanks for all the kudos! Please comment as well! Thank you!

Oh no…

Oh no, oh no, oh no, oh no!

He was gonna die! They were going to die! Well, maybe not the dragonfly, but he and the dragon were going to become splats of red on the ground in a matter of seconds! He had to do something! But what?!

It was then that he noticed his scarf blowing up above him, the end flapping crazily. His large eyes centered on it, as well as the other end of the piece of fabric. And then to the ground.

It’d be risky…not to mention probably impossible. But really, what other option was there? Aside from the other, more ‘fatal’ one.

“Hey!” he shouted, the dragon and his dragonfly directing their attention towards him. “I can’t guarantee this’ll work- “

“Don’t tell me that!” the little dragon retorted. “Just do it!”

“O-Ok!” gripping the fluttering piece of his scarf, he dragged it down, then gripped the other end, unraveling it from around his neck. The latter part was difficult, given that the other hand was being used to hold onto his ‘passenger’, but even as he was forced to momentarily let go, the dragon found he didn’t stay in free fall for long, as it seemed that they all went ‘up’ higher than before.

Not to mention, they were beginning to descend slower. Much, much slower.

He sighed, gazing up at his makeshift ‘parachute’, the dragon hanging off his boot. It wasn’t exactly a good one…but all things considered, it would have to do.
It was just briefly, just as he was overseeing the wall, yet Gildas managed to catch one member of their race looking at it from afar, not even approaching it. Odd, considering that he came to it nearly every day.

Though when he simply turned away, not even bothering to draw near it, the painter sensed that something was not well.

True, he had been struck with a particular brand of inspiration by one of his favorite muses, his artwork churning out one after another, his entire form practically dabbed in multi-colored, acrylic paints, and perhaps his initial assumption had simply been due to a misinterpretation from yet another all nighter, but the blue, bearded dragon just couldn’t shake that something was amiss.

He could be wrong…yet still…

He had to confirm whether it was just him. And if it wasn’t…well…he would have to perhaps get some advice on what to do about it.

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**Huh. Their landing was...surprisingly easy.**

Well, granted, it would undoubtably be rough, but not rough in the sense where a good number of bones would be protruding out from his joints and his brains would be coming out of his mouth. In fact, upon opening his eyes, Spyro came to see that he was on the ground, completely intact and among the living.

At least, that’s what he assumed. Frankly, he didn’t remember anything aside from falling to certain death one minute, the next, he was here.

“Sparx?” he asked, not seeing the little dragonfly. “Sparx?” he asked again, standing upon the insect not responding to him. “Sparx-whoa!” he attempted to step forward, yet found himself stumbling back, landing right back where he was before.

“Seems this guy here is the only one who still has a sense of balance.” A voice said from behind, the purple drake turning to see the balloonist winding his scarf back around his neck. Sparx, upon seeing Spyro, wasted no time in throwing himself right onto him, clearly relieved.

“Hehey, I’m fine!” the dragon chuckled. “Are you ok?”

Sparx nodded, the one that had fallen with them coming forward. “You passed out just a bit before we landed.” He clarified. “Little guy here was super worried, but you were breathing, so I thought it best to leave you alone for a bit.”

That would explain a lot. “How long?” Spyro inquired.

“Just about half a minute or so.” The bipedal figure confirmed. “At least, that’s when we landed.”

“Oh.” It was then that it occurred to him. Just how did they…?

“Never thought it’d serve me in such a way before.” The balloonist declared with pride, holding the end of his scarf up for Spyro to see. “But it turns out it can make for a nifty little parachute!”

“So…you…” it struck him fast, yet it was still clear. “You saved me.”

The humanoid blinked, then pondered for a moment. “Huh. Yeah. Yeah, I guess I did.”
“Thank you…uh- “


“…Spyro.”

“Delbin?”

The red skinned artist turned to see a fellow painter from Stone Hill, though given his coloration, he was barely recognizable at first.

“Gildas?” Delbin questioned. “That…IS you, right?”

“In the flesh.” Gildas confirmed. “Though…I suppose I don’t blame you for the confusion.”

Delbin chuckled a bit at that. “Well, you know well Nestor’s not going to let you set foot in the castle with all that. Literally.” He gestured to his clawed feet, they too coated in paint. Honestly, what sort of process did this guy use? True, his style and unique touch couldn’t be denied, yet perhaps there was a reason that Nevin declared he’d never set foot in the blue dragon’s studio again without a full suit of armor. “Anyway, what brings you here?”

“Well,” Gildas began, scratching the back of his head (unintentionally spreading around yet even more paint) “I was hoping you would perhaps know where Spyro would be.”

“Hm? What for?” the other painter inquired. “I mean, I WOULD bring him out to you, but you know how uptight Nestor is about the boy’s bedtime. Know firsthand from experience.”

“Oh.” The previously blue artist said, disappointment evident in his voice.

“What’s wrong?”

“Well, I was hoping to perhaps discuss something with him…”

“It’s the wall, isn’t it?” Gildas was startled, his glasses slipping down the bridge of his nose. “He’s been going to see it just about everyday in between lessons. I take it that, if anything’s been bothering him lately, it’s that.”

“You’ve noticed too?”

Delbin nodded. “Everyone has. True, things have been somewhat busy lately, what with the Magic Crafters commissioning some pieces from here and all, but some of us that have a moment or two have tried to talk to the little one.”

“And I assume nothing?”

The red, usually boisterous dragon shook his head. “He says he’s fine, but he’s been taking piles upon piles of wadded up paper outside to the rubbish heap and burning them himself.” He crossed his arms. “Heck, he outright said he’s ’tired’ of looking at it now. Though I know that’s not true.”

Gildas bit his lip. Indeed, though he had no idea, let alone was it his intention, he couldn’t help but feel some responsibility for this current slump the boy was in.

He doesn’t have anything going on during the weekends.”

“…I’d like that. No, scratch that. I think I need to do it.”

Where they were exactly, none of them were entirely sure, yet it was clear that they were nowhere near the Artisan Realm. In place of plains of fertile, green flora, barren, dry Earth lay in front of them, towering mountains and canyons seemingly creating a barrier of sorts around wherever they set foot. True, the area wasn’t completely devoid of life, cacti being spotted here and there, and they had seen some rabbits scurrying about, yet it was clear that neither of them was as well adapted to life in such a place as the natural inhabitants.

Speaking of which…

“Where do you think we even are?” Spyro questioned. True, perhaps it was a useless question, but perhaps some semblance of an idea would better boost their drive to find something. Anything really.

“I’m not entirely sure.” The scarfed figure, ‘Marco’, confessed. “Though if I were to gauge,” he continued, perking up the crestfallen dragon and dragonfly. “I’d say that this area is somewhere in the Peacekeepers Realm.”

“Peacekeepers?!” Spyro exclaimed aloud, it dawning on him on just how far they had gone.

“Yeah.” Marco confirmed. “Which is both good and bad. Sort of.”

“Sort of?”

“Good news is that there’s undoubtably a portal around here somewhere. Maybe some other dragons.”

“Great!” Spyro said in relief, though said relief didn’t last long.

“Bzz bzz bzz?”

Marco tilted his head, gazing at the golden insect. “Uh…pardon?”

“He asked what the bad news was.” The little dragon clarified.

“You understood that?”

“Course I did! He’s MY dragonfly.”

Oh yeah, dragons had those, didn’t they? At least, he thought they did. Hadn’t seen many with them recently. In fact, this little guy might’ve been the only one with one as far as he was sure. Though that could be dwelled on later. For now, other things were more important. “Well, the bad news is…eh…” Marco gestured around him. “Finding where it or anyone else is.” Assuming there WAS anyone else. “And, well, while it’s not impossible, water’s probably not easy to come by in parts like this.” He then looked to the sky, bright and blue with sparse clouds going by. “Journey’s going to be a lot slower too.”

“…sorry.”

The balloonist (ironically without a balloon) turned to the purple drake, swearing he heard him
“I’m sorry.” The drake repeated. “About your balloon. I… I didn’t mean to.”

Ah, yes. That. “It…” yet surprisingly enough, “It’s ok.” He found that he wasn’t as furious as he had been.

“Huh?” Spyro lifted his head up, both he and Sparx genuinely surprised upon hearing that.

“It wasn’t your fault. Well, yeah. It kind of was, but….” Marco rubbed the back of his head, realizing that perhaps stating the obvious wasn’t the best course to go. “Look, you didn’t know what you were doing, and, well, I’ll admit.” He looked down at the ground. “Had you not… I don’t know whether or not I’d even be here right now. So in that case, I guess I have something to say too.” He came forward, extending his gloved hand out. “Thanks. Even if it… well… you know. Still, thanks.”

Spyro eyed the hand, then looked to Sparx. The dragonfly urged him to take it. And while he was far from used, let alone enjoying the ‘hand strengthening’ lessons he had to endure, he placed his left forepaw in the ballonist’s palm, fingers clasping over it gently as he gently shook it.

“You’re welcome.”

Some Time Later

“You sure we haven’t been walking for an hour?”

“No, it’s only been fifteen minutes.” Marco paused. “I think. Maybe? I don’t know.” He noticed Spyro looking up at the sun again. The dragonfly buzzed something to him that invoked a low groan, as well as him flopping on the ground, legs stretched out in front and behind.

“It’s SO hot out here…” the little dragon sighed. “How anyone can stand being here… they have to be crazy! Or strong. Or crazy strong!”

Marco chuckled. Perfect description of Peacekeepers, if he had to say. Still, the heat was getting to be a little unbearable. Or a lot unbearable. Scratch that, he was sure he couldn’t take much more. His scarf and hat and basically every other piece of clothing on him were drenched in sweat, and Spyro wasn’t looking much better. Even the little dragonfly, Sparx he believed him to be called, was barely able to keep himself elevated off the ground.

It was clear to all of them that they needed to find some sort of reprieve from the sun’s merciless beams. Shade, water, shade AND water perhaps. But something. Anything, lest they end up as-

CAW!!

Wait…what was-

CAW!! CAW!!

The three came to see a small collection of shadows on the ground around them, circling. Stalking. Even though they looked up to see that they were no longer alone.

Least of all, the only ones seeking some sort of nourishment.
What in the world was interesting that Delbin insisted that he come here so early in the morning? The stupid wall hadn’t changed any since last night, let alone last week!

Everyone’s little ‘statement’ was still here. Everyone save for one, empty spot. A spot that he STILL had no idea what to-

“Ah, there you are!”

“I thought they only went after dead things!!!”

“Well, if you don’t keep running, we’ll be!!! So, move!!!”

And to think, the initial search for shade and/or water had taken this turn. And it was what they had been trying to avoid!

Behind Marco, Spyro, and Sparx flew a flock of large, dark feathered buzzards, clearly not exactly interested in simply waiting for one of the trio to up and kill over. Or they had simply wanted to speed up the process. Maybe create a little unfortunate accident…

Whatever the case, any sort of plan they had concocted in their puny little brains (assuming the insult of ‘bird brain’ was relevant) was no good for them, and thus, the further away they got from that and the birds themselves, the better.

“Faster!” Marco called out, having managed to gain a bit of distance ahead of the dragon and dragonfly.

“I’m going as fast as I can!” Spyro called out, yet truthfully, he was finding it difficult to keep up. Just how much had the fall and the wandering taken out of him?

“Bzz! Bzz, bzz!” (Try charging!) Sparx told him, though his dragon seemed to not even register his words.

“I don’t…think…I’ve got…the strength to…ugh!” Spyro spoke through pants, eventually losing his footing and tripping over himself, rolling forward a bit before his horns stopped him from colliding with a rock.

The birds seized the opportunity and dove downward.

The little dragon yelped as a powerful, sharpened beak clamped around his tail and drug him back, essentially tossing him in the middle of a small congregation of their flying aggressors. Several, sharp ends of hardened beaks jabbed, poked, and bit at the smaller, purple form in the center, said purple form yelping with each blow he took, not even able to try and conceal the pain being delivered to him nonstop. He tried to crawl out from the circle of buzzards, but found it impossible: either they would jab harder, or one would place its clawed talon on his back and wrench him into place once again, the ‘clubbing’ resuming once again. All other sounds began to die out amidst the cawing and frenzied croaks, and Spyro dare not open his eyes, lest he make it the last time he’d even possibly have eyes. Curling up in a ball, the drake folded himself in as the birds continued.

True, he was protecting vital portions of himself, yet even then, there were too many of them. And at this rate, he would give out sooner than they would.

BAM!
The sound of a hardened object meeting the far softer head of one of the carrion eaters, sending it off its feet and sprawling back, dazed from whatever had just hit it. And indeed, something had hit it. A sizable rock sat where the bird once again, Spyro, still covering his eyes with his forepaws, opened them just enough to see a humanoid figure rushing towards him, another rock in its gloved hand.

“Hey, you!” he shouted. “Get out of here!” the rock was thrown, hitting another one of the buzzards. Marco? And…and Sparx was with him! Holding yet another rock in his small little legs that he dropped in the balloonist’s hand, Marco in turn throwing it at another bird. “Bullseye!” he cried out in triumph at another target being hit.

This surge of pride was short-lived, however, as instead of taking off, the buzzards seemed to take an interest in him now, completely ignoring the one they had previously been pecking to death.

It seemed that they had acquired another source of meat to dine on. And though he too wasn’t yet dead…that could be fixed quite quickly.

Spyro and Sparx whirled around to see Gildas, unusually uncovered and spotless, the entirety of his blue form able to be seen.

“Hey, uh…” the little dragon observed the painter. “What happened to your apron?”

“Oh, it’s drying off.” The bearded dragon confirmed.

“You actually wash it?” Spyro said aloud, Sparx giving him a small jab in the side.

“Believe it or not, yes.” Gildas laughed. “Cleanliness isn’t a foreign concept to me, even if some may think otherwise.” He began to approach the two. “Anyway, care to share what’s been on your mind?

Spyro shifted his violet eyes. “Uh, what do you mean?”

The painter folded his arms, after adjusting his spectacles of course. “Come now. You know well what I mean. And before you say anything, I’ve already talked with some credible sources, so you’re not getting out of this that easily.”

Wait a minute…’Delbin…’

“So, with that in mind, and no escape,” despite his words, Gildas knelt and placed his hand on the youngling’s shoulder. “Do you have anything you want to get off your chest?”

Spyro averted his eyes, then released a heavy sigh. Well…as much as he didn’t want to…he supposed there was no other way out of it now.
said insect completely powerless against the avian fiends. He had to get down or something! Lest the little thing be pulled apart!

“Get away from him, you stupid, overgrown chickens!”

A pair of horns met the backside of one of the buzzards, sending it flying forward and into the one holding Marco, the scarf wearing guy had a small plummet to the ground. His tailbone had definitely taken some damage, yet for the most part, everything else seemed ok.

“Sparx, you ok?” Spyro questioned, the dragonfly below him and sporting a black eye, yet so far, seemed to have everything intact. The buzzards began drawing near the two of them, the dragon standing over the dragonfly to shield him from whatever they wished to do.

Marco was about to make his way towards the two, yet curiously, he saw the little drake’s cheeks become swelled, nostrils freely having smoke travel out of them. Then, upon opening his mouth, a spread of fiery orange and gold spilled out, the birds scattering away as it quickly made its way towards them. Some had been unfortunate enough to get their feathers ignited and had taken to dropping and rolling on the ground in order to put it out.

Odd, and somewhat funny. Who knew birds could do that technique either?

Repeatedly, Spyro spat flames at the birds, though it seemed that this only served to get them to back off. It didn’t take long for them to grow wise to the little dragon’s tactic, simply backing up, then going in when he took a moment to produce another round. Marco looked around, desperately looking for another rock or anything to use as a means of defense.

“Yah!”

Though it seemed that none of that, as something from further behind was tossed towards the birds. Something that, while it appeared to be a big, black rock, was sizzling. Suffice to say, it didn’t take long for bird, dragon, and balloonist to realize what it was. The buzzards immediately flew upwards, and Spyro grabbed Sparx and scampered away.

“Hurry up now!” an aged voice called out, an elderly, bottom heavy, plum colored dragon bearing an aviator hat with goggles and standing by Marco. He also appeared to bear something of a vulture’s ruff around his neck, and gloves, a horn on his nose on the sides of his head, one prominent horn coming out of the top of his head and arcing in a slight curve. “C’mon, boy! Hurry!” he called out again, Spyro picking up pace as the ‘black rock’ was but mere moments away from-

BOOM!!!

The little dragon was sent flying forward, right into the somewhat pronounced lower half of the bomber’s stomach, though the dragon seemed to not ever register it. “Oh.” He said, looking down. “There you are.”

“…y-yeah.” Sparx buzzed the same.

“All right, get out of here!” the sound of a whip and heavy object pounding the ground was heard, along with the swishing of a blade of some kind. Or perhaps a lance.

A buzzard flew out of the cloud of smoke, tongue hanging out of its beak and pupils rolling around in its eyes.

And out of the cloud, three dragons emerged, each beating back the birds that had decided to stick
around. A muscular, barrel-chested dragon bearing golden skin and a rope was using said rope as a whip, striking the buzzards akin to one beating back an approaching beast. Ironic in a sense, given his massive, dark grey horns, one of which was broken, large canines on the bottom jaw, and a tail that, had anyone been none the wiser, would’ve assumed to belong to a rattlesnake. Though the cowbell around his neck was somewhat off putting. Maybe he just…really liked cows?

“Begone, foul demons!” another voice called out, stabbing and waving a lance around, the dragon wielding far thinner and lean in comparison to his rope-wielding comrade. Sporting yellowish-green skin and, bizarrely enough, boots, struck and blocked the incoming buzzards that attempted to fight back with his shield. His head was well protected with a barber’s basin and he bore a collar piece, though the most defining characteristic of the dragon was his curvy horns and just as curvy mustache.

“I’ll cook each and every last one of ya!” the last of the three battling the birds declared, releasing flames from his mouth and sending more than a good few of them flying off. He was heavily built and bore greenish skin, though he seemed to prefer having something on his chest in comparison to the rope wielding dragon. A leather and fur harness was around his chest with a stone buckle, and while his horns weren’t as large as the former dragon, nor did he bear the style and precision of the lance wielder, his club was definitely something that no one, bird, dragon, or otherwise wanted to be on the other end of.

With the emergence of these three, along with the one that had thrown the bomb, the buzzards decided that it simply wasn’t worth it anymore and took off in a frenzy, the ground littered with hundreds of black feathers that blew lightly in the sudden breeze that came.

“So…” the elderly dragon began. “I didn’t know you were coming for a visit. Where’ve you been?”
Inspiration for Flights of Fancy-5

Chapter Summary

Conclusion to of the Balloonist tale.

With everything all said and done, Spyro finds that perhaps the answer he's been looking for has always been right in front of him.

Chapter Notes

Thank you all so much for the Kudos and Comments! It serves as great motivation for me to pump these out faster!

Also, the main reason I wanted to write this particular multiparter was that, aside from Sparx, Spyro doesn’t seem to have any ‘friends’ per say in the early games/Reignited (of which this is based), and I wanted to give him one outside of the dragons (who are more like father/uncle/brother figures. Not saying they can’t be friends). Plus, I also wanted to show perhaps the start of the little dragon’s desire to see outside the realm that’ll be expanded later, as well as what he would later do in the games.

And, as for Conan's characterization, I modeled him off of a certain man who imagined himself to be a valiant knight with the title of Don.

Dusting his yellow hands, the big horned, snake tailed Peacekeeper looked to the fleeing flock of carrion eaters, winding up his rope back into a loop. “Well,” he spoke, all the while continuing his task. “That takes care of them.”

“Indeed.” The lancer wielding dragon noted, taking a moment to adjust his hat. One of the blasted devils nearly went off with it. “Dreadful lot. Vile beasts even, taking advantage of such downtrodden, weary innocents.” He spat with disgust. “And a youth, no less!”

“Bzzt?” (And?)

“And a creature smaller than they.”

“Bzz.” (Better.)

“We should’ve maybe caught some of them.” The harness-wearing Peacekeeper noted. “Would’ve been perfect for roasting over a fire.” His mouth immediately began to salivate at the thought of it.

“You and Magnus always want something in your mouth.” The yellow dragon scoffed, this immediately earning the attention of the younger, more heavy-set dragon.

“Oh uh!” he argued, tightening his grip around his club. “Those buzzards just happen to be my favorite is all!” he then gained a snide look. “Just like you can’t go anywhere without that stupid cowbell.”
“Excuse you?” the big horned drake questioned. “Want to add another scar there, kid?” he gestured a claw to the ‘x’ etched into the younger’s neck.

The lance wielder wasting no time in stepping in between the two. “Gentlemen! Gentlemen!” he cried out. “For shame, both of you! Here we are in the presence of foreigners to our Realm, and this is the display you two present to represent us Peacekeepers as?” the two began to simmer down somewhat, yet still, it was evident that they were still somewhat sore with one another. “And even more, we came due to the plea of grief-stricken guardians! Are we, their saviors,” the greenish-yellow dragon shifted his eyes to the balloonist and far younger drake not far away. “Going to display such abhorrent behavior? Is such behavior befitting of heroes?”

Both of the other dragons were silent, their attention drawn away from each other and to the one standing in between.

“You know Oswin’s going to have to fine you for keeping those books over their due date, don’t you?” the harness wearing dragon added in, the lancer, ‘Conan’, growing quite flustered.

“Hmph!” Conan simply turned away from the two. Whatever animosity that had been present had deflated. Just not in the way he had intended.

The fourth of Marco and Spyro’s ‘rescuers’, the elderly dragon, finally remembered through the ‘youngin’s’ arguing that even younger ‘youngin’s’ were here. “Hey, you all ok?” he, Ivor, asked.

“Y-Yeah.” Marco huffed, still somewhat winded. “I think so.” He then looked to the young dragon. “Are you?”

“Me?” Spyro questioned, as if baffled he would even ask that. “What are you asking me for? Those stupid birds were pecking and going all over you and…oh no.” he then saw the torn fabric around his neck. “Your scarf…”

“It…it’s fine. I can get another one.”

“…thanks.” Spyro thanked. “Good thinking with the rocks and all.” He then looked to the dragonfly resting on his back, clearly worn out from the beating he received. “You too, Sparx.”

“And thanks for that killer breath of yours.” Marco answered back. “You toasted those guys good!”

“You really think so?”

“Yeah, totally! Truth be told, I think that’s the first time I saw a dragon actually ‘breathe’ fire! Though…I guess you kinda don’t ‘breathe’ it. More like you…blow it?”

“Oh…maybe? Honestly, I don’t really know where ‘breathing fire’ came from. It…” Spyro and Marco ceased their banter, just remembering that neither of them, nor Sparx, would be here if not for the four others here. “And thanks to you guys too!”

“You really think so?”

The heavy-set dragon gave a small, dismissive wave. “Don’t sweat it. Besides, those bird brains have been a real pain in the tail lately. I’ve been itching to give them a piece of my mind.” He
patted a bare spot on his club. “And maybe take a piece of theirs.”

“But,” Spyro began again. “How did you know that we were…”

“You weren’t that hard to find, kid.” The big horned, snake tailed drake answered. “Somebody back at your place noticed you and that balloon were gone, so they and a bunch of others went on a frenzy and asked everybody here to look for you.” He then gave a small huff. “Don’t know what the fuss was all about. Those buzzards were barely worth the effort…”

“That said, Boris,” the more ‘refined’ of the four, Conan, interjected. “I say that we best make haste to the portal. Those that came searching will be quite pleased to know you’re still intact.”

No one made any sort of protest to that suggestion at all. Though, Spyro couldn’t deny that a lingering dread began to creep in. How in the world was he going to explain all of this to whomever was waiting for him?

“So, you’re struggling to find something to put up, is that it?”

Spyro nodded. Really, it was clear Gildas wasn’t going to let him get out of this, so what use was there hiding it anymore.

“I’ve tried.” The little dragon clarified. “I’ve tried finding something that’d ‘fit’, you know. Like how you said that our ‘stone’ should have something that’s…well…”us.”

Gildas sighed. Even if this was the whole point of the wall to begin with, he hadn’t wished for it to take a route such as this for the child. “Spyro,” he began. “Yes, I stressed that it was important, but I was speaking more or less to the other dragons.” He ran a clawed hand through his blonde mane. “No one really seems to take these proposed projects of mine seriously, so I had to sort of exaggerate how everyone of future generations- “he paused, Spyro puzzled as to why he did. “I mean, everyone else of how their mark would be remembered, as would they.” He then placed a hand on the little dragon’s shoulder. “It’s not meant to be something to stress over. I’m sorry that I’ve made it such for you.”

“No, it’s not your fault.” Spyro sighed. “I just…I just don’t know what I can put. I mean, what AM I good at?”

“Many things!” the painter exclaimed. “What are you talking about?”

“…forget it.” he began to turn away.

“Spyro, wait.” Gildas said, pleading with him to come back. Yet the dragon had already ran off, presumably out of Stone Hill entirely.

The embezzled, etched letter that read ‘Dry Canyon’ grew more and more distant as the party of six made their way to the main stronghold of the dry, rocky area. Honestly, this place was a far cry from the Artisans’ living space. Instead of green, fertile grass, dried, cracked Earth was under their feet. And what could’ve been sources of water scattered about in a lake or perhaps kept in a fountain were thick, darkly colored pools of bubbling tar. Where in the world DID these dragons get water from? Let alone food? Who could grow anything in a place like this?
Then again, there were, surprisingly enough, a bevy of rabbits running about. Funny, in a way. All these unsavory, dangerous things, but one generally harmless, consistently ‘cute’ element added in as if to ‘balance’ it out. Either way, Spyro considered it weird. But even for all its differences... he couldn’t deny this place looked cool.

If anything, the Peacekeepers in general were beyond cool, he surer of that now than ever.

“You stay here.” Boris ordered Marco and Spyro, he, Conan, Ivor, and the younger of the four, formerly identified as Maximos, went to the fortress-like structure.

Really, no one protested. They were more than tired enough to even try anymore ‘exploring’. That said, their eyes still unconsciously traveled everywhere, taking in the various sights of this strange, new land.

“Hey.” Though one new sight wasn’t exactly ‘new’. “Is that a…” Spyro trailed off, Marco gazing in the same direction. Indeed, both of them saw it, it was no illusion.

Stationed by one regularly docked hot air balloon rested a second, albeit away from the tar pit the other resided over on the small dock. But...how, let alone, why would there be a-

“YOU!”

All three, balloonist, dragon, and dragonfly’s eyes widened, jumping at the sudden, angered declaration that filled the air. A figure could then be seen stomping towards them, or rather, towards Marco. This person bore a similarly colored scarf in comparison to him, yet aside from that, most of his attire was composed of shades of blue. Ironic, in a sense, because ‘blue’ was the last thing he was giving off.

“Tuco-“ Marco began, yet got no further, a gloved finger being shoved in his face.

“Do you even realize what kind of day you’ve caused me to have?!”

A Short Distance Away

Inside the structure, near the entrance, another dragon stood, seemingly awaiting for someone to come.

Scales of orange and a throat and stomach of dull mauve clashed with a mane and beard of violet, mane fashioned akin to that of a full, volumized mowhawk, and beard present, but only just long enough and coming to a point. A tuft of hair residing at the end of his tail bore the same color and general style. Horns of grey, angled and sharp protruded from his head, shoulders, sides of his jaw, nose, forearms, knees, and along the sides of his neck and down his tail. Suffice to say, horns were one of the most defining traits of the draconian male. A red cloth was wrapped around his neck and over a pair of epaulettes, of which the shoulder ‘horns’ came out of via holes specifically cut for them. Medals were clipped on his chest via an outer layer of scales, and around his waist rested a dark violet kusazuri, a belt of brown around the upper part with a thick, yellow rope that held the piece of armor on his form. Completing his attire was a large, sharpened battle axe that was, despite the obvious potency of the weapon, casually held over his shoulder as if he were little more than a simple carving tool. Given by the ‘x’ shaped scar on the left side of his abdomen, it was clear he knew how to use it well.

“You found them; I take it?”

“If anything, they lead us right to them.” Boris clarified. “Kind of impossible to ignore all the fuss they were making.”
“Fuss?” the violet maned dragon questioned.

“A flock of those foul, avian demons beset them!” Conan declared, hand to his chest as if congratulating himself. “Those two innocents would’ve been torn to shreds had me and my daring comrades not dashed in to protect them!”

“Translation: a bunch of buzzards helped us find them. But we kicked them to the curb.” Maximos added, Conan still blissfully unaware.

“Anyhow, the kiddos are fine, Titan.” Ivor confirmed, bizarrely enough, getting to the point. “Aside from a few bruises and some peckin’ from those them birds, they don’t have a scratch on ‘em.”

“Well, finally. At last.’ Titan thought. “Any way, they're back in one piece, and ultimately, that’s all that the Artisans care about.”

“Speaking of,” Maximos spoke up. “We found them. But what about the balloonist’s…balloon?”

“Interesting you’d mention that.”

From behind Titan, a figure garbed in quite the similar garb Marco was in, save for his scarf being green instead of red, came out. “While you all were gone and Titan and I, along with Magnus and Gunnar were here, looking to see if we saw them, Tuco came by with the intention of giving me and everybody here an…” he paused, he and everyone else becoming aware that quite a commotion was taking place outside.

Outside

“Oh..h-hey, Tuco.” Marco nervously greeted, a smile forming on his lips (though given the placement of his scarf, it was impossible to see, not that it mattered). “What’s up with you these days- “

“Don’t even start with that ‘how are you doing’ stuff!” the other balloonist, Tuco, interrupted, clearly in no mood to hear anything Marco had to say. “Do you have any idea, the SLIGHTEST inkling of what you’ve done to me?!”

“…does my life depend on what I say?”

“Maybe.”

Marco gulped. “Well…I’m sorry about whatever happened, if I caused you any trouble- “

“Don’t even!” Tuco interrupted, now seemingly more enraged. “Caused you any trouble.” He repeated. “Caused you and trouble, gah! Your balloon ruined everything!”

Balloon? Oh. Oh yeah. Duh, Marco thought. How else were they able to get all the way here? But what did it have to do with-

“If you MUST know, and I intend on letting you know EXACTLY what you’ve done,” apparently Tuco was going to be so ‘gracious’ as to enlighten the other balloonist now. “There’s been yet another order from Oswin’s library regarding the texts and historical records of each of the other Realms, right now specifically being that of the Magic Crafters.”

Oh yeah, the other figure thought. Not too long ago was it that he made such a delivery to the Artisan librarian himself.
“And vice versa, the Magic Crafters have too become interested in gaining texts from the Artisans! Do you know what that means?!”

“They have to…write them again?”

“Exactly!” Tuco bellowed. Honestly, Marco didn’t expect that would be the answer. “Alban spent hours transcribing mountains of text in time to make the delivery! My balloon was full of scrolls ready to be transferred to Cedric’s collection, and then YOUR balloon comes out of nowhere and knocks into mine! And do you know what happened next? Huh? Do you?”

Marco didn’t answer, though he could very well guess.

“All over Wizard Peak!” the blue shirited figure cried out, throwing up his arms. “Everywhere! Everywhere, and who knows where?! Jarvis, Hexus, and Lucas are STILL searching for all of them! And should any of them have fallen in the water- “

“Hey, hey, hey!” a new voice suddenly spoke up, Marco feeling something moving behind him, looking to see the purple, adolescent dragon. “Lay off him! It’s not his fault you had a bad day, you know!”

“Bad day, bad day?!” Tuco bellowed. “No, a bad day is one of Gavin’s brews being five minutes late! A bad day is me not being able to find my scarf! No, kid! This was NOT a bad day! This was a…” it was then that he stopped, just realizing something. “Who are you even?”

“…I’m the one you should be yelling at. Seeing as…well…all of this is my fault.”

Welp…here he was. Still with nothing.

“Bzzz…” Sparx fluttered near him, Spyro sitting in the small doorway that lead to the dock, watching the waves lap in and out. (Hey, you ok?)

“Yeah, I guess.”

“Bzz, bzz, bzz.” (That’s a total lie, and you know it.)

“Well, it’s not like saying the truth is going to do anything for me!” Spyro shouted, though a pang of guilt followed suit afterward. “Sorry.”

“Bzz, bzz, bzz, bzz.” (Hey, you’re having a hard time. But don’t you think you’re making too big of a deal out of this?)

“Maybe. But…” the little dragon allowed his already reclined form to sink down further. “I don’t want that space to remain empty.

---

Tuco’s eyes widened, the little dragon’s words, as well as demands for him to back off from Marco made his initial fury simmer down, as well as stinging guilt take its place. “Did…” the blue shirited balloonist began, eyes turning to Marco once again. “Did all of that really happen?”

“Pretty much.” Marco confessed, rubbing the back of his head. “But, hey. Scarf can be a parachute. Who knew?”
Tuco didn’t even pay that any mind, he lowering his head in shame. “Marco…I had no idea. I didn’t know any of that had happened. And before you say anything, no. It’s not ok. None of it is ok. Here you two are, quite literally in life threatening situations one after the other, and all that happened to me is just losing a few scrolls…” really, saying it all now made him feel all the more ashamed. “Marco, and, Spyro, was it? I…I’m sorry. I mean it. I’m really, really sorry.”

The little aforementioned dragon could scarcely believe what he was hearing. “Wait…you’re NOT mad?”

“Mad? What the…” Tuco paused. “Well…honestly, I can’t say I’m happy about what’s happened.” He admitted. “But you guys clearly had a worse day than I did. And…I mean it. I really am sorry about blowing up like that. Besides, if not for you,” the blue clothed being gestured to Spryo. “My little brother might’ve not been here to tell me any of this either. If anything, I should thank you. Immensely.”

“Well, it was nothing. I’d…” Spyro stopped himself. “Wait. You two are brothers?”

“We all are.” Marco announced, then pointing to himself. “Youngest of sextuplets.”

“Third youngest.” Tuco in turn stated in pride, Marco averting his eyes in annoyance.

“Fourth youngest.” Another voice said from behind, all of them turning to see another like Marco and Tuco coming forward with a group of Peacekeepers, bearing a green scarf in comparison to the other two. “So, I take it you all have patched things up?” Tuco averted his gaze for a moment out of a lingering sense of shame, yet ultimately nodded in reply. “Well, good. Because I think it’s about time we all start going to where we belong.”

“Especially you.” Titan said, gesturing to Spyro.

Though upon noticing his growing trepidation, Tuco spoke up. “How about I take Marco and the little one back to the Artisan Realm?”

The green scarfed balloonist tilted his head. “You sure about that, Tuco? I thought you were pretty anxious to get those scrolls-“

“I think the guys at Wizard Peak can wait a bit more. Besides,” he then turned to the three, brother, dragon, and dragonfly. “I think it’s the least I can do.”

“Hey, what’s up? What are you doing…here?” Marco had just come back from delivery yet another compilation of texts to Oswin’s library, this particular brand being that of the Beast Keepers, and was frankly ready to go and have some down time. Though upon seeing a familiar purple dragon by the dock, looking rather downtrodden, he found that perhaps said plans would have to wait. “You ok?”

Spyro looked to the balloonist, giving him a half-hearted nod. “Yeah, I guess.”

“Guessing isn’t a definite yes.” Marco retorted. “You’re either ok, or you’re not. And frankly, I don’t think you are.” He then sat down by the little dragon. “So, spill. What’s up?”
He had to admit that a twinge of nervousness (well, maybe a little more than just a twinge. Maybe a lot more) upon boarding the balloon, and especially when they began to leave the ground. Yet given someone who knew what they were doing was at the helm, perhaps this trip would go better than last time?

Maybe?

As he watched the ground grow smaller and smaller, Spyro found that he completely lost his nerve, ducking to the floor of the basket and shielding his eyes. The entire balloon was now high up in the air, the cold chill of the air trailing up his back and underneath his wings. It was far from something he was proud of, yet frankly, after today, he was pretty sure he never wanted to get in one of these things again!

Some Time Later

“Bzzt.” (Hey.)

“Mm mm.”

“Bzzt, bzz.” (C’mon, this is cool!)

“No way!”

“Bzzt, bzz, bzz!” (It’s not scary! It’s actually really cool!)

“You’re not any danger, you know.” He heard Tuco state. “If anything, what happened back then was a freak accident.”

“Well, I don’t know if I would call it and ‘accident’ per say.” Spyro countered, then again, technicalities weren’t at the forefront of his mind. “But I don’t want to look!”

“Bzzz, bzz, bzz!” (C’mon! You want to fly someday, don’t you?)

Spyro uncharacteristically nodded.

“Bzz, bzz, bzz!” (Well, same thing!) Sparx flew down and began gently tugging at one of his legs “Bzzzz, bzzz. (Have I ever steered you wrong?)

Well, there was a good amount of times that he didn’t even notice, let alone consider Sparx’s words, yet ultimately, no. The little dragon couldn’t think of a time his dragonfly intentionally put him in harm’s way. “…fine.”

Shakingly standing up, Spyro yelped when he felt a pair of arms seizing his sides, said arms lifting him up so he could see over the basket. Surprised, he saw that Marco had taken the liberty in doing so. Well, at least he wouldn’t have to lean over himself.

And despite his trepidation before…to his shock, all of it died the moment he looked.

His head instinctively looking downward, his violet eyes widened as he saw the fortress they had been before below them, now around the size to fit in his paw. The dried land held a bevy of details and etchings into the Earth’s crust that he hadn’t even noticed at ground level. Even the tar pits brought a sense of intrigue, the moon’s light shining on the thickened, goopy surface and creating a vibrant, reflective purple glow. It was so large, and yet tiny.

Sparx was right. It WAS cool.
No. Way better than just cool. It was…incredible.

True, it wasn’t as if a sight such as this was entirely new. Heck, but a few hours ago, he and Marco had seen a similar sight upon flying over Dry Canyon. Yet the mood was far from pleasant then. Now that everything had passed (assuming that he couldn’t come up with a good enough excuse when he got back home), the view of the Peacekeepers’ Realm could fully be taken in and, dare he say, appreciated. It was incredibly different from his home, yet now, it seemed that its differences could truly be studied and, dare he say, appreciated.

In fact, Spyro found the sight of it…

“Hey, there’s Dry Canyon right now!”

He found the sight of it…”It’s incredible.”

Tuco’s balloon soared on and on, more and more of the warrior dragons’ home coming to be seen. A town nestled by the edge of a cliff, surely a living place for some, if not all of them (assuming they didn’t reside in the fortress akin to the Artisan’s castle), a towering mountain with snow covering its top, the fact that snow could be ANYWHERE in a place like this baffling to him. And an area-like area of sorts, probably where the Peacekeepers had some sort of matches with each other. Another ‘coolness’ factor to them.

Still, despite his current influx of admiration for the clan separate from his own, Spyro couldn’t help but wonder what the Artisan Homeworld looked like from a height such as this. If anything, it actually made him want to try and make the balloon travel even faster. Though that thought was quickly banished. After today, he’d leave the controls to someone who actually knew what they were doing, a la not burning away the only thing capable of weighing this thing down.

All the same, as he watched the land below him transition into that of a vast ocean, the little dragon found something had begin to ‘click’ within him. As if he found something that, out of all the lessons and teachings he had received, this was had been one that he didn’t wish to have to end. Not that everything was ok. Seeing the world, or rather, different worlds to what he had known for the last few years of his existence brought a sensation and slew of emotions he didn’t knew know were possible for him.

What he saw below him was nothing short of amazing. Breath taking. And even if he was not one for flowery language…beautiful.

As Spyro finished replaying his current predicament, Marco placed a hand on his shoulder. “Gee. That sounds kind of hard.” Truthfully, he didn’t really know why he was making such a big deal out of this, yet ultimately, he decided to keep that sentiment to himself. It was clear that it meant quite a bit to him.

Still, despite that, Marco didn’t exactly have a situation in mind.

That was, until something popped into mind.

“Hey,’” he said, getting Spyro’s attention. “You think you can manage to sneak out tonight?”

“Maybe.” The dragon answered. “Why?”

Late at Night
Ok…this was the spot. Treading lightly over the stone floor, the dragon turned to see Marco awaiting him on the dock.

“Wow.” He stated, crossing his arms. “You actually managed to pull it off.

“Believe it or not.” Spyro replied. “But…this is cool and all, but I’ve got to get back in at least an hour or two, otherwise Nestor’s going to kill me. Maybe literally.”

“Relax, relax.” Marco reassured. “It will just be an hour or two. It’s not like we’re going far. We’re just going up and that’s all.” He then gestured to the balloon, sitting there not but a short distance away. As if beckoning them to enter. “That said, shall we?”

Spyro didn’t even answer, charging forward and practically leaping into the basket, Marco following suit. With a few adjustments and the fire lit, the vehicle used to soar the air lifted off, higher and higher until the ocean encompassed nearly all of his vision. Though that in itself didn’t last long. Marco maneuvered the balloon back somewhat, green fields of grass soon able to be seen below, along with a series of stone towers and an expansive, towering castle. From here, the little dragon, heck, the dragonfly with him seemed bigger than it right now. Even so, he had no idea that their home was actually quite huge. And that was just one part of it!

As they passed over miles and miles of ground, the cliffsides and walls of Stone Hill looking to be little, grey lines running along the ground below, and Town Square looked like a bevy of tiny little miniature toy homes and sets. Heck, he could’ve maybe set something like this up on his own! Dark Hollow lived up to its name at this hour, yet the numerous sources of light made it appear as if thousands of fireflies were down in the place where the finest scholars and practicers of the written word conducted their studies.

Argus was right, Spyro thought. The portals really DID cover a good deal of distance. Everything looks so small, but it covered so much ground. He never knew just how HUGE the Artisan Homeworld was!

And he wanted more. He wanted to see everything.

Not just the Artisans and Peacekeepers. Magic Crafters, Beast Makers, Dream Weavers, the desire to view and see all the Realms and all they had to offer. Something…something had been ignited in him. Since his first boarding of the balloon, even if it wasn’t in the best conditions, it was something he had never experienced before. And now that he had gotten a taste…he found he couldn’t get enough.

Though he knew he couldn’t do it much, if not barely at all. Heck, he wasn’t even supposed to be out here right now. Yet up here…or it didn’t have to be up above. Just exploring…

This beat any geography lesson any day.

The Next Day

The wall was finally complete. Each and every space was filled with the individualized marking of each individual dragon in the entire realm.

Save for one.

Everyone else having made their marking, Nestor made his way to the wall, chisel and a small hammer in hand. Though upon coming to the wall, there was one particular spot he noticed that had not been there but a day before. Sure, Gildas had confirmed that everyone else had contributed, yet he had yet to view the latest of these additions.
One of which, had both taken him aback, yet also drew him in to observe it closer.

It was obvious who had done it, the picture simple and lacking in much detail, the colors flat and everyone mainly a series of different colored blobs. Yet it was clear enough to see what it was presenting.

A small, purple dragon, a figure with a red scarf, and a dragonfly stationed in a large, hot air balloon, a small, curved, white line painted on his face, clearly indicating a smile.
The Caffeine-ing Part 1

Chapter Summary

Destruction lies in the wake of a certain little dragon, yet what spurred this wave of carnage is closer than any of them believed.

Chapter Notes

This will NOT be a five parter like last time, though it’ll be probably two. But after this, I can get to the Town Square Dragons. I also hope to add in more one shots in general in between them, then get to those that take place during/near the second/third game. Though this won’t be a completely linear thing, though I suppose that’s already been established.

That said, hope you enjoy!

Just one.

It was JUST one!

Not even a cup! And just barely a sip!

Should one had even been listening to Gavin’s inner musings at the moment, as well as seeing the state of his shop, they would’ve probably wondered how in the world it had gotten rendered in this state and by who.

Both of which he couldn’t have expected in his lifetime. Let alone how there was no lead up to it at all. Today had started out so calm and ordinary. Serene and generally mellow. Perfect as far as he was concerned. Both in the weather and what he had planned for that day, everything. Everything was going according to his envisioned plan.

Save for the small, minuscule detail he missed that lead to everything going so wrong.

“Gavin?” wait a moment, voices. “Gavin!” outside.

“He’s in here! I think…”

“Assuming anything living could be in there.”

The table that had presumably been blocking the door had been moved, allowing the band of unseen rescuers to fully see the damage done. Whatever hadn’t been broken or shattered into a million pieces was either stuck in the wall or out a window. Glass littered the floor and splinters of wood were just as numerous. Ingredients such as sugar, coffee beans, and cream were plastered on the walls and scattered about on the floor. The blue skinned barista was aware that whomever was coming for him was watching their step, and soon, the overturned table that had served as his shield was gently pulled from him.
“There you are!” Gildas proclaimed, relieved that, unlike what was once his shop, the dragon was relatively unharmed.

“What in Five Realms happened in here?!” Lindar questioned, obvious as it was. Still, it was difficult to ignore it. Though upon looking back to survey what was once a simple stop for coffee (something of which he was looking forward to), he also noticed something else. “And where in the world is Astor?!”

“Probably lost or fell asleep along the way.” Gildas theorized, leading to Lindar throwing up his hands, exasperated.

“I’ll go get him. Old fool.” The clockmaker grumbled. “I TOLD him that if he felt he couldn’t keep up, then it’d be best to just stay put-OW!”

Gildas winced. That’d definitely leave a mark. “Gavin,” the painter asked, returning his focus to the tattooed barista. “You all right?” he then peered around behind him. “It doesn’t look like you’ve gotten any extreme damage.”

“No, no, I’m fine.” Gavin assured, standing up, albeit slowly. Suffice to say, his legs were still somewhat unsteady.

“What happened here?”


“What?” Gildas quirked a brow.

“Well, more than one ‘who’ in a sense.” He sighed, rubbing the back of his head before wincing at having brushed over a sore spot. “It all started when- “

“NOOOO!!!”

The cry of anguish seemingly emitted from outside, both dragons (albeit slowly as to not step on anything) racing out of the destroyed shop towards yet another. Entering Lindar’s shop, the sight of it made what had occurred in Gavin’s pale in comparison. Broken glass practically covered the flooring like carpet, clocks scattered all over the place. Gears ranged from accompanying the rest of the carnage on the floor to hanging off springs (of which were numerous) to being embedded in the wall.

“Lindar?” Gildas questioned, the clockmaker remaining silent, claws grasping at the fibers of his hair. “Lindar? Are…are you all right?”

“…I’ll never be all right.” He simply stated, voice devoid of emotion. “I’ll never be all right again.” Then, he swirled around, his gaze near murderous as he set his sights on Gavin. “I don’t know how, let alone why, but what I DO know is that somehow, some way, this is all your fault!” the fact Gavin didn’t protest only further confirmed his suspicions. “I knew it!”

“Eh? What are all you doing holed up in here? It’s a beautiful day outside.” All three dragons turned to see Astor standing in the doorway, still more than a little groggy, but finally back to the world of the waking. “Huh?” his sunken eyes looked around at the damage done, brow raised. “What’d I miss?”

All three stepped outside, Lindar stepping away from them all in order to better compose himself (mainly for Gavin’s sake), Astor and Gildas quite puzzled as to what had even happened. “All right,” the painter began, taking a moment to adjust his spectacles. “Perhaps the best place to start
“from is the beginning.” He then took in a heavy breath. “What happened before your shop and Lindar’s…” the clockmaker was a distance away, but seemingly flinched as Gildas said that. “Eh, got in the shape they are now?”

“That’s just it, nothing.” The barista began. “It started out like any other day. I was setting up for the usual crowd and making sure I had everything in stock.”

“Ok, what else?”

“Well, then Tomas came in and requested a latte,” he went on, “Then Delbin came. Simple brew, the usual. Man likes certain styles in more ways than one, it seems. Also left with one of Devlin’s dounuts.”

“All right, all right. Go on.” Gavin then bit down on his lip. “Come on, it’s fine. No one here’s judging.”

“AHEM!”

Gildas’ gaze shifted to Lindar for a second. “Well, we aren’t. Right, Astor?”

“Hm? What?”

“Continue, Gavin.”

“Well, that’s when he came in.” the barista admitted, his answer still quite vague.

“Who came in- “

“BZZT!!!” (Watch out!)

A small, golden object smashed right into one of the dragon’s eyes, causing him to stumble over to the grassy ground, said object bouncing off and landing on the painter’s stomach. Gavin rushed over and wasted no time in lifting him up, a task that took little effort thanks to his muscular form (really, he could’ve passed for a Peacekeeper according to some of his fellow Artisans). Upon doing so, he then scooped up the object that had just crashed into Gildas, of which garnered the realization that the ‘object’ was very much a living thing.

“Sparx?” the barista questioned, the little dragonfly shaking his head and steadily getting his senses in order. “Oh geez,” he scooped up the insect. “Sorry about that.”

“What’s up with him?” Lindar questioned, having come over. It was clear he was still quite mad over the destruction of his shop, though he too recognized the oddity of the situation. “And where in the world is-“

“BZZT!” Bzzt, bzz, bzzt! (That’s just it! Spyro, he’s out of control!)

“Out of control?” Gildas questioned. “What do you- “he was interrupted by the insect flying in his face, taking tuffs of his beard in his feelers.

“Bzz, bzz, bzzt, bzzt!” (That’s just it! He’s gone crazy! He’s heading for your studio!)

“He’s WHAT?!” The dragonfly was thrown off the artist’s head when he immediately took off to the nearby tower, everyone else following in pursuit. And from the resounding cry of “NOOOO!!!” that followed, it was clear as to what had happened. And upon arriving, their assumptions couldn’t have been any closer to the truth.
Paint covered near the entire inside of the studio, and canvases with blotches of acrylic, oil, and watercolor were strewn all over.

“Bzzz…” (He’s been here already.)

“…I can see that.” Gildas stated, completely dejected.

“All right!” Gavin found the straps of his apron seized and slammed against the wall. Quite a feat for someone with only a quarter of the muscle mass he had. “What did you do?!” Lindar demanded, his fury having peaked to its maximum.

“It was an accident!” Gavin answered, though this seemed to only infuriate Lindar more. Even Gildas appeared to be reaching Lindar’s level. Astor had once again dozed off. “I didn’t mean to give it to him!”

“Give what to him!?” the artist chipped in, though before any questions could be asked, a shape could be seen flying towards the doorway, landing right at the entrance of the studio.

“Nils?” Lindar asked, the sculptor more than a little frazzled. “What are you- “

“Is he here?!?” the green, tall dragon interrupted.

“Who?”

“That, that purple little devil!” Nils cried out. “That menace! He’s ruined everything! All of it! Devlin’s bakery! Thor’s stand! Alvar’s kitchen! MY LIFE’S WORK!!!”

Sparx winced, all eyes centering on Gavin.

“You know what?” Lindar finally spoke up. “Don’t think you’re off the hook.” He said to the barista.

“I have PLANS for YOU.” Nils stated, giving the blue dragon a death glare.

“But perhaps it’d be best to figure out WHERE Spyro is at the moment, then we can discuss as to how all this is YOUR fault.”

Gavin’s shoulders slumped. Heavens above, this wasn’t supposed to happen.

“Do you know where he’s heading to next?”

“Do you think I got a chance to ask him?!” Nils retorted.

“Well, all the better that we start searching now!” Gildas proclaimed. “Before something worse happens!”

No one protested that suggestion, all rushing out of the studio and to the portal leading back to the main hub of the Artisan Realm. Of course, for one amongst the group, the thought of how things could’ve gone so wrong plagued his mind the entire trip there. And would throughout this entire ordeal.

Main Dwelling

“Ok, here we are.” Lindar stated, the four of them having arrived (Astor was simply left behind. Really, the old man would’ve simply been extra baggage), all pairs of eyes searching for any sign of purple, dragonfly included. “Now where could he- “
“YES, FINALLY!” turning to the left at the entrance of Dark Hollow, a rather angered and disheveled scribe marching towards them. “Some decent help around here! Now,” Alban looked around. “Where is that little monster?”

Sparx’s cheeks puffed upon hearing that. He made jokes of the little dragon’s obvious faults, but only he got to do that! Let alone call him anything!

“That’s what we came here to find out.” Gildas stated. “But what was he doing in Dark Hollow?”

“Better yet, in Town Square?” Lindar asked Nils. “He was SUPPPOSED to just have lessons today with me today.” He then paused. “Away from any of my projects, of course.”

“Of course.” Alban said, a small bit of pompousness in his tone. Still, now, he wasn’t exactly one to talk. “Well, that was what I thought too. Then, out of nowhere, he comes barreling into MY study, spouting something about ‘calligraphy practice’ when there was none today, but Wednesday. This apparently went right over his head, as he goes scrawling ink on mountains of paper before charging out, spouting something about going to see Argus and help him with the watermelons- “

“Did someone call me?” Coated in the juice of melons, a stout, lumbering figure made his way towards the small collection of dragons, a watermelon stuck on his head, and one on his left foot. Lindar sighed. “Don’t tell me. Just…where did he go?”

“I think somewhere to see Tomas- “

“Don’t bother.” The aforementioned bard came forward, holding a broken lute in his hands.

“…where did he say he- “

“What’s up, guys?” everyone turned, Delbin coming up to them. “Uh…did I miss something?”

“You!” Nils rushed forward, grabbing the painter by the vest. “Where did he go!?”

“Who?” Delbin questioned, managing to wrangle the sculptor off him.

“That little demon!” the green dragon responded. “He’s ruined everything!”

Lindar then gestured to Gavin. “And it’s all HIS fault! Somehow!”

“Somehow what?” another voice interjected, though far from as easygoing as the painter’s. Turning, all of them saw their leader making his way towards him, arms folded and while not as enraged as some of them, he was clearly displeased. “Thankfully, I locked the shop for the day. But there’s a good number of marks on it from SOMEONE trying to get in. Someone far smaller than any of you. And seeing as you’re all here, and if what I’m hearing is true, I suppose I need to ask, what happened?”

Gavin lowered his head, a low sigh escaping him. “It all started this morning. When the little guy came to Stone Hill.”

Morning

“You all right there?” the blue dragon asked, the smaller boy’s head still flat on the table. “Hey.” He lightly nudged him, rousing the little one from sleep once again.

“Ugh…” the young drake moaned, brought back, once again, to the world of the waking. “Sorry.”
He yawned. “I don’t know why some of these lessons have to be so early!”

“Bzzt, bzz.” (Nine isn’t exactly ‘early’.)

“It’s early for me.” Spyro argued, sighing once again.

“Bzz, bzz, bzz.” (Twelve would be your earliest if you could have it that way.)

The little dragon had now engaged in a small verbal tennis between himself and the little dragonfly, Gavin couldn’t help but notice that the former party was losing the battle, already falling back asleep. Really, though he didn’t say it openly, he found the whole thing regarding all this ‘education’ to be rather ridiculous. Honestly, did they really feel the need to cram this much into him? Poor thing couldn’t even sit up straight, let alone have an ongoing conversation at this hour.

It was then that an idea came to him. True, it would have to be a small amount, and judging by his age, it was probable that he wouldn’t exactly like the taste. But perhaps most of it didn’t have to be the actual thing. It could just be mixed in with some sugar and milk. He wouldn’t even taste it.

“Here.” Spryo was mildly aware that something had been pushed in his direction, looking up to see a small, white cup on a tiny little plate of glass.

“What is this?” he groggily asked.

“Just some milk. Go on,” Gavin pushed it forward. “You don’t have to drink the whole thing, but a sip or two would probably do you some good.”

Present

“. . . then next thing I know, I’m on the floor, and the entire shop is destroyed.”

Silence rang throughout the entire group, no, the entire area.

“So,” until one among them spoke up. “It IS your fault!” Nils roared, halfway wanting to test his carving tools on the barista, even though said barista could surely take him.

“My scrolls were ruined because YOU gave him one of your drinks?!”

“It was barely a drop!” Gavin argued back. “I didn’t think that he’d be as wound up as this- “

“Well, he is!” Alban shouted, smoke rising from his nostrils. “And frankly, what I want to know is how you plan to compensate for what you and that little demon caused!”

“I’m more than eager to hear that part.” Lindar added.

Soon, it seemed everyone began putting in their two cents (or two gems) in of how this one moment resulted in so much disaster. Delbin nudged Nestor, gesturing to the angry mob forming, clearly begging him to intervene.

And frankly, he too had reached his limit. “ENOUGH!” at the sound of their leader’s roar, each and every one of them went quiet. ‘Honestly, aren’t we supposed to be the adults here?’ “Listen,” he began “It’s more than clear that quite a bit of damage has been done to each of you.”

“What was your first clue?” Lindar chipped in.

“Yet,” Nestor continued, shooting the clockmaker a look. “As to whose fault it was can be dealt with later. Now, the most important thing is locating Spyro before anything else can happen. Now,
does anyone have any idea where he was last?"

“He was supposed to be with me at twelve.” Tomas confessed, looking sadly at his broken instrument. “He left before I could even come back from getting the xylophone. I just thought he was eager to try out another instrument.”

“Yes, yes, I can craft a new one.” Nestor assured. “But still, we need to find where…” he then grew silent.

“What?” Tomas questioned.

“His lessons for the week.” He began counting. “Lindar, Gildas, Argus, Tomas…” he paused, sheer dread coming to his features.

“What?” Tomas asked again.

“…I hate to say it, but I believe that just a bit more carnage is going to have to be added.” And indeed, he hated it. Dare say, it nearly destroyed him. Yet if the marks in his door were any indication, then perhaps, just perhaps, this could be their one chance.

Hopefully.
The Caffeine-ing Part 2

Chapter Summary

Conclusion to the Caffeine-ing. With a plan to capture the out of control, hyped up dragon, everyone's now waiting for the plan to go into action. Though there are still lose ends to be tied up.

Chapter Notes

2nd part. The next few shots will be shorter, I swear. I think I just overstuff things against my better judgement.

That said, hope you enjoy!

He was on a mission. A mission that very well could’ve taken his life. Ok, that was stretching it perhaps, yet it was far from one that he would’ve gone on had he held any other option.

Night had fallen, and the wake of destruction had grown. Now, almost every dragon had come to the main hub to both complain of what had happened, and subsequently give the one who ignited the whole deal a piece of their mind. And they all received the same answer. Though before their plan could be followed through, they needed one core component.

They needed ‘him’. And thus, they needed Sparx.

Only one problem. Where WAS he?

The dragonfly had flown everywhere. Stone Hill, Town Square, Dark Hollow (which certainly lived up to its name at this hour), and all of it yielded no result. Not ONE sign of him. Surely, he couldn’t take the balloon. No way the guy running it (what was his name again?) would let him. Still, where was he-

Wait a minute. Sparx squinted, finally able to see it. In the distance, by the big, stone dragon head. The one leading to Nevin’s gallery. Oh no. Oh, no, no, no! He had to go! If not to at least stop one more thing being destroyed!

“Everything ready?”

Nestor looked to Darius, more than a little crestfallen. “Yes. Now all we do is wait.” Though arguably, perhaps the only one to rival his was the barista himself.

‘I just thought that…’

Suddenly, everyone froze. No one said a word, yet a chill in the air indicated to all of them that
something was coming.

He was coming.

The sight of a small, golden glow in the distance was more than enough proof. Even more, quickly gaining on him, a blur of purple was following suit.

“All right.” Nestor stated. “Prepare your- “

“HeyNestorHey, what’supwhat’supwhat’sup?!”

Well…that put the first part of his plan on the back burner.

“Oh, uh, hello there, Spyro- “

“Hiya,howyadoing,howyadoing,howyadoing?!“ the little one’s appearance was far from one he had seen before, and frankly, after today, never wished to see again. Aside from not even staying on the ground for more than a second due to how he kept bouncing up and down, his small body appeared to be violently shaking, eyes wide and seemingly never closed since he had taken that small dose of coffee mixed milk. Not to mention, the boy was coated with a variety of substances: paint, clay, baking powder, melon juice, etc. He didn’t even seem capable of separating his words, speaking in a jumbled mess.

Poor Sparx appeared exhausted. Unfortunately, the dragonfly’s job wasn’t done just yet.

“Hey,hey,hey,why’severybodyhere,huh?Whatgiveswhatgives?”

“Well, it’s occurred to me that you paid a visit to the shop earlier, only to find it locked. Apologies for that.” Ok, so far, so good. “But I’m back now, so you can go on in and- “He didn’t even get to finish, the dragon already zooming in inside. So soon?! Still, it was perhaps the only chance they had. “NOW!” Slamming the door, Nestor and any able and more muscled Artisan available took part in barricading the entrance.

Poor Sparx. He could’ve sworn the little insect gave a small salute of sorts before he entered in with his charge.

The banging on the other side was immediate, those stationed against the door surprised at how much strength the little thing had in him despite his size. “How long is this going to take?!“ Alvar questioned, though should anyone be asked, everything he said sounded like he was yelling.

“Don’t worry!” Gavin answered, jostled by another bang against the door. “He’ll crash eventually!”

“Everyone crashes eventually!” Lindar spouted. Though far from being as well built as Gavin or Delbin, he didn’t want to risk any potential of the violet child getting out. “And I can attest that as a ‘former’ devotee of your brew, he should’ve crashed hours ago!”

“Then,” another bang interrupted Delbin, he and five others holding the door shut. “Nothing to do but wait until he does!”

Inwardly Nestor rolled his eyes. He suspected that would be the answer, though that didn’t make it any easier to accept.

“NESTOR!”
‘Oh, what now?’

“I want a word with you!” a yellow dragon approached the green dragon, seemingly oblivious to everyone and everything else, save for himself, Nestor, and the broken palette in his hand.

“Can this wait, Nevin?” the carpenter asked, though a good amount of frustration was in his voice.

“Do you see this?!” the painter paid the leader no mind, holding his broken palette up for all to see. “That little monster, he…he wrecked everything!”

“Join the club. All applications accepted.” Nils commented.

“My paintings! Each and every one of them— “

“Ruined? Smashed to pieces?” Lindar chimed in. “Heard it, dealt it, now it bores me.”

“Yes! And…” it was then that Nevin steadily became aware of his surroundings, anger still high, but a sense of intrigue managed to creep its way in. “What are all you doing here?”

Nestor just sighed. “Either stand here at the door, or just save your grievances for tomorrow.” He didn’t need to be told that this was going to be a long night. And an even longer day tomorrow.

5:45 AM

Finally, mercy. Mercy from the continuous banging and pushing against the wooden entrance to and from the carpenter’s workspace. Mercy for the nearly incomprehensible blabbering of their ‘captive’. Mercy from the ongoing disaster that had befallen nearly everyone in the entire realm.

At last, finally. It had stopped. He had stopped.

To say that everyone was about to drop dead on their feet would’ve been an understatement. Frankly, almost everyone there resembled that of freshly dug up corpses, blackened bags lining the underside of the eyes and said eyes wide with a far off, dead stare as if there was no comprehension of what was in front of them.

Still, the task wasn’t done entirely. There WAS still the task of going in and checking in on their ‘hostage’.

“Spyro?” Nestor called out, receiving no answer. “Spyro?”

“Here.” A blue hand seized the doorknob. “I’ll do it.” with that, Gavin slowly, steadily, opened the door, a small, purple form lying right at it, along with a dragonfly sprawled out not far from him, both surprisingly even more exhausted than they.

As tempting as it was to gauge just how much damage had been done inside, Nestor resigned himself to focusing on the preteen beneath him. “Spyro?” he nudged him in the side. “Hey, come on, now.”

“Mmm…” the smaller dragon groaned, his violet eyes opening up slightly, the sun’s rays stinging them, so he only opened as much as he could allow. “Nestor?” he lifted his head up slightly. “Oh. H—Hey there.” His eyes then shifted around. “What’s everybody doing here— “

“Never mind that.” The carpenter cut him off. “How do you feel?”

“I think…” he groaned. “I think I got something. Like the flu…or something.” He tried to rise, yet didn’t get far, essentially flopping back down on his stomach. “Am I dying?”
Funny, in a sense, that he could chuckle at that after everything. “No, you’re not.” Nestor answered. “But what you need is rest right now.”

“Well…you’re gonna kill me, aren’t you?”

“…no. Not this time.” The carpenter assured, stroking the boy on his back against the rounded spines on his back. “You get off on a technicality. Just get to sleep now. It can be talked about later.”

“…kay. Night…or morning. I don’t know.” Spyro didn’t much more, head falling to the floor, face first.

Nestor wasted no time in scooping up the small dragon in his arms, Delbin in turn taking care of Sparx, the castle in view as their destination. Whilst there was relief amongst everyone that the wave of destruction was over, there were still a good deal of lose ends that needed to be mended.

As well as some hefty compensation needing to be discussed.

**A Few Weeks Later**

Well, at the very least, he could move all his stuff back inside the shop again. Nestor had been gracious enough to provide him with the lumber, yet he had to do most of the work himself.

Due to the damage done, the leader had decreed that it only be fair that Gavin compensate for what had been done. His funds were practically used up (ingredients weren’t he cheapest things in the world), and though he still had a good degree of business in regards for orders, it was mainly to rack up gems to fix what had been damaged. Frankly, the barista didn’t complain. He was getting of light, and he knew it. Besides, if there was anything good about it, at least he was able to garner more muscle for his already massive arms. Not much of a benefit, but still. At least most…er, some…a couple of his fellow Artisans weren’t too sore about the whole thing anymore.

Ok, maybe it would take some time to blow over, but at least things were relatively back to normal.

“Hey.” The blue dragon was startled by the sudden voice, nearly dropping the container of milk he was going to put in the refrigeration box. A light giggle followed. “Geez, for such a big guy, you’re easy to scare!”

Indeed, he was mentally kicking himself. “What are you doing here, Spyro?” Gavin questioned. “If you’ve actually come for another one of those ‘light doses’, then- “

“No, that’s not actually it.” Sparx buzzed, nodding in agreement. “We- “the dragonfly buzzed again, as if offended. “It slipped out, ok?” the little dragon retorted, turning back to Gavin. “I came to say, well, I’m sorry. For causing so much trouble, I mean.”

The barista was quite taken aback. “In all fairness, I should’ve known better than to think you could handle one of my brews, even if it was just a drop, at your age.” He then began to look around. “Did Nestor or anyone else put you up to- “

“No exactly.” Spyro confirmed. “Actually, I’m kinda running late on a lesson with him. History again.” He shifted a foot on the floor. “But I guess I… I don’t know. It’s just not fair that everyone’s mad at you, you know?”

Gavin was silent for a moment or two, before leaning down to the far smaller boy and placing a hand atop his head, lightly pushing down on his crest. “That’s pretty big of you. For such a little guy.”
“Hey! I’m not THAT little!” Spyro argued back, though it was clear there was no anger in his voice. “I’m gonna get bigger one day! You’ll see!”

Laughter was shared between the two, both completely unaware of the carpenter stationed outside the shop, listening in on what was going on.

It baffled him: how in all these situations, there seemed to always be some sort of silver lining. And though he dared not say such openly, Nestor found his chest welling with pride at the little dragon’s actions. Indeed, in some ways, he was big, despite his size.
Chapter Summary

Nils informs Spyro that when sculpting, he has to look for the 'angel within'. Unfortunately, said 'angel' isn't exactly in the best of hands...

Chapter Notes

Onto Town Square Dragons! Yeah! Also, the title and quote found in this is derived from the famed renaissance sculptor, Michelangelo. I'm probably going to make these shorter in order to get them out faster, but that doesn't mean I'm going to jip out on quality.

And while I have something of an order at the moment, any potential suggestions are welcome!

Enjoy!

“So…what kind is this again?”

“The bevel-ended chisel is more typically used by woodcutters. Think more along the lines of what Nestor excels at.”

“But we’re not doing stuff with wood.”

Nils sighed. This was going to be a long day. “No, we are not. Do you see a piece of wood in front of you?” Spyro didn’t answer, though his eyes fell on the small block of stone in front of him on the small slab, set of tools on the side. “Nevertheless, while woodcutters and carpenters use many of the same tools as us sculptors, I assure you, boy, our trades are vastly different, and, dare I say,” the tall, lanky, and green dragon took a moment to straighten his mustache. “More refined.”

“You both get super dirty at the end of it all.” The younger dragon noted, Nils in turn furrowing his brows.

‘At least I have the luxury of not having to worry about splinters.” Honestly, what did the boy know? It wasn’t as if he was at the right age to truly appreciate the majesty of his craft. But not to worry, he would come to appreciate it soon enough. And who better to make him see the light than he? “Now, UNLIKE woodcarving,” he gestured to his nearly complete work, “Stone cutting is an ENTIRELY different manner of crafting.”

“Yeah, of course it is.” Spyro rolled his eyes and muttered, Nils shooting him a look as if to say ‘yeah, I heard that’. Nevertheless, he went on.

“True, we may use the same tools, such as chisels and hammers, we can extend past the basic cubic shape and allow for a far broader, more creative bevy of options.”
‘So does woodcarving.’

“And thus, we transcend not only pieces of art and figures to display but extend to that of architecture as well. In fact, the aptly Stone Hill is filled with carved and crafted stones. Albeit none that can compare to the likes of my gallery, but I suppose foundation is more important. Somewhat.”

Spyro could only roll his eyes, and while Sparx didn’t follow suit, it was clear he agreed with him. “Is this guy for real?” he whispered, the dragonfly only shrugging in response.

“And wood, unlike stone, is more prone to the elements. Wind and rain can cause rot while stone cracks and wears down.” Nils seemed to realize then what he had just said. “Just…at a slower rate than wood.”

“Wonder how peeved Nestor would be if he heard this?”

“If Nestor heard what?”

Spyro froze. “Uh…how…awesome stone is and stuff! Like…it’s…hard. And…yeah.”

The boy was clearly lying through his teeth. Still, he had far important matters to attend to today. And frankly, he was wishing to get this lesson over with. “Then tell me, can wood carvers say this?” Nils then ran a claw along the cubic formation of the stone block before him. “One of the most famous Artisan sculptors, a dragon that was long before your lifetime and mine, created such masterpieces that, should one not regard their lack of color and stillness, they would’ve surely passed as living, breathing forms of life.”

The purple dragon was somewhat doubtful somebody could be THAT good, and frankly, didn’t get it. How could something that was clearly not alive appear such? That made no sense to him at all. Even so, Nils seemed to totally buy into it, speaking with nothing short of utmost conviction and admiration for this supposed sculptor from long ago. Dare say, it almost seemed like, for once, he was acknowledging that there was someone that could potentially rival him in such.

“And when he was asked as to how he made such master works, his answer was short, yet was all that needed to be said.”

“What did he say?”

Nils adjusted his hat. “He said, ‘I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free.’”

“The angel?” Spyro looked back to his stone block. “I don’t see any angel.”

“Of course you don’t.” Nils stated. “That’s because your eyes are untrained. But that’s what I, one who has been a delver into this particular craft for a good hundred years, shall teach you.”

“Ok?” really, he could’ve been spouting jargon for all he knew. Nothing of what he said made sense. Still, this WAS supposed to be a lesson in carving, so might as well get going on that. Grabbing a chisel with his mouth, he was about to begin carving, yet a green hand quickly snatched the tool away from him.

“First of all,” Nils began, holding the chisel up to the boy’s violet eyes. “You don’t just use this on its lonesome. It must ALWAYS be accompanied with a hammer.” He then gestured to the hammer in his hand. “Second, this is NOT supposed to be used via holding in your mouth.”

“Via? What the heck does ‘via’ mean- “
“This is ALSO supposed to be yet another introduction in how to properly utilize your paws and better prepare you for the transition from quadruped to biped.” Again, why did they always have to use all these ‘big words’ all the time? Couldn’t they just…well, say stuff he’d actually understand? “And thus, seeing that I am tasked with such a thing, I intend that you follow said instructions to the letter.” The sculptor then made his way to his stone block. “Now, take your chisel in one hand.” Spyro simply rose one brow, gesturing to the green dragon’s hand. “Oh.” He then realized he still had said chisel. “Yes, well, here.” He handed it back to the smaller dragon. “Now, take your chisel in one hand,” Nils repeated, observing Spyro as he attempted to do so. It was less of ‘taking it in hand’ and more grabbing it with his digits and holding it in place. Nevertheless, the lesson must go on. “Hammer in the other,” again, the little dragon struggled, but he did technically manage to hold both tools to an extent. Though he seemed to be struggling to maintain balance, only maintaining said balance thanks to the small stand the stone cube stood upon.

“Now what?” Spyro questioned, practically leaning up against the stand.

“Now what?” Nils repeated, though his tone indicated bemusement. “Find the angel, of course!”

“Huh?” the younger of the two asked again. “What does that even mean? How am I supposed to ‘find’ an angel in this thing?”

“You must visualize it!” Nils declared. “Visualize in your mind what your block of stone holds! Your own imagination is your only limit!” he then saw Spyro still struggling with his tools. “And perhaps learning how to properly use the instruments provided to you.”

‘You think?’ Spyro thought, though he was dealing with bigger things than saying a little comeback. As he continued to fiddle, he noticed Nils rising, setting the stone block to the side off of his stand. “Hey, what are you doing?”

“Oh, surely you didn’t believe that this could be finished in one day, did you?”

Spyro’s eyes grew wide. “…what?”

“I’m off to get a project I’ve been working on for a week or so. No sense in beginning something when you’ve yet to finish something else.” He then began to go off.

“H-Hey!” the little dragon called out. “You’re just gonna leave me here?!”

“I’ll be back, don’t cause such a fuss!” Nils called back, not even bothering to face him. “I’m just going to my studio and be here before you know it! Until then, remember what I told you!” Spyro heard no more from him, seemingly going off to where he said he would. In other words, leaving him completely on his own.

“Remember what I told you.” The preteen stated in a mockingly poor imitation of the sculptor’s voice. “Take these things here and just mess with them! I’m not going to teach you how to use them or anything, because, you know, hand stuff isn’t exactly your thing!” Sparx, despite himself, found that he was chuckling at his charge. “Oh, and while I’m at it, I’m gonna tell you so stupid story about some old guy that came up with this stupid saying about how an ‘angel’ lives in the rock!” as he went on, however, it became clear to the dragonfly that it was steadily growing less and less humorous, the little dragon continuing to release his frustration. “Oooh, that guy probably doesn’t even know HALF of what he’s even saying. He’s just trying to make himself look cool.”

Oh, he could go on. He could go on, and on, and on. And to a degree, that sounded like a swell way to pass the time. Yet that wouldn’t exactly make this particular lesson go any faster. And, to his chagrin, there WAS a progress report due this week. So, with a moan, Spyro set the end
of his chisel on one part of the stone, and got to work, swinging the hammer down.

TWING!!!

What the heck?! The dragon’s body was vibrating at a continuous rate the moment his brought the hammer down, Sparx having to try and stop him from shaking, only to have said vibrations transfer to himself. “What’s this thing made of?” Spyro asked, not entirely aware that the dragonfly was still suffering a bout of tremors. Still, it dawned on him that he essentially answered his own question. He positioned the chisel again, and also brought down the hammer.

CRUNCH!

“OWWW!!!” Sparx had just regained his senses to be aware of that, flying (albeit with an unsteady start) up to see Spyro holding one paw up, the dragonfly immediately able to piece together what had happened, said paw swollen and red.

“I’m…I’m not gonna cry.” The little dragon declared, clearly on the verge of pain-ridden tears.

“Bzz, bzz, bzz.” (You just slammed your hand. I’d flipping cry!)

“You’d be crushed.” Spyro retorted, trying to keep stray droplets from leaving. “I just hit it, th-that’s all. I can take it!” he yelled again. “I’m NOT gonna cry! In fact,” to Sparx’s shock, the little dragon grabbed the hammer with one paw and began wailing on the stone block before him.

“I’m-“

CLANG!

“Gonna-“

CLANG!

“Make-“

CLANG!

“This-“

CLANG!

“Stupid-“

CLANG!

“Rock-“

CLANG!

“Pay-

CRACK!

With the last strike of the hammer, to their shock and horror, both Spyro and Sparx witnessed the stone block develop a long, splintering crack down its side. Soon, the crack began to fan outward past its origin place, spreading to the top, sides, and presumably the opposite of where they could see. That…was not supposed to happen. Tentatively, the dragon brought his claw up and gave the
block a light touch.

The entire thing crumbled before them.

“Now then,” they both heard a voice behind them, as well as accompanying footsteps. “I don’t expect you to be able to carve a work of brilliance such as this for your first sculpture, but with time, and MY guidance, you shall be on your way to becoming a fine…” Nils stopped dead in his tracks.

“Uh…Nils?” Spyro began, nervously waving. “You…know what your said? About the whole ‘angel’ thing?”

The sculptor could only nod slowly, gazing on in horror at the broken stone before him.

“Did that guy say anything about ‘gluing’ them back together? Because…” the purple dragon looked to the useless pile of rocks before him. “I think I just killed this one.”
Overstuffed

Chapter Summary

In preparation for a birthday party, Spyro is tasked with helping out with the party favors. Of course, he decides that for the occasion, he needs to make it as big and grand as possible.

In more ways than one.

Chapter Notes

Given that Devlin’s found with a massive cake and all, I thought it only fitting that he be doing so in this. Of course, with that, there’s got to be party favors aside from it. Which sort of, shamefully, came from Cooking Mama, idea wise. Also, I sort of headcanon (even if it’s sort of been proven in the games) that dragons live for a long, long, LONG time, and what might be a century or two would just be early teens to middle age for them. I don’t really have a direct lifespan, yet for the most part, they could potentially live for about a millennium or two at the longest.

Enjoy!

“Awesome!” he declared, hoping up and down. “Awesome, awesome, awesome, awesome!”

A blue, stout dragon chuckled at the little one’s enthusiasm and excitement. And really, it was nothing short of the appropriate attitude for this task. In but a few days, their Gavin was to turn the whooping year of 300 years old! True, the fiasco that occurred regarding him slipping a bit of his cafffeinated goodness (Heavens knows that each and every one of them relied on it to get through the day) wasn’t too long ago, but whatever damage that had been caused had been repaired (albeit begrudgingly by Cosmos and a handful of Magic Crafters), and thus, most animosity directed to the barista had all but slipped into the past. Save for Alban, though that dragon never forgot anything. And Alvar, yet really, he still held grudges even from hatchling-hood. Others, such as Lindar, simply used it in humorous remarks and sarcastic quips. Indeed, it seemed to be something Gavin would have a LONG time getting over.

Nevertheless, such things had died down this week due to the dragon’s big day coming up, as well as the anticipation for whatever their local pâtissier would concoct in his kitchen.

“So, what are we gonna make?” Spyro asked. “Huh? What? What?”

“Slow down, slow down, boy!” Devlin urged. “I haven’t even cracked any eggs yet, so to speak.” This managed to get the little dragon to simmer down a smidge, though it was clear his anticipation knew no such thing as ‘going down’. Sparx could attest to that from firsthand experience. “The first thing to do is decide on what sort of cake Gavin prefers, which I have thanks to some prodding around courtesy of Astor.”
“Really?” Spyro questioned, somewhat doubtful.

“Believe it or not.” Devlin confirmed. “Old as he is, his memory never fails him. He remembered all the way back from Gavin’s fifth birthday.”

‘Yeah and everything else, whether you want to hear it or not.’

“And while his tastes may have changed, from what I have heard, he’s still got quite the hankering for chiffon cake.”

“Chiffon what?”

“A cake.”

“Yeah, but what kind of cake? Never heard of it.”

“It’s a unique type of cake. Mainly due to using vegetable oil in the making of it instead of traditional fat, a la butter or shortening. Plus, the egg whites are separated from the yolks as well as beaten separately.”

“Why?”

“Well,” Delvin continued. “It’s to give it its distinct flavor and texture. It may look like angel food if one were to look, but in contrast, it uses eggs and fat as opposed to the former not being made with such.”

“Why?”

“Bzzz.” Sparx whispered in the baker’s ear. (Don’t get him started. Otherwise you’ll never get anything done).

“Yes, well, getting back on topic.” Devlin stated, adjusting his apron and straightening his toque. “You’re going to help me in this by-”

“Ooh! Ooh! Making the cake, right?”

The blue dragon bit his lip. This was going to come up sooner or later, though he hated to have to disappoint the boy. “Actually, no.” he told him, surprise and the resulting downcast face following not long after.

“Aw, why not?”

“Now, Spyro.” The baker folded his arms. He had to do this, let alone see the boy’s face in the state it was in, yet he was instructed to be firmer with him. “I suppose you remember what happened last year at Thor’s 925th party, yes?”

“Hey, everyone was worried about it being boring because Thor’s an old guy, so I thought jumping out of the cake would liven things up!”

“And nearly give Thor and everyone else a heart attack.”

“…he liked it. I think.”

“Well, did you like having to clean up the party site after it was over, and not getting anything from it a few days after?” Spyro didn’t argue. That part, he would care not to repeat again.
“But...I wanna do something!” he protested, still refusing to give up the fight. It wasn’t fair! True, he had no intentions of jumping out of any cakes this time, but still! There was going to be a big celebration, and he couldn’t do anything to be a part of setting it up? And no, just putting streamers and hats out didn’t count (though he’d probably be told that would be his contribution anyway). “I promise I won’t screw anything up! I’ll make sure no eggshells get in and I measure stuff out! I won’t jump out or even get in the cake!” he began professing a string of promises and things he swore not to do, ranging from not getting the batter everywhere to not mistaking baking soda and power, almost anything, Devlin had thought. “C’mon, please?” Spyro begged, lifting one paw up as if asking for a treat, or in this case, an answer. “I promise I won’t.”

Devlin sighed, Sparx in turn flying back to the smaller dragon. ‘Darn it, you’re not making this easy for me.’ He thought. Still, those wide, violet eyes were near impossible, no, outright impossible to resist. ‘Oooh, sorry, Nestor.’ He mentally apologized. ‘Looks like I’m not the right kind of dragon for that line of work.’ “All right, all right.” He gave in, holding his hands up as if surrendering to him in battle. “I’ll let up help out. Just...please stop making that face.”

As if on a dime, Spyro’s downtrodden expression transitioned to the complete opposite. “Yeah! So, what do you want me to do?” he immediately asked, tail wagging to and fro.

“Well, it’s not with anything concerning the cake.” The preteen’s expression began to sour. “But there’s going to be more than cake at the party. And with a lot of us, there’s going to be plenty of snacks needing to be sorted out, as well as other pastries to be taken care of.” He assured. “Plus, it might help you work on your hand coordination.”

Oh, come on? Again, with the hand thing again? Still, at least in a way, he was getting his wish. Only question now was, what was it?

This wasn’t exactly what he had in mind.

“Bzz, bzzt, bzz, bzz.” (You’ve got to stop setting your expectations so high.)

Spyro sighed. True, he had WANTED to help. But this...this had nothing to do with the cake. It had something to do with the food, but not one thing to do with the cake. Heck, it was as if he was outright told to stay aware from it. Ok, maybe not that, but still, it was clear that Devlin didn’t exactly trust him regarding the main party favor. Thus, he put him on another duty.

And, as he said, it did force him to make use of his ‘hands’.

Currently, Spyro had a collection of oblong, baked dough that, to the naked eye, seemed to be just that. That was because they had yet to filled with cream and covered with chocolate. Of which were before the dragon, cream in a squeezer, chocolate melted and in a bowl near said squeezer.

“Bzz, bzz, bzz, bzz.” (Y’know, given the guy’s expertise, you’d think he’d want something like a tiramisu or a mocha flavored cake.)

“Ok, get me the squeezer.” The dragon asked (or rather, commanded), the dragonfly pushing it forward. “Well...here goes.” These things were going to fill and cover themselves.

Sticking the end in one side of the first pastry, Spyro put pressure on the squeezer, the custard slowly, seemingly begrudgingly, making its way out of its holding place and into the pastry, said pastry growing bigger and bigger as its once empty interior was being filled.

“Bzz, bzz, bzz.” (I think that’s enough.) Sparx told the preteen, he in turn releasing the squeezer
and grabbing the brush inside the bowl of chocolate, brushing the top of the baked good.

Viola! He had just made his first, and a successful éclair! Now...only fifty or so more. Yeah, making the cake, knowing Devlin, would probably take a long time. Yet...at least he'd be doing something majorly important! Something that the dragon could tell the others that he was the one that helped in making Gavin’s favorite. But...maybe, just maybe, he could make this work out too.

"Y’know," Spyro began, looking to the filled and covered éclair. “This kinda looks a little small, doesn’t it?"

“Bzz? Bzz, bzz.” (Huh? No, don’t think so.) the dragonfly tilted his head, rubbing his chin with his front feeler. “Bzz, bzz. Bzz, bzz, bzz.” (Well...maybe. But you’ve got fifty of these to fill, so there’s got to be enough for every one of them).

“Yeah, but look!” Spyro then pressed down a little on the éclair, a bit of cream coming out. “It’s just so...so...”

“Bzz?” (So...?)

“Well...this is for a birthday, right?”

“Bzz?” (Uh...yeah?)

“So, the cake and other stuff is gonna need to be good, right?”

“Bzz?” (Yeah?)

“So, shouldn’t we...y’know, go all out on these?”

Sparx was confused. “Bzz, bzz, bzz?” (Got all out? That’s what the cake’s for.)

“Yeah, but...” The golden insect didn’t exactly like where this was maybe going. “No, I’m not going to mess anything up. At least, I won’t try to.”

“Bzz, bzz.” (Try is subjective for you.)

“Look, it’s just something I’m wanting to add on. Nothing else.” Spyro affirmed. “Only problem is...” his violet eyes searched around. “You mind helping me look for the sprinkles?”

A Couple of Days Later

It was quite taxing to place all 300 candles on the cake. Yet as they were promptly blown out, Delvin found it worth it.

“HAPPY BIRTHDAY GAVIN!!!” each and every Artisan shouted, the blue skinned barista’s cheeks turning pink.

“You guys...”

“Well, c’mon!” Delbin urged. “Dig in! First dibs is on you!”

“If you insist,” honestly, he was practically waiting for this moment all week. The knife cut through the three layered, icing and fruit covered chiffon (the most lower half specifically) and placed it on one of the many plates, gathering a fork to cut into it yet again. Of course, it was then that he noticed. “Where’s Spyro?”
“Hopefully not getting into your coffee beans.” Lindar joked, collective laughter following suit. Gavin simply rolled his eyes, yet he too saw humor in the clockmaker’s comment. “Really, though, I don’t think I’ve seen him either. Where is that kid?”

“Oh, he said he wanted to put some finishing touches on the eclairs before the party.” Devlin explained. “Though…he should be here by now- “

“Sorry I’m late!” well, well, right on cue. Pushing a tray with his horns, Sparx also assisting in sitting atop of a tower of pastries to keep them from falling over. And given how large everyone’s eyes were, they were somewhat thankful for the little dragon’s rarely executed caution. “Happy birthday, Gavin!” he proclaimed, stepping away from the tray and beaming with pride.

‘Well…’ Delvin thought, eyes surveying what was before him. ‘At least he did what he was told… sort of.’

Indeed, the eclairs were done and filled. Oh, were they filled. At first, on the bottom layer, they appeared to be normal sized with just the right amount of filling and chocolate. But on the second layer, they appeared to be bigger and covered in a mish mash of sprinkled. Ok, not bad. Honestly, expected from the boy. Then came the third layer. These were even bigger, and practically coated in chocolate and sprinkles. But they were nothing compared to the top layer. The top layer was dedicated to one and only one éclair. This pastry was swollen and presumably stuffed with whatever cream was left in the squeezer. Perhaps Delvin put in too much, yet this one…this was of mammoth size. The chocolate atop was just a small brushing, and the sprinkles were piled on high.

“Seeing as it’s your birthday, and that there was going to be more food than just the cake, I wanted to make these things extra special!” Spyro proclaimed, chest out with pride. Sparx simply sighed. He could already tell this was going to go sour.

“Oh. Well…thank you.” Gavin told him, though his eyes gazed at the large, and frankly, rather intimidating pastry that was practically smushing the others.

A brief silence fell over the castle chamber, the purple dragon simply gazing at everyone with large, pleading eyes. “Well?” it was clear what he wanted.

“Well, Gavin here IS the birthday boy,” Lindar began. “It’d only be fitting if HE have a taste test.”

“Uh, no, I’m fine.” The barista retorted. “I’ll definitely have some, but I don’t want to hog all the-“

“No, no, no, I insist.” The clockmaker interrupted. “It’s only right you have the first bite. Right guys?” the response was slow at first, yet eventually, almost everyone nodded and agreed with him. Heck, even Nestor and Devlin himself agreed (though the former simply put his hand to his face). Though they appeared to simply wish for him to have the first take, it was clear what the alternative motive was.

“All right.” Gavin stated. His fate couldn’t be averted forever. Going over to the large éclair, he observed it again. Truly, it was monstrous. But the little dragon’s eyes bridled with anticipation. ‘Ok.’ He thought, bringing the knife to it to cut a small bit off. ‘Here we go.’

SPLOOSH!

Gavin, the cake, the refreshment table, and everyone else, were bombarded with a tidal wave of custard. And once he was able to wipe the cream from his eyes, the blue, tattooed dragon saw that, unlike the larger members of his clan, Spyro was barely recognizable, little more than a blob of
paleish yellow with horns and eyes. Sparx was seemingly stuck on the ceiling, wings plastered by the custard. Still, once he got a taste, he took a moment to savor it, surprised at what he found.

“Hmm…” he stated, licking it off his lips. “Well, at least everyone here likes custard.”

He was going to be in trouble, he knew it. Still, at least, from the look of things, Gavin’s smile indicated that his ‘present’ wasn’t a total failure. Hey, at least he did ‘liven’ things up. Again.
Cider Stew

Chapter Summary

Making stew for dinner, Spyro believes that he's more than capable of accomplishing it. Though, one particular ingredient is one he really shouldn't mess with.

Chapter Notes

Geez, I’m on a roll! Three one-shots in a span of four days! Don’t know how long this’ll last, but hey, guess I need to milk it for all it’s worth! This may be a bit similar to the last one yet given both Delvin and Alvar are dragons that have food in their profession, I guess it’s sort of inevitable. Just hope it’s different enough to distinguish the two. Also, there are references to alcohol in this one, though personally to me, that’s far from anything to up the rating on.

Another note, I don’t hate Alvar. I don’t hate any of the Elder Dragons. I just like to point and exploit their flaws.

Why?

Why, why, why, why, why?

Why, oh why, did he have to be saddled with ‘him’ today?

True, there wasn’t anything special, let alone for the rest of the week. Yet still, his current ‘student’ wasn’t exactly known for not being accident prone. Amongst other things.

Still, he was stuck with ‘him’, whether he liked it or not. Sighing, he turned to the small, purple dragon sitting by a large cauldron. ‘Might as well get this over with.’ Straightening his apron that came to his waist, he went over to the pot. “You arrived earlier than I thought. Then again, probably because food was involved.”

“Uh…kinda?” Spyro said sheepishly, Alvar just rolling his eyes.

“All right, this should be simple enough, even for you.” He gestured to the pot. “Stew basically consists of throwing ingredients into a pot and keeping the water boiling at the right temperature.”

Simple enough? The little dragon felt insulted, yet Sparx urged him to hold his tongue. Alvar was…well, just being Alvar. What indication was there that he’d be any different?

“Anyway, this here is a little recipe of mine that’s never failed to satisfy.” The butcher clicked his claws on the rim of the filled, yet not yet boiling cauldron. “Pork and cider stew I call it.” he proclaimed with pride. “Utilizes the flavors of meat, vegetables, and fruit, all in one. And creates a refreshing taste that rejuvenates the body.”

“He’s really laying it on thick, isn’t he?” Spyro whispered to the dragonfly, only for Alvar to cut
his speech short.

“Anything you want to share?”

“N-No! I’m good, thanks!”

The red dragon huffed, smoke rising from his nostrils. Oh well, it mattered not. But should he do it again, he WOULD say something. “As I was saying,” he began again, shooting Spyro a look. “This stew is easy enough for even you to make, yet as with anything, preparation has to be done correctly, otherwise the taste will be ruined.” He explained.

Spyro glanced at the large collection of ingredients before him. Out on a wooden board lay chopped sweet potatoes, parsnips, carrots, onions, Granny Smith apples, and what appeared to be dried sage and thyme (though really, he couldn’t tell the difference). Needless to say, he was rather intimidated. “All of this has to go in there.”

“Where else?” Alvar stated. “That’s your part in this.” He gestured to the pot. “I want you to put all this in the pot, then warm it up,” he gestured to a set of logs underneath the cauldron. “and keep it warm and burning until I come back.”

“Come back? Wait, you’re leaving me?”

“Of course I am.” The cook exclaimed. “Like heck I’m allowing you to lay one claw on the meat or spices. Let alone the cider.” He turned to leave. “Now remember, there’s no specific order that you put them in. I’ve already salted and peppered them, so you can just toss them in. Think you can do that?”

“Yeah, I got it.” Spyro answered back.

“Hopefully.” With that, Alvar left to collect the remaining components needed.

Once he was sure the chef was gone, the young dragon snorted indigently. “Who does he think he is? I’m not stupid!”

Sparx nodded in agreement. Frankly, despite Spyro’s seemingly impeccable ability to make a mess of things, to have him be treated like that really ruffled his wings. And he didn’t even have feathers. “Bzz bzz, bzzt. Bzz bzz, bzz.” (You know, the best way to get back at him is to prove him wrong.)

“Hey, yeah.” Spyro nodded. “Well, fine! Let’s show him!” with that, the dragon dove in, everything going into the cauldron and the water that filled it in heaps upon heaps, food seemingly flying wildly, yet for the most part, it made its mark where it was supposed to go. Yeah, that’d teach him! He could do it! Oh yeah, he’d throw these thing SO well, that Alvar would practically BEGGING for him to do this each and every time this thing and other stews, heck, anything else was being made!

And to finish it off, puffing out his cheeks, Spyro expelled fire from his mouth, igniting the logs under the pot, the water rising to a boil not long after due to the heat.

“Well,” a voice came from nearby, Alvar bringing with him the meat and a bottle of golden liquid. “My eyes don’t deceive me. You actually managed to do it without anything being destroyed.”

“ Heck yeah, I did!” Spyro proclaimed, his voice clearly indicating it was a ‘take that!’ to the older dragon.

“Don’t get cocky.” The red skinned butcher huffed. “You’re not out of the woods yet.” Going to
the wooden board, he landed slabs of seasoned meat in front of him. “Seeing as you’ve managed to
get this done, and there’s the fact that you should be able to handle more responsibility at your age,
you get to toss the meat in as well.”

“Fine by me!” the younger dragon answered back, clearly pumped up. Then, his eyes fell on the
bottle Alvar held in his apron pocket. “What’s that?”

“The cider, of course.” Alvar stated. “It’s not just pork stew after all.” He then noticed Spyro’s
eagerness. “Don’t bother. It’s nothing for kids to be messing with.”

“Then why are you putting it in the stew?” the young dragon asked.

“Because that’s going to be for everyone else.” The cook explained. “I’m making yours
separately.”

“Aw, why?” Spyro asked.

“Didn’t you just hear me? Cider is not for kids. Especially you.”

“I could do it! Totally!” the younger dragon argued.

“Yeah, well you won’t.” Alvar huffed, folding his arms. “Now then, keep the water boiling while I
go work on your ‘cider-less’ version.” With that, he turned away, yet as he did so, the bottle was
jostled in such a way where it was leaning just enough so that, with his sudden, fast paced walking,
it fell from its place in his apron and bouncing off of its top, then on its bottom, until it couldn’t
travel any further due to hitting the young, purple dragon.

Sparx immediately sat atop of the bottle, shaking his head.

“What?” the dragonfly buzzed in protest. “Not you too.” Spyro took the bottle, looking at the
contents. “Doesn’t look like anything ‘not for kids’. Looks like apple juice really.” Sparx continued
to protest. “C’mon! I’m just doing what he told me to do!” Spyro retorted. “He wants this stew to
be the best ever, then fine. I’ll make it the best ever!” he then opened the cap with his teeth.
“Besides, there’s no better way than to prove him wrong, right?” and holding it with his mouth,
Spyro poured the contents into the stew, the yellow liquid becoming one with everything else.
“See?” he said, gesturing to the water. “Now it’s done! All we have to do is wait for Alvar to come
back and- “

“And what?” Spyro and Sparx turned to see the red dragon having come back. “Is that my cider
bottle?!”

“Yeah, but you- “

“Give me that!” Alvar swiped it out off Spyro’s mouth, seemingly not even registering what had
just happened. In fact, he seemed to be completely unaware that it had even been opened. “I told
you, this stuff is not for kids!”

“What does that even mean?” Spyro questioned further. “Not for kids how?”

“Just…keep the cauldron hot.” The cook sighed. “Otherwise, I might have to let the bulls have
your stew.” He once again left, oblivious to what had just happened.

The Next Morning

Stretching out, his claws gripping at the floor tiles, Spyro yawned once again, shaking off the last
bits of sleep. The clock had surprisingly read that it was 8:30, the usual time Sparx woke him up. Still, despite this, as he and the dragonfly exited the room, they both took to noticing that the castle’s interior appeared rather…empty.

Where was everyone?

He considered himself nothing short of a fool that he allowed this to happen.

When the stew had been dug into, everyone remarked on how there was a particular ‘difference in the taste of it. A certain ‘sharpness’ in the taste that, while different, was still relatively liked amongst the general crowd. Thus, they continued to take it in.

Then, again, he didn’t notice at first, yet Alvar found himself feeling more…amiable. Downright pleasant. The best he had felt in a long while, really. Soon, everyone else followed suit, some sooner than others, yet eventually, all the dragons save for one had begun to become more jovial and conversational. Declarations of how ‘awesome or ‘amazing’ the other was rang through the dining room. Dragons were all touchy-feely, and even more, he was ok with it! Heck, he had Alban and Delbin in an embrace of all things (though it was more like a fuzzy, feeling good choke hold).

Then, as more stew was eaten, things began to take a downward spiral. Some complained of sickness and nausea, retiring to their rooms. Some kept on eating and eating until they found themselves unable to hold it in anymore, spewing it back out. And no one had a problem with this. They thought it was funny! Others began to get on the table and remove their articles of clothing, waving them around as if they believed themselves to be some erotic dancer. And he and everyone else encouraged it!

The night descended into utter chaos. Enjoyable, euphoric chaos.

Euphoria that ended the moment he woke up, head throbbing and pounding in agony. Whoever else was up, Alvar didn’t know, yet it didn’t surprise him that others would be sharing in his pain.

He should’ve checked his pocket sooner. He should’ve realized that the bottle was empty.

And he should’ve worn out that kid’s hide when he had the chance.

If anything…at least that would come later, the only thing he had to look forward to.
Beauty in the Broken

Chapter Summary

Upon breaking his pottery bowl, Thor takes it upon himself to teach the boy that nothing must stay broken forever.

Chapter Notes

I’m trying to type these in one sitting, both to control how much I put in, as well as teach myself of how I can write without putting in so much that it becomes exhausting to read (really bad habit of mine I’m trying to break). The process of restoration that’s mentioned in this is quite fascinating, and the examples you can find online are indeed quite beautiful.

That said, hope you enjoy!

He should’ve perhaps known something was wrong.

While the little dragon wasn’t really one to be enthusiastic about learning, from what he could recall, not once had he come back early from one of his lessons (save for the first few times he snuck out, of which were promptly ‘corrected’ by extending said lesson). Let alone in a state such as this.

“Nestor?” a voice asked from behind him, old and somewhat croaky.

“Ah, Thor.” The carpenter greeted, though he bore quite the worried expression. “What is it?”

“The boy didn’t happen to pass by here, did he?”

“Spyro?” the potter nervously bit his lip. “What happened?”

Reaching into the large pocket of his apron, the yellow, elderly dragon pulled out shards of a broken, clay bowl already glazed in a purple hue, smooth to the touch. “Oh.” Well that answered part of Nestor’s question. “But hasn’t he broken almost anything he’s made? What’s gotten him all worked up about this one?”

“I’m not entirely sure.” The potter confessed, adjusting his small pair of spectacles. “Though…if possible, do you know where he’s headed off to?”

It was a rare sight indeed to see him this upset. And while it was occurring now, Sparx could attest that he hated it. He rested atop of the small boy’s head, trying offer some sort of comfort to the sniffling dragon, only to have his attempts either not answered or retorted with chocked out, soft cries of ‘no’ and ‘it’s not like that’.
“Bzz, bzzz bzzt bzz.” (Hey, it’s not like you meant to.) he assured.

“It-sniff-doesn’t matter.” Spyro told him, still buried underneath his covers.

“Bzzt, bzz, bzz, bzz.” (And it’s not like Thor’s made or anything.”

“I don’t care.” Spyro sniffed again. “It’s ruined now. It’s all ruined.”

Sparx was at a loss, sighing as he realized he was fighting a losing battle. But just then, he heard the door open, though was surprised to find it wasn’t Nestor or any of the other dragons current in the castle that had come into the small dragon’s room.

“Go away.” Spyro said, not really caring who had just come in.

“Oh, there you are.” An old voice chuckled. “I thought you had gone somewhere else.”

Spyro’s eyes widened, jostling from his hiding place (and knocking Sparx off balance) and popping his head out. “What are you doing here?”

Thor took a moment to breathe, as well as adjust his glasses yet again. “I think you know why, boy.”

Spyro retreated under the covers yet again. “Then you should know I’m not coming out!”

Thor was rather taken aback by his response. While it wasn’t something he’d ever say aloud, the boy wasn’t exactly skilled at pottery and had broken a good dozen or so projects (some of them his own). Yet he thought that Nestor had only gotten a brief glimpse and assumed the worst. The potter didn’t expect for Spyro to be this shaken up about it. “It was just a bowl.” He assured. “It’s not as if I’m going to run out of clay anytime soon. You can just make another- “

“It’s not like that!” Spyro interrupted.

“What’s it like.” Thor asked.

“It…I didn’t want to break it.” the younger dragon sighed. “I didn’t want to break it.”

“No, of course you didn’t.” the potter assured. “But why does this one matter so much? You never did this when you- “

“Because I tried this time!” Spyro interrupted again. “I really, REALLY tried this time! I wanted it to not end up broken!” from the sudden drop in volume and muffled quality of his voice, Thor assumed that he had buried his face in a pillow. “I tried. I did…” he began sniffling yet again, and the elderly dragon sensed that he wasn’t going to get much further than this. So, with little else to do, he made his exit, his heart given a small jump as he noticed Nestor waiting outside.

“Sorry.” The leader apologized. “He not talking?”

“Not aside from stating the obvious.”

Both dragons were at a loss. Sure, the boy would possibly get over it in time, yet still, if there was a solution to this, then…it was then that it came to Thor. Of course! Why didn’t he think of it sooner?

“What is it?” Nestor asked, noticing the old dragon’s sudden excitement.

“Tell the boy to come to Town Square tomorrow. I’ll need a day to get it ready.”
“Get what ready?”

“Just wait.” The potter assured. “I have just the thing.

The Next Day

“Ah, there you are, my boy.”

Spyro nodded in acknowledgement, though it was clear he didn’t exactly want to be here in the old dragon’s studio. The only reason he was here at all was due to Sparx not letting up on it.

“Anyway,” Thor began, gesturing to the shards of the purple bowl on the table, Spyro’s gaze immediately averting from it. “I’ve got just the thing to put this thing back together.”

“Sorry, but I don’t think there’s…” Spyro then paused. “Wait. Put what back together?”

“The bowl, what else?” the potter confirmed. It was then that both small dragon and dragonfly noticed a small pot on the table, along with a brush.

“What’s that for?” Spyro asked, Sparx as well confused.

“That,” Thor began. “Is how we’re going to put this bowl back together.” Put it back together? Frankly, as far as Spyro was concerned, he had already smashed that thing to Kingdom Come.

“Tell me, boy, are you familiar with the art of kintsugi?”

Spyro’s only response to this was a sigh. “I…don’t really think that that’s gonna work.”

“Oh really?” as if on cue, Thor opened a cabinet and pulled out a pot. “Don’t forget, you’ve also broken some of my work on accident.”

The little dragon and insect’s brows quirked. “Kintsu-what? No offense, but that sounds totally weird.”

“Well, at least he’s somewhat gone back to normal.’ Thor thought. “It’s something you have to get used to pronouncing, but the easiest way to say it is that it means ‘golden rejoining.’ Which is because, well,” he gestured to the container of paint. “what this is for.”

Spyro’s only response to this was a sigh. “I…don’t really think that that’s gonna work.”

“Oh really?” as if on cue, Thor opened a cabinet and pulled out a pot. “Don’t forget, you’ve also broken some of my work on accident.”

The little dragon was left speechless at what he saw. He remembered that pot, with a green glaze and linings of red with yellow dots in the middle. An accidental swipe of the tail sent it to the floor (as well as the punishment of cleaning the studio afterward via Nestor), yet he was never aware Thor had taken it upon himself to fix it. The evidence of where it had been broken was still there, but streams of golden paint or glaze or whatever it had lined them, said gold shimmering in the light of the small lamp hanging above.

“How...how’d you do that?” Spyro asked, obviously quite impressed.

“That, is kintsugi.” Thor told him. “It’s the art of taking broken pottery instead of throwing it out.” He went over to the smaller dragon and placed a hand on his shoulder. “And kintsugi also refers to the philosophy of acknowledging flaws, embracing change, and restoring an object with newfound beauty.”

Spyro looked to the repaired pot, then to the broken shards of his bowl, switching back between the two. Sparx nodded, flying over to the table and picking up the brush and bringing it to the young dragon. “Well…” he finally said. “I’m not really good with my ‘hands’.”
“That’s fine.” Thor assured. “You can stick things together though, right?”

“Well…yeah.”

“Well, that’s all you need. I can handle the hard stuff if you want. The question is, do you want to try it, or trash it?”

Spyro was silent for quite a while, his attention now shifting in between Sparx and the elderly potter. “I guess…” he finally began. “I guess I don’t have to worry about breaking it if I do this.”

With that, the three made their way to the table, sitting (or in Spyro’s case, climbing) onto a stool, the can and shards before them. He had no idea if this was going to even be successful, yet really, there seemed to be little else that could go wrong for the little dragon now.

Especially now that Thor had up and put his own repaired pot back in the cabinet.

**A Few Days Later**

Did he tell Sparx how much he hated calligraphy practice yet? The dragonfly seemed to think so, but Spyro saw fit to keep informing him of how he hated, hated, hated, hated, HATED calligraphy practice.

“I swear, Alban wants to torture me.” He complained, paws sore from trying to hold that blasted quill the ‘right way’.

“Bzz bzz bzz bzz.” (It’s called ‘practice’ for a reason. It’s to help you get ‘perfect’.)

“Yeah, well, I can be ‘perfect’ when I want to.” Spyro argued back, both he and the dragonfly going off to their shared room for the night. “And as for how I’m ‘not holding it right,’” he continued, imitating Alban’s voice in a mocking tone. “I bet you anything that the way I’m holding it is fine. He just doesn’t think it’s ‘proper or whatever he thinks is the ‘only way’.”

“Bzzt bzz bzz.” (Well, at least you don’t have it for the rest of the week. There is that.)

“Yeah, I guess.” Oh geez, his front paws hurt. Yet thankfully, they mad it to the room. Pushing it open with his head, Spyro and Sparx entered, making their way to the collection of sheets, only for something sitting on the nearby shelf to draw their attention.

A small bowl glazed in purple, only now, embezzled and partially covered with chaotic, yet beautiful lines of gold.

The process wasn’t simply to paint the broken pieces back together (the paint wasn’t actually ‘paint’ per say, but lacquer derived from tree sap), the excess had to be scrapped off with a small razor blade (of which Thor thankfully took care of for him). But all the same, there it was. Broken, but repaired. Not hiding where it had been smashed, yet still, it was whole once again.

And, in the two’s shared opinion. Looked even better than before.
Records of Things Past

Chapter Summary

Upon accidentally knocking over some scrolls, Spyro and Sparx come across bits and pieces of text that indicate a grimmer picture of one of the dragons they know.

Chapter Notes

Again, this is based on an official piece of art from Reignited, albeit altered a bit. This also gives a bit more insight (thought just a bit) into the past conditions of the dragon's, as well as other details that they probably don’t want someone as young as Spyro to know.

This is more solemn than the last few ones, yet it also fits into the events that took place before Spyro’s birth, and in a couple of the other Dragon’s childhoods. Again, don’t want to give away too much, but consider this and Astor’s chapter small tidbits into what occurred before the ‘peace’ that had come to the Dragon Realms.

Hope you enjoy!

At least it wasn’t calligraphy. At least it wasn’t calligraphy. At least it wasn’t…

No.

No, the recitation made no difference.

It was no better than calligraphy. Dare say, in this very moment, he thought it to be worse.

“Don’t just haphazardly throw them all together!” and the fact the very same dragon he had to deal with being the helm of it all didn’t make things better either. “These have to be kept in exact order! Honestly, Spyro, your organizational skills leave much to be desired.”

Said purple adolescent scowled. “Thanks.” He said aloud, though it was clear that Alban’s observation wasn’t well received.

“Never fails to head helpful advice. Remember that.” The rose-colored scribe told him, adjusting his monocle and taking a light blue feather from his crest.

‘Yeah, and I can give you advice of where you can kiss it.’ Sparx advised him beforehand to keep his mouth shut, lest he prolong his torture. Still, it failed to make said experience much better. Either break your leg or your wings. Those were your two choices, pick one. One was clearly better than the other, yet no one wished for either to happen.

“Bear in mind, it’s a Heaven blessed miracle that Cedric was able to restore these from your caffeine induced wave of destruction.” Alban continued on, turning to the current scroll he was jotting down on. “If not, then we would be having QUITE the session regarding your calligraphy
skills. Of which, you HAVE been practicing as instructed, have you?”

“Huh?” Spyro was drawn from the collection of wound up scrolls, Sparx sitting atop of them. “Oh, y-yeah! Sure thing!” it was then that he realized what trap he had probably just walked into.
‘Please don’t make me write something. Please don’t make me write something. Please don’t- ‘

“Whatever the case, it probably isn’t enough.” The scribe nonchalantly continued. “But that can be dealt with later. For now,” he turned to face the younger dragon. Gesturing to the pile of scrolls. “Place these in the archives in Oswin’s library.”


“As well as your vocabulary.” Alban scolded. Honestly, where did the youth hear such language? Certainly not from him. “I take it that also applies to your sense of direction?” Spyro didn’t answer. “Ugh, honestly. Must I do EVERYTHING?” he muttered to himself, grabbing a belt and then the small dragon himself.

“H-Hey!” Spyro protested, squirming.

“Lest you want this night to go on longer, I suggest you cease struggling.” The smaller, younger of the two found a belt placed on him and promptly tightened (to the point where he swore his innards were about to pop out of his mouth), then he was set down. “Take the scrolls with this and deliver them to the room to the left in the library.” He then turned back to his work. “Surely even you could do something as simple as that.”

Something as simple as that. Oh yeah, he could do it. He could also tell him he could take each and every little lecture and remark he gave him and shove it right up his…

“Bzz, bzz bzzt bzz.” (Looks like we’re here.)

Indeed, and good thing too. Heaven help him if he dropped these things in the water. Really though, why was there water in here?! As Alban said, to the left of the shelves upon shelves of books, a small chamber presented itself, containing a collection of scrolls contained in various shelves. Though unlike the books lining the last and main hub of Oswin’s library, these shelves appeared to be far deeper, presumably to contain the far longer scrolls. ‘Of course it would, silly boy.’ Alban’s voice lectured in his head, though at the moment, Spyro found himself struggling to think. Let alone struggling to breathe. Of which was thankfully ended via Sparx undoing the belt holding the clutches of scrolls.

“Th-Thanks…” Spyro wheezed, falling to the floor as he caught his breath. “We’re dragging that back. I don’t care what he says.” Still, that said, his eyes fell on the shelves, noticing that where the most available empty space was a bit ways up. “Oh, great.” He looked to Sparx. “You mind?”

Sparx flew over to one of the scrolls bearing a blue tassel. It seemed with everything, Alban had an order to everything: blue-red-green-and yellow in sequential order, said order more than prevalent in the room. His feelers grabbed the scroll and his wings beat, slowly, yet steadily dragging it up, up, up to one of the upper shelves. Yet upon reaching it, he realized that the scroll was labeled green. Lovely. Just lovely.

Of course, his descent downward wasn’t as successful. Then again, the scroll’s weight wasn’t
exactly good for his back.

His feelers gave way, the scroll falling from his grip, to the dragonfly’s horror. “I got it!” Spyro cried out from below, rushing towards the shelf. “I got it! I got it! I got- “

SLAM!

A shower of paper fell down from their places, both dragon and insect’s vision composed of nothing but dried, aged, rolled scrolls that continued down upon them. “Ow!” along with the hardened ends that held them together. By the time it was over, neither said a word to each other, knowing good and well how deep they were in. “Well…” Spyro finally started after a period of silence. “Where do we start?”

“Bzzt bzz bzz bzzzz bzz.” (Well, we have to read them to see where they go.)

Oh. Perfect. Perfect, perfect, perfect, perfect, perfect!

Spyro slumped over, more than tempted to set this entire pile on fire if he were able. Where in the world was he to start?! He had no idea when these things began, let alone in which order he should put them in! He didn’t know if they went clockwise, counterclockwise, or any sort of wise for that matter! Oh, what was he going to do!?

‘…five weeks since our arrival.’

Huh? His eyes caught some words from the scroll he had unintentionally knocked over. Maybe this was at least one of the first ones he could put somewhere. Assuming they went in a particular order aside from past to present (and knowing Alban, there probably was). Using his forepaws, Spyro pushed against the ends of the scroll, more of the text able to be seen.

‘My darling and I, along with my dearest boy, have been able to settle in along with the rest of us, yet still, there’s much that this new, foreign land we must watch out for. But a night or two ago, we saw strange, green creatures making their way in front of the campgrounds, seemingly having been observing us for some time. I suppose it was only a matter of time that our presence here be noticed by the natural inhabitants of this place. We can only hope that they are not hostile, and that Astor knows what he’s doing. Though personally, I believe he’s putting too much emphasis on all this being the result of that witch putting us under some curse.

Artisan Scribe, Probatio.’

Probatio? Huh? Spyro was left at a loss for words. What was this thing talking about? Astor wasn’t the leader, and who was this Probatio guy? Though…didn’t Nestor once say that Astor, his own dad, was leader of the Artisans before him? The little dragon, and now the dragonfly, were befuddled by what this scroll read, yet given the use of names, both familiar and not, it was probably one of the first. Which meant finding the (potentially) next one. Spotting one with a red tassel, Spyro set the scroll to the side (unintentionally getting it mixed up in the rest of them again) and opened the one he went to, both he and Sparx finding different text.

‘The Gnorcs have the Artisan’s home, and thus, until it is reclaimed, we must reside with the Peacekeepers. Though it is not the greatest loss, I can attest that those green skinned buffoons had better not laid one hand on the library’s contents, lest I take the battle there myself. But I suppose that whatever occurs there isn’t the greatest concern. My darling Maryam has been struck ill. She insists that it is only a mild flu, though I cannot be certain. Honestly, I pray she’s right. Alban is concerned, yet I try to assure the boy that there is nothing wrong, yet even in his young eyes, I sense that he knows better. Unfortunately, it is beyond my power to do anything but attend to her
needs. But I feel that the boy may be onto something.

Artisan Scribe, Probatio.’

Probatio…was Alban’s dad? Or this guy at least knew him when he was a kid? This was getting confusing, yet both Spyro and Sparx couldn’t help but note how a small chill came to them when it mentioned this ‘Maryam’. No idea who that was, yet apparently Alban and his dad (maybe) were pretty worked up about it.

A scroll bearing a green tassel was nearby, the little dragon in turn opening it, both his and the insect’s eyes widening as they saw what it contained.

‘Maryam.

My dearest.

She is gone.’

There was nothing after that, nothing about this supposed loss of the Artisan home world, time with the Peacekeepers, not even a signature. Both Spyro and Sparx looked to each other, having been distracted from their initial goal due to what they were finding as they continued to read. There were surely large gaps in between each entry, and they were probably missing a good few, yet the fact remained that a tense discomfort perpetuated the room after that entry.

Yet with that, a sudden drive, a biting, gnawing intrigue also overcame the small space as well. Seeing a yellow tassel, they went over and opened it.

‘It was long and hard, but finally, our home is restored. Though this is far for the end of Dragon and Gnorc battles, let alone general tensions. It seems ever since we arrived here, we’ve been at odds with each other. That said, there is much rebuilding to be done, especially the library. Yet if there is any solace, I take this, at least my dear boy, Oswin, is still here with us, along with my Patricia. Quite a pity regarding both Probatio and his beloved, Maryam. Their poor boy is currently residing with us, and while he seems to be adjusting well, I dare not push too much. For now, the best we can do is make sure he is given as much as my own boy.’

Artisan (Temporary) Scribe and Librarian, Melvil.’

Wait, Melvil? No Probatio? And Alban…both Spyro and Sparx froze, looking to each other. “You don’t think that- “

“By Heavens above! What have you done!?” they turned to see Alban standing in the doorway, clearly horrified at what was before him.

“Oh geez!” Spyro, as if his very body acted on its own, shoved the scroll he was currently reading behind his back, as if to hide it. “I-we didn’t think you’d- “

“What? Come back and see this, this disaster!?” the purple striped scribe then sighed. “I should’ve known better than to trust you with even something as simple as this. Heaven knows you would only…” he then noticed Spyro’s odd posture. “What have you got there?”

“Got what?”

Alban folded his arms, claws drumming against his forearm. “Show me.” The little dragon’s behavior was perplexing to him. Strangely enough, he seemed to be reluctant to hand it to him. “Well?” finally though, the younger relented, handing the scroll to him. His eyes quickly scanned
it, but came to a halt, body seemingly seizing up and growing tense.

“Alban?” Spyro asked, though the scribe said nothing for a good while.

“Leave.” He finally spoke, voice firm, yet clearly wavering.

Wait, what did he say? “But…don’t you want me to- “

“You will.” Alban interrupted. “I far from trust you to arrange these correctly. You shall be tasked with putting them in their proper places once they’re organized. Until then, leave and wait outside.”

“Are you ok- “

“LEAVE.”

Spyro didn’t argue, he and Sparx making their exit (and taking care to not step on anything. Mostly) and going out of the library entirely. While it was clear that he wasn’t going to get out of this, that wasn’t entirely the little dragon’s concern at the moment. Yet the multitude of questions that flooded his head, he came to realize, would not be answered tonight. And perhaps not ever. Yet from what he and Sparx had seen, the names listed down, the may or may not have been relations…a hazy, yet still visible picture began to piece itself together in both of their minds.

Neither of them liking what their imagination saw fit to present them.
Three Act Structure

Chapter Summary

Struggling to come up with anything for Darius' assignment regarding the formula of the Three Act Structure, Spyro finds that a potential tragedy may also serve in helping him complete it.

Chapter Notes

Given Darius’ attire and demeanor, the works of Shakespeare will be referenced and mentioned here, though instead of people, dragons of course take their place. Also, there’s some mention of the other famous stories that aren’t exactly plays, but given Spyro’s age, he’d probably gravitate to more ‘cool’ stuff. Truth be told, this was originally intended to be separate one-shot, yet thinking it over, I found that this would be perfect for this particular subject. Also, I'm gauging that this takes place before the last one.

“So, you think you can run that by me again? Why the guy wanted to use magic to keep those guys on the island?”

Despite his insistence to retain his composure, Darius was beginning to lose his patience. “Prospero was driven by revenge due to being cast out of his dukedom by his brother, Antonio. Those that helped Antonio also were shipwrecked on the island thanks to the intervention of Ariel causing the storm and luring them to said island.”

“Who’s Ariel again?”

Darius had to move on, lest he begin channeling Prospero’s rage himself. Besides, all of Spyro’s questions were distracting him from the actual point of today’s lesson (though perhaps ‘tonight’s’ would’ve been more appropriate). ‘The child just doesn’t understand the poetic genius these works demonstrate.’ “The point is, that his initial desire for vengeance to his forgiveness of those who wronged him follows the flow of character development and the three-act structure.” He then presented a folded-up piece of paper to the little dragon, stretching it out to where it was to its full length and resembled that of a graph. “The first is the inciting incident, followed by a plot point that serves as the transition between Act One and Two. The midpoint lies in the middle, of which also has the transition of a plot point to bring us into the Climax.”

Spyro gazed to Sparx, whom seemed to be just as confused. “So... all plays and stories have to go like this?”

“Well, no, not all.” The blue skinned playwright answered. “Some works have the distinction of breaking this particular formula and some hold no chronological order, telling things not based in a linear timeline.” He took a moment to groom his mustache. “Though personally, I find the traditional method to be the most successful. After all, it wouldn’t be used so much if it didn’t guarantee some form of success.”
“Do they all have to have this ‘mushy’ stuff in there?” Spyro asked. “Why can’t they have some cool stuff like the one where the lady finds all the guy’s wives in a room all cut up and stuff?”

Darius was silent for a moment. “I’m going to pretend I didn’t hear that.” He cleared his throat. “That said, the Three Act Structure is an old formula that has used time and time again.” He then straightened out his scarf. “Everything, in a sense, begins with a dramatic question: the conflict with Prospero, or the incident with the marriage involving the young dragoness and Bluebeard: what will be or not be? Or as the creator of the Tempest said ‘To be or not to be.’ Spyro grew quiet, mainly surprised by how into it Darius was getting. “The First Act serves as a means to lay out the foundation of the story: characters, their situations, relations to each other, the world, all these things must be established. Then, an inciting incident, a dramatic event takes place that renders their world upside down and perhaps will never be the same again.” He said all this whilst alternating between a variety of poses, movement of his hands wild and constantly altering, ending with the dramatic question of what shall become of them all.”

Sparx and Spyro exchanged glances with each other, brows raising.

“The Second Act, also referred to the Rising Action, is the characters, specifically the protagonist, attempting to solve the dilemma that has been thrust upon them, only to find their predicament becoming worse and the stakes raising!” Darius continued, repeating the same motions as before. “The protagonist and other characters must grow and develop from where they started, overcoming their flaws or becoming aware of who they are as individuals, and using those traits to combat the antagonistic forces against them!”

Wow, both little dragon and dragonfly thought. Was he even aware what he looked like to them right now?

“And finally, the Third Act, or the Climax, where everything comes together. An intense, thrilling end that accumulates into all threads meeting and being solved! A reprieve from the drama then is given, allowing all to breathe and reflect on what has happened, and in turn, what they have gained and lost. Then,” he stopped, taking a bow. “The audience give their dues.” He looked to see the two simply staring at him, bug-eyed. “Well?”

Uh…ok? Spyro and Sparx began, albeit slowly (and with much confusion) clapping in response to Darius’ ‘performance’.

“Thank you, thank you!” he proclaimed. “You’re too kind!” Of course, it was then that he seemed to regain his senses, rising up and straightening his scarf. “Which,” he continued, clearing his throat. “Brings me to your assignment is for next week.”

Next Week

He was doomed.

“Bzz, bzzt, bzz bzz.” (I think you’re overreacting.)

“No, I’m not.” Spyro answered. “I can’t think of ANYTHING!” Darius’ session was him was a mere hour away, and still, he had absolutely nothing to show!

“Bzzt bzz bzzt bzz.” (Well, maybe if you didn’t goof off all week, you WOULD’VE maybe thought of something.)

“I was trying to think of something during all that stuff! It was for…what did he call it? Referencing?”
“Bzzt bzz bzz bzz bzz.” (Why not take Argus’ advice and just base it on something that happened during your day? Heaven knows anything can happen whenever you’re involved.)

“Oh, gee. Thanks”

Still though, Sparx and Argus’ words had merit. There wasn’t any reason that he COULDN’T base it on all the lessons he had this week. But…this week was SOOO boring! History, Mathematics, oh, and let’s not forget the oh-so-thrilling exploits of learning about the color wheel! He couldn’t go in with that, he was struggling to not fall asleep during half of them (which wouldn’t happen if lessons just started an hour or two AFTER nine)! What sort of ‘rising action’ was that? Did the little dragon fall asleep during his lesson or not? Oooh, how thrilling! He had to face facts; he was doomed. Doomed, doomed, doomed, doomed.

They were right at the entrance of Dark Hollow now. What in the world was he going to do?

**Dark Hollow**

Really, this shouldn’t have been that hard, Sparx thought. True, this week hadn’t been that eventful (quite of feat for Spyro), but he could work something out with that. After all, Darius wouldn’t mind if he embellished on some details. He did so in his productions and own plays all the time. Still, the poor kid didn’t look so hot.

“Bzzt.” (Hey.) he flew in front of Spyro’s face. “Bzzt bzz bzz bzz.” (I’ll go ahead and tell Darius about how this week wasn’t that hot. Maybe you can come up with something then.)

“I don’t know if that’s gonna work.” The dragon stated, though the dragonfly seemed undeterred.

“Bzz bztt, bzz bzz.” (Well, my mind’s made up, and you’re clearly having a hard time. So, I’m going on ahead.) he then began to fly off before turning around. “Bzz bzzt bzz bzz!” (But you probably shouldn’t be too late!) with that, he went forward, the golden insect steadily fading out of view.

He was sort of right. This would perhaps give him some time, though not much. Finding a small patch of grass nestled by some bushes, Spyro sat down and reminisced on all that had occurred this week. Only to come up with absolutely nothing. Nothing from this entire week would do! ‘Let’s face it.’ he thought, slumping down to the ground. ‘I was doomed from the start.’

Ribbit!

Hm? The familiar noise of Dark Hollow’s natural residents aside from the dragons distracted him from his moping, violet eyes turning to see a frog hopping along nearby, the skin around its throat expanding as it croaked. “Yeah, hey to you too.” He greeted, albeit halfheartedly. “Look, I’m not really in the mood, so go and hop somewhere else…” he paused, noticing a particular feature of this green skinned amphibian. A glowing light seemingly residing from within its stomach. Yellow, and fading in and out.

Oh no. Oh, no, no, no, no, no!

The frog hopped away.

“H-Hey!” Spyro called out, rising from his place and immediately giving chase. “Come back here!” the amphibian looked back to see the larger reptile chasing after it, puzzled as to why. Yet that far from stayed in its mind for long, seeing as he was gaining on it. “Don’t you run away from me! Hey!” the frog began to hop faster, creating bigger strides and covering more distance between itself and the dragon. It wound around the circular structures nearby in places he couldn’t surely
squeeze in, making its way to the other side.

Unfortunately, it didn’t account for the fact that he could just climb.

The dragon leapt and slammed right in the ground; horns aimed right at the frog. The frog leapt out of the way, Spyro finding that the method of his descent wasn’t exactly the best method, seeing as he horns were now stuck in the ground. He watched in horror as the frog hopped away.

Said frog wasted no time in finding a place to hide, reclining against a stone wall for the time being. What the heck was that dragon’s deal?! What had it done to him!? All it did was just catch a little-

“There you are!” a voice thundered nearby, the purple devil just mere feet away, having wrought his horns out. “Give Sparx back!”

The terrified hopper made a blind dash towards a staircase nearby, hopping desperately as it heard the dragon following in pursuit. Going on further, its large eyes came across a plethora of books lining the walls along with several candles. It must’ve been what the dragons called…what was it? Some sort of berry, a lie-berry?

“Come back here!”

Gah! Wasting no time, it leapt onto one of the platforms resting above a small body of water, giving a croaky yelp as the dragon came barreling in. It hopped on the next, the dragon following suit, candles being overturned and books falling into the water as in his zeal, he momentarily lost balance and fell into one of the bookcases. Strangely enough, the frog thought, he seemed to be adamant in avoiding any contact with the water. Odd. Still, such things would have to be reflected on later, as right now, this guy was out for blood.

Despite the amount of candles and books alike being flung into the water and/or overturned and scattered all over the place, its pursuer didn’t stop, chasing it back up the stairs and outside through the entrance of the lie-berry, the dragon quickly gaining on him. “Sparx! Don’t worry, I’m coming for you, pal!” It hopped like mad, its webbed feet and legs practically aching with unbearable pain as the dragon was gaining on it. And even worse, it hadn’t even had the chance to fully enjoy its catch-

“GOTCHA!”

The tips of a pair of horns met its backside, sending the amphibian flying, knocking it face first into a stone pillar, a sickening ‘splat!’ echoing throughout the garden-esque area. Instead of falling, it more or less ‘peeled’ off, front to back front to back until it reached the ground, landing flat on its rear.

“All right!” its pursuer growled, staring down at it with angered, violet eyes. “Cough him up, or I’ll-“ then he stopped, looking to its stomach and expression twisting into something of horror. The glow in its stomach was gone. “No…” the dragon choked out, seemingly heartbroken and distraught, though the frog couldn’t comprehend why. Yet again, there was no time to reflect, as it soon found its stomach being stomped on “Give him back!” the small (yet a good degree larger than it) dragon demanded, his paws pounding down on the amphibian’s plump stomach. “Give him back! Don’t you dare eat him! I’ll get you to cough up everything you’ve eaten for the whole week if I have to! Just don’t-“

“Spyro, what in the world are you- “turning around fast, Spyro saw Darius making his way down the small set of steps that led to his small corner of Dark Hollow, his eyes widening at what he was
seeing. “What in Heaven’s name are you doing to this frog!?”

“It ate him!” the small dragon declared.

“Bzzt?” (Ate who?)

Spyro paused, a small, golden insect coming up from behind the playwright and fluttering to the purple dragon.

“SPARX!” immediately, he abandoned the frog, leaping up and taking the dragonfly in his arms, rolling head over heels until he came to a stop, Sparx firmly in his tight embrace. “Oh buddy, I thought you were a goner!” Spyro declared, hugging the insect even tighter. “I thought I lost you forever…”

“Bzzt…” (Glad to see you too.) If not for his current lack of oxygen, the dragonfly would’ve noted that the little dragon sounded as if he were on the verge of tears. Though, again, his need of air was at the forefront of his mind. “Bzz bzzt bzz?” (But I’m not gonna be fine if you don’t let me breathe.)

“Oh, yeah!” Spyro let him go, the dragonfly in turn wheezing and gasping. “Sorry…”

“Aren’t you forgetting someone?” Darius questioned, gesturing towards the frog.

“Oh…yeah.” The smaller dragon approached the amphibian. “Eh…sorry about that. I thought you- “he didn’t get another word out as a green, webbed foot promptly kicked him right in the nose, jostling his senses and sending him back. Little guy had more power in those legs than he thought. With a huff, the frog hopped away, more than glad to be rid of that purple demon, and its act of retribution.

“Well, seeing as that’s out of the way,” Darius began again, “Perhaps you would enlighten me on what exactly happened?” he heard a distant cry echo from the library. “And what has been destroyed this time?”

“…and then, well, it kind of kicked me in the face.”

Both Darius and Oswin looked to each other, then back to the little dragon. “Well, I’d say that it’s been an eventful night. For both you and the frog.” The orange, striped, turban wearing librarian commented, as if he had completely forgotten about the damage done to his collection of books. Though given it was Oswin, there was a good chance he had. Selective memory, that dragon had.

“Yeah, guess so.” Spyro confessed.

“Though, if anything,” Darius chipped in. “I suppose you no longer have to worry about your assignment.”

“Huh?”

“Well, think for a moment. What happened?”

What happened? He just told them! He didn’t understand…until thinking it over a bit more. And as he thought, it became more and more clear in what Darius was getting at. First Act, he had come to Dark Hollow. Plot point, he thought Sparx was eaten. As he went through the Second and Third
Acts, it became more and more clear to Spyro that he no longer needed to worry about what to present to the playwright. He had, albeit unintentionally, made a sequence up on his own. Even more, he had acted it out too! All exact the very end, he realized.

“So…” though maybe, “Since I did it right,” he could perhaps, “Does that mean I have to- “

“Yes.” Darius cut him off.

“Huh? Oh.” Oswin was confused at first, but then realized. “Yes, you do, son.”

Unfortunately for Spyro, this ending was more bittersweet than he had hoped.
Secret Best left Untold

Chapter Summary

Still pondering something Astor said some time back, Spyro takes it upon himself to ask Oswin a particular question. One of which he isn’t sure how to, let alone should he answer.

Chapter Notes

This one takes place after the one involving Alban and the one involving Darius, though also the one after Astor. I say this mainly because of a certain few topics that come up regarding a particular someone that no one really wants to talk about. Also, expect some history involving the dragons settling into where they reside now, conflicts with the Gnorcs, and how they came to involve border control and where the Realms lie in regards to one another. And of other creatures and peoples than can be found in the Dragon Realms, via Fairies, various enemies, and some of the bosses. Hopefully it won’t be too boring, as while it is expositional, it is technically world building. Plus, probably way, way, WAY down the line, there will be tales involving actual encounters/conflicts with them.

That was a bit of a mouthful. Anyway, hope you enjoy!

“So, you see, frogs don’t dine on dragonflies. They’re too big to fit into their stomachs. Plus, the magical energy radiating around them simply makes them taste bad.”

Well, that would’ve been nice to know beforehand. Honestly, he swore every time he had to come to Dark Hollow, that one frog never failed to stare him down whenever he passed by. Guess it was still sore over getting its stomach nearly turned inside out.

“But personally,” the turban wearing librarian continued. “I believe that they may have some sort of social standing with us, seeing as they ARE our companions, and, well, we dragons simply are bigger than any frog could hope to be. Even you.” He then covered his mouth. “Oh, did you hear that out loud?”

“Oh, look, where do these go again?”

“Uh, look, where do these go again?”

“Oh, third right shelf, second row.”

Looking to the stack of books on the floor, Spyro readied himself and pushed the collection of bound text towards the located Oswin directed. After the incident involving the death glaring frog, and the subsequent soaking of some the library’s works, Marco was tasked with bringing said books to the Magic Crafters to see if repairs could be made. They were, of course, though for quite the hefty amount of gems out of the librarian’s own pocket. And while he was thankful that Nestor wasn’t going to make him rewrite the entire books (which would’ve taken him a good century or two), he WAS tasked with helping Oswin put them back in their proper places. Plus, according to
the carpenter, it’d teach the boy some good organizational skills.

“Um,” Spyro asked, semi standing on his hind legs as he pushed a rather thick book in place. “Why’d you have to give all those gems to Marco when you sent the books over?” at first, he received no answer, Sparx in turn tapping his shoulder in order to get him to look forward.

The orange skinned librarian was currently enthralled by the contents of whatever he was reading, leaning against one of the shelves, eyes wide in intrigue and fascination. “My word.” He said aloud to himself, as if completely oblivious to the fact that he wasn’t the only one occupying the chamber. “Gwydion the Great was able to tame even the Beast of Alpine Ridge? And he himself founded Alpine Ridge?”

“Oswin?”

“Though it’s odd that it had to take the combined effort of him and his own student Faegan to beat back the Metal Spiders of the High Caves.”

Ultimately, the purple dragon just rolled his eyes. It was a fruitless effort to get his attention. Then he realized he would need Oswin’s input to put the rest of the books in their proper places. “Sparx, you mind?”

Sparx flew on over and landed on the pages of the books the stripped dragon, only for said dragon to lightly flick him off as if he were some pest. The dragonfly began pulling on his turban, yet this only garnered another swat, sending Sparx flying back and crashing into Spyro’s nose, slipping down on the floor.

“Hmm?” surprisingly enough, the small ‘plop’ managed to get the librarian’s attention. “Sorry dear boy, I was miles away. Did you say something?”

“…where do the rest of these go?”

“Oh. Oh!” Oswin exclaimed. “Yes, of course. You would need that, wouldn’t you?”

“Duh.” Spyro said under his breath.

“Well…you mind bringing them over here?”

‘You gotta be kidding me…’ Begrudgingly, the adolescent went back to the pile and began pushing it towards him. Unfortunately, the book atop of the pile was somewhat off balance and as he pushed, it fell off the top and nearly into the water.

“GAH!” both Spyro and Oswin screamed in unison as they rushed over, the book seemingly having landed in the water.

“It’s not my fault, I swear!” the little dragon cried out, though as he and the older librarian looked further, it became clear that, despite appearing so, the book didn’t seem to be ‘in’ the water, but more ‘floating’ just mere inches above it. And as it seemingly began to rise on its own, it was clear that the only thing wet was a lone, golden dragonfly straining under the weight of the book.

“Oh, bless you, little thing!” Oswin sighed in relief, grabbing the text from the insect, he taking in long and heavy breaths as he was finally relived from preventing another book being sent off to the Magic Crafters again. “Here.” He then told Spyro. “I’m putting this one up. It goes on one of the higher levels.”

‘Then why did you give it to me to put up?!’ the young dragon thought, though he resigned from
letting it slip out. A potential disaster had already been averted; he wasn’t exactly in the mood to push his luck. Still, as his eyes wandered and read the spines of the books, said books bearing such titles as ‘The Epic of Gilgamesh’ and ‘The Golden Bough’ (both of which he had no idea of what they were about, and honestly wasn’t all that interested), his eyes also spotted the book Oswin had previously been invested in before the book nearly landed in the water.

“Great Sorcerers and Sorceresses of the Past Ages?” Spyro said aloud, the librarian’s attention being drawn to the reading of said title.

“Oh, yes.” Oswin responded, going over to collect said book. “A collection of the various deeds and exploits of the various magical genius’ over the history of the Magic Crafters, both from here and…”

“And?” Spyro asked, tilting his head to the side. “And what?”

“Um…” Oswin bit his lip, eyes shifting back and forth. Lovely. He had to think of something. Though he had perhaps already screwed everything up already. “Hey, wanna know something cool?”

The little dragon’s eyes lit up, he (to the librarian’s relief) intrigued by whatever Oswin had to say. “According to this,” he pointed to some of the book’s open pages. “The famous sorceress, Morganfey compiled an entire record of potions and remedies that are used to this day by all of the clans in the different Realms!” he flipped to yet another page and presented it to the boy. “Her work also highlighted a rise in Magic Crafter, Beast Maker relations, as she relied heavily on various plants and elements that resided in their lands to compose of her potions.”

That word again. He had only heard it once before, though even from that time Astor had said it, said term hadn’t left Spyro’s mind. Still, until now, it seemed it would remain in obscurity. “What’s a sorceress?” he questioned. “Is it like a wizard?”

“Well, in a way, yes.” Oswin answered, the fact the little dragon was interested igniting an irresistible urge in him to educate the lad. “The terms are different, but they hold different connotations in a sense. Mainly in experience.” He continued. “Sorcerer can refer to any magic user, male of course, yet the title is more general, as it simply means on that holds magic powers.”

“Well, what’s a wizard?”

“A wizard is essentially the same, but the title of ‘Wizard’ holds more of an indication of age and/or power, as well as wisdom about magic and how to make use of it.” oh, this was exciting! The boy was seemingly absolutely enthralled by what he was saying! It was about to make his heart burst with anticipation. “In turn, ‘Sorceress’ is a female sorcerer, though…really, there’s not really another term for an older or greater powerful one aside from, well, ‘Sorceress.’ I’m not entirely sure why.” Oswin confessed. “I suppose that it’s something that…well, just is.”

“That…doesn’t make any sense.” Spyro noted.

“Well, not everything in history or, well, anything makes sense at times.”

Not exactly an answer he liked; thus, he came up with a counter. “What about a ‘Witch’? Is that the same as a wizard?”

It was for a moment, but Spyro could’ve sworn that the orange dragon’s entire body grew stiff. “Uh…no.” he answered, regardless. “A witch is more or less a sorceress that…well…I mean, she has magic, but sorceress is more of a neutral term. A witch uses magic for strictly evil and
malevolent purposes.”

“Malevolent?”

“Um, basically it means evil.” Oswin clarified, the urge to educate and inform him steadily outweighing his former caution. “A witch isn’t like a wizard though. A witch would be more like a warlock, which is basically an evil wizard or sorcerer.”

Well, that sort of answered his question. Sort of. Still, now that he had asked it, it seemed everything he had swarming in the back of his mind and put away began rushing forward, both from then and events that had occurred more recently. “And, well, if they wanted, could a witch or sorceress put a spell on a lot of people at one time? Like, a curse?”


“Like…could it cause people to…die?”

The librarian froze, eyes wide and blood running cold. “Um…” he began to stammer. “Wh-What makes you say that?”

A chill also came over Spyro then. True, this was his intention, finding out more about the subject, yet seeing Oswin in such a state was nonetheless rather disconcerting. Yet…he had gotten this far. If he backed out now, even if Sparx was urging him to do so, he’d perhaps never get anything. “Well…Astor once said something about a ‘curse’ or something.” he continued. “And I saw something on some of the scrolls in there,” he gestured towards the smaller room in the library’s vicinity. “That said something about the Artisan Home being taken, and some dragons getting sick.” Even with his pushing on getting some sort of answer, the young dragon still found himself unable to let the word ‘die’ come from his lips.

Heavy silence came over the chamber of various books and bound texts, blue eyes wide and teeth clenched together. Sparx buzzed in disapproval, Spyro now beginning to regret saying anything. He just wanted to know, that was all! Astor wouldn’t tell him, and anyone else he had actually brought it up to either didn’t know what he was talking about (supposedly) or outright told him he was speaking nonsense. Everyone was so ‘hush hush’, and for what reason?

Oswin once rubbed his arm and fiddled with his neckpiece, his toe claws clacking against the stone floor as nervously shifted his feet. Finally, at long last, he spoke. “This…this doesn’t leave this room, but…” he stammered, sighing afterward. “Can you keep a secret?”

“A-S-Sure.” Spyro answered, stepping forward. Sparx still didn’t believe any of this to be a good idea, yet, as always, things seemed to be beyond his control now.

“I can’t tell you everything.” Oswin confessed. “Seeing as…well, if I did, Nestor would kill me. But I can say this.” He knelt to the little dragon’s level, bringing him closer as he whispered. “A long time ago, way before you were born, and when me and Alban…well, many of us were around your age, things…well…they weren’t as peaceful. Frankly, a lot of things went…wrong.”

“What kind of things?”

The librarian bit his lip. “Things like…” he paused. Oh, what kind of hole had he just jumped into? “Well…things like…setting up towns and our general living areas being fraught,” he noticed Spyro’s confusion. “Plagued,” still confused. “It had a bunch of problems. The area was hard to get set up, materials had to be located, thieves kept stealing everything from us from the Peacekeepers’ weapons to simple utensils, and not to mention, the Gnorcs,”
“Oh yeah. Those guys.”

“Yes. ‘Those guys’ had gone and seen fit to fight us each and every time they could get, making our supplies dwindle and keeping the sick from getting the proper care they needed.”

“About that,” Spyro added in. “Why were they sick? Or, what were they sick with?”

“Well…” Oswin sighed. “We don’t know.”

“Huh?” Spyro didn’t understand. “What do you mean you didn’t know?”

“We…don’t know.” The librarian said again. “Things just…happened. Things just…for a while, just seemed to go wrong.” He rubbed the back of his head. “But things are better now!” he assured, turning to an optimistic mood just as quickly, though it was clearly disingenuous. “Even before you came around, things have gotten a lot better! In fact, we haven’t had an attack or disaster of any kind for a long time! The Peacekeepers have been able to drive off each and everything threat away from the borders, Gnorc and anything else alike. Assuming there IS anything else, seeing as Gnorcs kind of like to involve themselves in anything.”

Things just happened…just happened? Granted, things do just ‘happen’, but even with his general lack of knowledge on some things (he wasn’t too proud to admit that, just not openly), Spyro could sense that this still wasn’t the entire truth. Besides, “Well,” if that was the case, “what about,” what did what Astor mentioned “the curse?” have to do with it.

“…I can’t talk about this anymore.”

Spyro was taken back by such a radical change in Oswin’s demeanor. “Why not?”

“Because I could get in a LOT of trouble. Heck, even telling you this now, if it gets out, I could get in trouble.”

“But why? I’m not going to say anything.”

“Spyro, please.” Oswin sighed. “I…I just have the answers you’re looking for.”

“Then who does? No one wants to say anything.” Spyro countered. “I…I just want to know. I’m not going to tell. I promise.”

“…I’m sorry.” The librarian said. “I…I just can’t.” he began to turn away. “Oh. When you finish up putting those books up, you can go home early.”

“Oswin,”

“I’ve got to check out something up above.”

“But Oswin- “

“See you later, Spyro.”

With that, the orange, striped dragon left.

An angered buzz and jab at his side drew Spyro to face a very irritated Sparx. “I didn’t mean to make him uncomfortable!” the little dragon argued. “I just wanted to know what this ‘curse’ and ‘sorceress’ thing was all about!”

Sparx once again buzzed, shaking his head. “Bzzz, bzz bzz bzzz.” (Have you considered that
maybe something like that, whatever it is, is kinda a touchy subject for them?)

Spyro looked to the floor. “Well…no. I…didn’t think that it’d be.” In hindsight, yes, perhaps he was being quite selfish. “I didn’t mean to though.”

His violet eyes gazed towards the entrance and exit of the library, then to Sparx. It was clear that after this, despite him being a far cry from Alban, Oswin would probably need some space, guilt welling up in the young dragon’s chest.

Well…there were books needing to be sorted out. In a way, at least this was some sort of compensation. If anything, this cemented that it was best that this particular topic not be brought out in the open for some time, yet Spyro’s intrigue could only be subdued for so long. And while he would try, perhaps the answer, or at least bits and pieces of this, whatever it was, would come to him from sources that would unintentionally let it slip.

And perhaps then, the burning question, the true core of all of this, would be known.

What is the ‘curse’ and who was one that supposedly cast it?
Ear Splitting

Chapter Summary

Aside from Tomas, there is another amongst the Artisans that knows a thing or two about the musical arts. Unfortunately, unlike Tomas, this one isn’t exactly prepared for the results, of which may be quite an assault on her sense of hearing.

Chapter Notes

The first introduction of one of the OCs in this series, specifically, one that resides amongst the Artisans (as stated in the summary). Though, while I don’t want to say here, she isn’t exactly like the other dragons that reside there, of which will be detailed more in this. But the deeper details in her backstory and what and who she is in general will be delved into later. Also, while not explained here, there will be hints of what she is and what possible ‘powers’ she has regarding her talent.

Fitting that there was a full moon tonight, as it seemed to make sure to light up the Dark Hollow, especially on the surface of the large body of crisp, clear water that held the unsteady, ever shifting image of the glowing, ivory orb in the heavens above. The heathy green and trimmed hedges and shrubs that seemed to be in every area of this small corner of the Artisan Realm seemed to circle and enclose this small body, isolating from the everywhere else.

It was there, on a small rise in the land above the water, by a series of small, ever pouring waterfalls she resided, her green eyes finally sighting him at the other end of the miniature lake. “Oh, you’re here. Finally.” She stated, sitting atop of the piece of land, everything from her thighs down in the clear liquid. Despite her acknowledgement of his presence, the small, purple dragon didn’t approach, his attention more on the unsteady liquid below his perch on the land under him. “Well?” she questioned. “Come on now. You’ve kept me waiting already.”

“Well…” Spyro began, violet eyes shifting, trying to wretch his gaze from the water below. “Can’t you, you know…come a little closer?”

In response, she folded her arms, claws tapping and drumming on her forearm. “There’s no difference between here and there. And frankly, this is a far better and more spacious spot.” She gestured to the small rises of land that lead to where she was. “There’s a clear pathway right there, and there’s hardly any gaps at all.” Still, he didn’t budge. “I won’t go and collect you. You can go home and tell Nestor that you didn’t see me, or you can take a small walk over and we can get started.”

The little dragon sighed, a small bit of hatred for the dragoness on the other side developing. ‘Here we go.’ Giving a small hop, he landed on the first platform. Then, after a good few seconds, he hopped on the other. This pattern repeated itself, a concoction of fear and loathing for the one he was here to see only rising further and further as he drew closer.

The one at the end sitting by the waterfalls was a rarity amongst the Artisans in more ways than
one. First, she was, of course, a female. The only female amongst them all. The reason for this was never told to the young dragon, though as he grew older, a part of him began to suspect that such an oddity wasn’t a case of ‘just because’ that liked to be tossed around whenever he began asking questions. Two, even if she was living amongst them, she sure didn’t LOOK like an Artisan, at least according to Spyro. She bore scales like all the other dragons, yet personally, these scales seemed to be more in line with the skin of a fish than a dragon, and even more fitting, they were a deep, vibrant shade of blue. She bore pale, blue horns that arched upward, smooth in texture, and had two ‘fins’ of sorts that rested in between the sides and back of her head, arching in such a way that they resembled something like a cobra’s hood. She had glistening, green eyes and fin-like ‘ears’ on the sides of her head, both they and her hood mainly composed of a thinner, green membrane. Similar looking fins rested on her arms above her elbows, above her ankles, and on her tail, two on the mid-section, and two at the bottom, making resemble something of a combination between a fish and dolphin’s tail, the very tip slightly split to where it was two small areas of blue flesh. And her ‘wings’ were more in line with large flippers affixed to her back, something of which Spyro had thought them to be, seeing as he had never seen her fly. Her garments, however, were more along the lines of ‘Artisan’, Spyro supposed. At least, he assumed, seeing as aside from her, there WERE no other dragonesses in the Realm. Something of a toga-esque top covered her upper chest, draping over it and being held by two golden fasters on her shoulders. Around her waist was a long skirt akin to her top, flowing and white, secured with a golden belt. On her wrists, ankles, tail, and neck were golden bands, completing her attire, as well as the image she clearly wished to invoke whenever anyone saw her.

Oh yes, here was she, Anyte, the Dragoness, in all her splendor.

Of which Spyro felt NONE of at the moment. Nevertheless, he was at least at the end now, though he would’ve preferred not to have gone and made the journey at all.

“Well, there you are.” Anyte simply said, waving her hand back as if she were brushing back invisible strands of hair. “Took your sweet time.”

“I told you,” Spyro retorted. “Me and water don’t mix!”

“And I fail to see how that can be.” She answered back, rising from the water, ironically enough. “You drink it, bathe in it,” she then glanced to him. “Albeit, by force.”

“It’s an allergy!” he argued, Sparx in turn rolling his eyes.

‘An allergy that doesn’t exist.’

“Well, whatever the case, we’re not here for swimming lessons, though that would serve you well.” Anyte straightened her skirt out, her clawed feet and lower legs still wet, green webbing in between her toes. “Though, what I am to educate you of tonight WILL be of benefit for you. Who knows? Perhaps you shall find your calling in that.”

‘If it means being as big a snob as you, then count me out.’ The little dragon thought. Even if he muttered it, she probably wouldn’t have even noticed it. It seemed the very prospect of his potential in her own talent got her in a good mood.

“Tonight,” she began, now adjusting her top. “I shall educate you in both the types, and discover which voice type you have.”

Spyro was silent. “You’re gonna what?”

“As I’ve just said.” She declared proudly. “I shall demonstrate my knowledge and talents, and in
turn, pass such onto you. Should you indeed hold such untapped skill.”

He looked to Sparx. “She’s REALLY laying it on thick, isn’t she?” he murmured, Sparx in turn nodding.

She was so into it; she didn’t even take notice. “Given you are but a young dragon, you will need some time and guidance,” she gestured to herself. “To guide you on the right path, yet that’s what I’m here for!”

Spyro was at a loss for words. Of all the dragons here, Anyte was the one that had previously held no interest in tutoring him in anything of this sort. Sure, she did serve as one of his many ‘teachers’, but it was mainly more in Tomas’ line of education. And now, here she was, getting it in her head that perhaps NOW he would somehow be some sort of prodigy of vocal range? Why?!
Was she even hearing herself?

“If any of the other dragons’ talents haven’t rubbed off on you yet, then surely it is I who shall help you find your voice!” she chuckled lightly at the double meaning. “Oh course, you DO know that there is none better to teach you of this, yes?”

“Uh…yeah. Sure.”

“I mean, even Nestor has mentioned my prowess, hm?”

“Yeah, sure thing.” That was one thing he was sure about, thinking back to the not so small listing of each dragon and their individual talents the leader gave him some time back. And ironically enough, he stopped the carpenter before he could get to her.

“Of course he has.” Anyte said proudly. “Now, as I was saying,” she redirected herself. “Finding one’s voice is a process in which one must be willing to dedicate much time and energy towards.” Once again, she gestured to herself. “A young lady, such as I,”

“She’s not THAT young.” The purple dragon murmured.

“Will be able to either bear the title of a soprano, mezzo-soprano, or that of an alto or contralto.” Spyro suddenly released an “ulp!” upon feeling a cold, wet hand place itself on his throat. “And seeing as you’re still quite young, at least in that you haven’t reached your teen years, you perhaps may still able to classify as a soprano.” He then shivered when she began examining his neck.

“Then again, given how you sound now, you’re probably a countertenor or outright tenor at the least.”

“Yeah, yeah, cool.” Spyro uneasily got out, quite frankly desperate to get those clammy hands off him. “But what is any of that stuff again?”

“I’m getting there.” Anyte assured. “They are the types of voices that one can sign, judged via range, weight, tessitura, timbre, transition points, such as breaks and lifts, and register.” Again, he had no idea what she was even talking about. “Essentially, in basic terms, it’s how high or low you can sing at, and how it sounds.”

‘Then why don’t you just say that?’ he thought, she going on.

“Regardless of whatever type one has, once it is discovered, it must be cared for and attended to. Perfected and strengthened to be the best it can be. If not, their craft shall never come to fruition!” she dramatically proclaimed, spreading her arms out wide as if beckoning an audience to behold her.
Part of Spyro thought maybe she had been hanging out with Darius recently. Heaven knew that he was one of the few dragons that could stand her. If anything she was a regular in his productions.

“So, in that, we shall begin with a few exercises.” Anyte stated, placing her hand to her throat. “Ahem!” she cleared it, then looked to Spyro. “Ahem!” she did it again, yet once again, the little dragon was completely clueless on what she was even doing. “Oh, here!” she groaned, kneeling down and placing a paw on his throat. “Now then, let’s try that again.” She cleared her throat again. “Ahem!”

“Huh? Oh! Ahem!” Spyro repeated after her.

“Good.” She told him. “Now,” she then went to the waterfalls. “It’s also important to keep your throat hydrated before you perform even the simplest of solos.” She then cupped her hands and collected some of the liquid, then bringing her hands to her mouth and allowing it to travel down her throat, a light chill overtaking her for a moment. She then turned, Spyro still in place. She rolled her eyes, beckoning him forward. Honestly, surely, he should’ve gotten the routine by now.

He approached the waterfall and opened his mouth, allowing some water to fall in. He had to admit, despite his current company (let alone what he was surrounded by), the waters of Dark Hollow were always guaranteed to be refreshing.

“There’s a bevy of other things one can do to help and improve the quality of their voice, but in the end, it all lies in the dedication and passion of the individual to see where it takes them.” She then straightened out her top again. “One particular tip I found quite helpful is practicing basic vocalizations.”

Clearing her throat again, she opened her mouth and allowed what had been contained to freely flow outward.

Both Spyro and Sparx’s hearing rendered them speechless. Indeed, it couldn’t be denied that Anyte was the epitome of a mega diva, yet her skills couldn’t be denied either, and, to a degree, she held every right in the world to be proud and declare their greatness. Her voice was soft and soothing at the moment, reciting a wordless tune of higher notes, yet he knew she was more than capable of expelling out a voice charged with emotion and power. And the ease in which she could transition between the two was something to behold. Spyro wasn’t even one to really understand, let alone appreciate this stuff, yet even he had to admit that hearing her sing was…kinda nice. No, scratch that. It was really nice. A part of him wondered, while she was indeed talented in her own right, if perhaps there was something else that made it so attractive? Something that, while she wasn’t displaying it now, she could’ve openly released.

And then…then her voice would perhaps be irresistible.

Bringing her small piece to a close, Anyte ran her fingers along her left head fin. “As you can see, years of dedication and passion.” She said with pride. “Now then,” she gestured towards her ‘pupil’. “Your turn.”

“Oh, uh…” Spyro bit his lip. “Isn’t it a little early for that?” Sparx said nothing, yet he began to suspect that this wasn’t going to end well.

“Nonsense!” Anyte stated. “Though you’ve only just begun, you have been taught the basics! If anything, you should be able to produce at least something of a note!”

“Note?”
She groaned. “Just…start singing.”

“Oh…kay?” seeing as he wasn’t going to get out of this, Spyro readied himself and repeated the actions she had showed him before. Clearing his throat and drinking some water, he began to try and get something out, only to choke on some water left in him.

“Another tip.” Anyte said. “Swallow before you start.”

“Y-Yeah. Sure.” Spyro answered. ‘Not like I MEANT to or anything.’

“Anyway, out with it. Go on.”

Sparx didn’t like this. He didn’t like this one bit. Yet before he could do anything, much less utter a protest, the little, purple dragon took in a heavy breath, what was contained inside his throat ready to be unleashed.

A Few Minutes Later

To find Anyte here of all places was unusual, seeing as it was far from when she usually turned in. Even more unusual was to find Spyro here as well, in her company no less. For him to be on his lonesome would’ve at least given Nestor some sense of clarity in that he was merely playing hooky, yet to see whom was supposed to be with him tonight outright dropping him off at the doorstep of his shop brought with it a bevy of questions. Sparx too appeared in a similar state, yet it was clear whom the more affected of the two was.

“Here.” The blue, aquatic looking dragoness simply stated. “Take him.”

“I’m…sorry?” the green carpenter questioned. Honestly, what was going on?

“Lesson ended early.” She told him, he in turn noticing that her voice sounded strained. “Sorry to say, his chances of a singing career are zero.” As if she were fighting off…wait a minute. Was that red liquid leaking from her earholes…oh. “Now…” she twitched. “Good night…” with that, she headed in the direction of the castle, the three able to hear the utterance of “Ow, ow, ow, ow…” with every few steps or so until she entered. The moment she had the chance, she was stopping at Thor’s. Surely clay would function well enough for earplugs.
Drawing From Life

Chapter Summary

Nevin’s painting skills are a vast contrast in comparison to Gildas’ and Delbin’s, especially in his insistence on accuracy to what he draws inspiration from. Something that Spyro just can’t seem to get.

Chapter Notes

Last of the Artisans is here! Next few ones will relate to other events and various events that take place in the first game. So, while I have some ideas, suggestions are more than welcome! Also, there will be future one-shots simply dedicated to the older dragons, and when I get to it, those that involve OCs and the other dragons when they were around Spyro’s age (sort of, given that Spyro himself is runt and isn’t as developed as he should be at his age).

That said, hope you enjoy!

“Don’t forget, the transition between the sky and the horizon must be as natural as possible.” The golden dragon wearing a red beret informed, the little dragon stationed on the stool (which was far too big for him) feeling said dragon pushing him out of the way slightly to oversee his work. “No, no, no, look.” He pointed the end of his paintbrush to the canvas. “This looks like the sky’s three different colors than just one.” He sighed. “Well, it can’t be helped. You’ll just have to blend them the best you can.”

“What if that’s just my style?” Spyro questioned, Nevin in turn looking back to him.

“That’s Gildas’ and Delbin’s excuses. Specifically, Gildas.” The artist told him matter-of-factly. “The duty of the artist is to capture the very world around them and transfer it on the canvas. Accurately.” He clarified. “Stylization is a mere construct.”

The purple dragon simply huffed. Frankly, he’d give anything to be in either of the other two’s company right now. At least they didn’t feel it necessary to have an entire hallway filled with portraits of themselves. True, they weren’t the ONLY thing in the small building nearby, but still.

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“Now, try to at least blend it somewhat while the paint’s still wet.”

Begrudgingly, Spyro did such, moving the brush up and down, Nevin all the while spouting out critiques and mentioning each and every little problem he saw in the younger dragon’s technique. He wasn’t blending it ‘right’. The sky didn’t just have three colors to it. Add some white here. No! Don’t just move the brush up and down! Now the sky looks like it’s all smudged! If anything, the best part about it was it seemed that Nevin had reached his limit and simply left him to paint in peace. If not simply out of the fact that it was clear that teaching him the proper technique would take even more time. Lovely.
“We’ll simply have to work on accurately capturing the sky another day.” The painter groaned. “For now, at least I could educate you on how to lay down the proper colors and manner in which you are to capture the greenery around here.”

“Uh, not for nothing, Nevin, but nothing here looks ‘green’.” Spyro noted, gesturing to the setting sun and the orange light it cast over the environment below. And if one were to ask him, the sky already looked like it had sections to it, one-part orange, another pink, and even more, with orange and purple clouds! He swore Nevin was just being picky because he could.

“Exactly.” The artist said. “Yet they are not simply orange.” As if to demonstrate, Nevin went to pluck a leaf from one of the nearby bushes and held it in front of the younger dragon’s face. “It still retains its original color, but the lighting makes it appear as if it is different. Both of these must be implemented in your work to fully capture what’s before you. Understand?”

“I think so.”

A lingering doubt plagued Nevin, yet ultimately, the result would probably be the same no matter what he did. Besides, he too was creating yet another masterpiece, so at least that would be something that’d add some positivity to this session.

As time went on, Nevin in turn looked to see Spyro both take in and completely misunderstand his advice (the bushes green with blobs of orange messily painted in it throughout creating a putrid, vomit colored smudge), he in turn growing more and more frustrated with the little dragon. If not for needing to focus on his own work, he would’ve been tempted to take that hideous thing and burn it. It was just a temptation though.

Though given that this wouldn’t be the last of these lessons, Nevin could only hope that perhaps his ‘student’ would be able to pick up on how to properly construct art eventually.

A Few Weeks Later

Oh, this boy was hopeless!

“No, no, no, no!” Nevin cried out, bringing his palm to his face. “Just because the bushes don’t appear green doesn’t mean they aren’t!” he explained, albeit with his patience long gone. “It’s all about the lighting!”

“Yeah, I know that!” Spyro countered.

“So why do you keep ignoring what I keep telling you?”

“I’m not!” he argued. “I’m trying, it just doesn’t make sense!”

“What doesn’t make sense?”

“Like, what do you mean they’re green by they’re not? Things can’t be two colors at once!”

“No, they can’t.” Nevin clarified. “But there are various shades of every color.” He then thought for a moment. “Perhaps…we need to take a step back.”

‘Maybe a step forward.’ Spyro thought. ‘Like, a step out of this.’

“Come next week. I’ll bring it out then.”

A Week Later
Spyro and Sparx simply looked to each other, then to the object Nevin held before them. “What is it? Some kind of…wheel?”

“You’re onto it somewhat.” Nevin confirmed, gesturing to the colorful collection of colors in an ordered fashion from lightest to darkest, seemingly going in an order both vertically and horizontally. “This, dear boy, is a color wheel. The basis in which all things, whether paintings, pieces done with pencils, or even crayons follow.”

‘Never heard of that.’ Spyro thought, Nevin continuing.

“Perhaps I should’ve started out with teaching you this.” The painter mentioned. “Though I DID educate you on the relation between colors and their compliments.” He then went back to the wheel. “Anyway, given your trouble with colors, perhaps it’d be best that you...” he shuddered. Oh, this was going against everything he was attempting to teach the boy, yet again, he told himself, at the behest of Gildas and Delbin, that the child couldn’t be rushed in such things. “Practice with a monochromatic color scheme before going onto a more…complicated set.”

“Oooh-kay?” it didn’t take a genius to see Nevin wasn’t exactly ok with this, but if it made it easier for him, then he was more than ok with that.

“So…” the painter gulped. “With that, you still need to remember the basics of compliment colors.”

“Why?” Spyro asked. “If you want things to lighter or darker, you jut add white or black, don’t you?”

“Well, somewhat.” Nevin confirmed, straightening out his mustache and rubbing his stubble. “For lighter shades, yes, you can add white, yet for darker shades, you don’t just add black.” He then gestured to the red portion of the wheel. “Green is the compliment of red. Thus;” he then moved his claw to the green. “You need to add green in order gain a darker shade. If you add black, you make a darker shade, yet it’s also dull and not aesthetically pleasing.”

“Aesthetica-what?”

Nevin sighed. “Not looking very good.”

“Why not just say that?” Spyro asked. “Why does everyone around here have to use ‘big’ words?”

“The point is,” Nevin interjected, bringing the conversation back to base. “It’s to better help improve your abilities as a painter.” He put it up on a stand that he usually brought for his own use. “I myself have pieces to hang. I’ll leave this here for you to reference.” With that, the painter left the little dragon alone.

Perfect timing too…especially seeing that given it was early in the day, where you could see the plethora of different colors clearly, without any sunset or moon affecting how everything looked. “You know what?” Spyro told Sparx. “…oh, heck with it. I’m just doing this regularly.”

A Day Later

Hopeless, hopeless, hopeless! The boy was absolutely hopeless!

Should he have had any to pull out, Nevin would’ve gone through each and every fiber of hair on him! Heck, he was about ready to find someone with hair and pull it out himself!

He had tried everything! Devolving from full blown pieces of varying color to monochromatic to
even flat colors! And each and every one of them looked wrong! Honestly, he had no idea what to do! Spyro just seemed either unwilling or completely unable to execute even a fraction of his advice!

This painting, the complimentary colors were little more than blobs on the canvas. This one, the sky looked like a mess of smudged colors with disgusting, dark streaks all throughout it in order to make it look darker. And this one…honestly, how in the world did THIS one happen? Was this even where they had been sitting? What part of this looked like ANYWHERE in this little private sector of the Realm?

Honestly, just looking at these was the equivalent of banging your head on the wall. Heck, he might as well bang his head against the wall! Truly, he was at a loss. It wasn’t something he was proud to admit, yet ultimately, Nevin had to admit that his ‘student’ was not, nor would he ever be a painter, let alone someone who perhaps had any place in the artistic world.

“You look like you’ve seen better days.” The voice startled him, yet upon turning around, his heart rate immediately settled down.

“Oh, it’s you two.” Nevin sighed, Gildas and Delbin having come to intrude on his favorite little corner of the Realm.

“Not exactly amiable at the moment, are you?” the blue skinned dragon questioned. “What’s up?”

“Spyro is what’s up.” The golden dragon confessed. “He…that boy is just impossible!”

Both dragons were about to protest, though as the words began to fully feed through, neither could conjure a decent enough counter to it. “Well,” Delbin admitted. “He’s a good kid, but he’s nonetheless quite a handful—“

“No, not that.”

“Oh, so he HASN’T destroyed anything?” Gildas questioned.

“Aside from my sense of sight, no.” Nevin confessed. “And perhaps my entire perception as a teacher.” As if to answer the questions they were about to ask, he held up the painted canvases he was looking over.

“Oh…” both of the other painters said in unison. Indeed, this…no. It was painful to admit, but there was no defense for what they saw. “Well…” Gildas began, biting his lip and running a clawed hand through his hair. “Maybe…” come on, come on, he told himself. Think of something.

“Maybe just a bit more practice would—“

“We’ve been practicing for a near month!” Nevin cried out. “I’ve tried everything! Each and every one of these…monstrosities are from different lessons, and each one of them is nothing short of an absolute eyesore!”

“To be fair,” Delbin added in. “Isn’t everything when we first start?”

“Just…I don’t understand it.” the beret wearing painter sighed. “How…how is it that his whenever he’s with you two are…well…”

“Easier?” Gildas added. He had to choose his words carefully, lest a full-on debate between the two on which style was ‘better’ would break out and go on until nightfall and potentially beyond. Though, if one were to ask either he or Delbin outside of Nevin’s presence…
“Well…yes.” The golden dragon sighed. “It just seems that my intricate methods are either too complicated for the boy, or he just outright refuses to get it.” thought he knew the former was surely the case, sometimes he did wonder.

“Have you ever considered simply letting him do…just that?”

Nevin turned to Delbin. “Excuse me?”

Gildas then added in. “I think what Delbin means is, perhaps you should allow him to be free in his methods.”

“That’s what you two are for.” Nevin argued. “What I’m trying to do is teach the boy the importance of precision and accuracy. How to capture the world you see and transfer it onto the canvas with the use of your eye and hand. And…well, no offense, but stylization isn’t exactly what I’m trying to convey.”

The urge to go on the defensive of his work stirred up in the more freestyle artist, yet a look from Delbin urged him to refrain. He had more than a smidge of a hankering to do such as well, yet at the moment, it wasn’t about them. “Well, it wasn’t as if accuracy was your forte at first either.”

“Wh-What?” the golden dragon questioned, voice indicating surprise, and perhaps a bit of offense. “Of course it was! Why, even before I was Spyro’s age, I drew from everything I saw!”

“Yes. With crayons.” Gildas added.

“Well, yes. But still, I-“

“Without any shading or lighting.” Delbin interjected.

“Um…I’d yet to gain knowledge on such things yet-“

“And you and every other dragon was little more than a stick figure-“

“Your point?” Nevin had enough by this point.

“Think about it, seeing as you’re so anxious to figure it out.” Gildas told him, though there was no offense or maliciousness in his suggestion.

“Just think.” Delbin agreed. “Perhaps a little leniency in your criteria may lessen some of your pain.”

“No, what would lessen my pain would that boy actually putting what I told him to use…” they were already gone. Nevin grumbled to himself. It wasn’t as if he asked them to come, let alone give him any advice. And what sort of advice was that? Just let the boy do what he wanted? That wasn’t advice, that was an invite for anarchy! He couldn’t simply let Spyro-

‘With crayons.’

Wait a moment.

‘Without any shading or lighting.’

It wasn’t what they had said directly, yet once he looked past what they said and stopped taking it so literal…even the part about the stick figures.

But…but it wouldn’t be…oooh, it was something whenever it came to that boy! Always
something! Still, he had to admit, this perhaps would be his only chance in maybe getting something of reasonable quality out of him.

Next Lesson

“So…you wanna run that by me again?”

“It’s just as I said.” Nevin told him, albeit he was twitching. “Paint what you see. But…” his eye shifted, this just about killing him by even allowing this. “Do it…however you…want.” There. He said it. With much effort on his part, but he got it out.

“You ok?” Spyro asked, Sparx’s focus shifting from his charge to the painter. Clearly something was wrong, yet it seemed no one was exactly willing outright say it.

“Yes. Everything’s…fine.” Not accurate. Not accurate! “Just…let’s just get this over with.”

“Oh…ok.” With that, the little dragon went on, dipping the brush in the blobs of paint on his palette and scribbling the tool wildly on the canvas.

It took everything in Nevin to not go over and put a stop to the madness. So much paint going everywhere, no one spot on the dragon was left without some splatter. Oooh, this was going to look like a mess, he just knew it. And with that, if anything, he’d at least have some satisfaction in rubbing it in Delbin and Gildas’ faces. Heavens knew that the always messy artist was the main source for this horrid suggestion.

Time went on, the yellow dragon having to force himself to look away, lest he lose it and go put a stop to the whole thing. Poor Sparx wasn’t left unscathed either, his golden sheen covered in thick globs of reds, greens, purples, essentially everything. It’d be an outright miracle if he didn’t drown in it all.

And just when he was sure he couldn’t take anymore, “And…done!”

Oh joy. And yet, what he was about to see would bring anything but.

Going over to view what the little dragon had done instead brought a…strange mixture of both.

One, the whole thing was a mess, yet that was a given. Bushes didn’t have their proper shapes, the sky was once again strange looking, and everything had, if he had give a name to it, a off color, cubic look to it. And yet…he could at least tell what everything was supposed to be. And the colors, while wrong, weren’t dull or flushed out. They were actually quite vibrant. He wasn’t entirely sure WHAT to feel about this.

“Oh…well?” Spyro asked, puzzled and somewhat disconcerted regarding Nevin’s silence.

“It…” he bit his lip. There was so much he wanted to say, all that was wrong and off with it, yet still, the boy technically did as he was asked. And while it was far from something of his tastes, even this looked better than any of his past pieces. “You know what?” he finally said. “Why don’t you take this one with you?”

“But, don’t you need to grade-“

“Take it.” Nevin insisted. “Grade doesn’t matter this time.”

“You’re acting weird.” Spyro told him. “But ok. Thanks!” with that, seeing as the painter was moving away, he and Sparx went through the portal back to the main hub of the Realm.
It wasn’t good. At least not in his eyes. And yet, it wasn’t as bad as the others. It certainly didn’t adhere to his criteria, yet again, it bore higher quality than those previously done. And they were imitations of his work!

Frankly, Nevin didn’t get it. He didn’t get that boy in general, and really, he doubted many, if any here in the entire Realm did at all. Looking at the piece, he gazed along the walls, eyes searching for an empty space. The sun was about to set, and the light provided a perfect setting.

Though, a part of him wondered what Spyro would’ve done if he had been around at such a time.

Even more, how bad, but also, how…interesting? Was that the word? Well, whatever it was, Nevin, despite his vast differences in what passed as acceptable, couldn’t help but ponder at how the boy would, despite breaking the rules, do in making his own stamp on the blank canvas.
Chapter Summary

A strange, new device has been introduced to the Dragon Realms. And while some aren’t too keen in accepting it in their way of life, the Balloonists are insistent that it’ll bring them into a more ‘modern age’. Though whether that’s a good or bad thing has yet to be seen.

Chapter Notes

Not to sound pompous or anything, but anyone who’s played the first game would know how exactly the whole disaster that set off Spyro’s quest started (I’m looking at you, Lindar), though that begs the question as to how the manner in which Gnasty Gnorc heard the clockmaker’s comment, let alone how those seemingly still stuck in the days of old in some aspects (baristas exist as well as electricity). Yet the television didn’t just get discovered on its own. Someone had to introduce it to them.

Also, while it may not be obvious, there’s a bit of a hint at some unused content in the first game, particularly another Realm and dragon type that never came to be.

BTW, Thank God for Wikipedia, flawed as it is.

“What is it?”

Each and every Artisan was gathered around the large table, gazing intently at the small, alien device stationed upon it. Even one that was desperately trying to find some sort of area where he could climb to see what the fuss was all about.

“It’s a…box?” Tomas stated, though said statement also served as a question.

“We can see that.” Lindar added in a hint of sarcasm in his tone.

“Though what sort of box is the question.” Argus then chimed in, running a claw gently over the smooth, blank screen.

“What’s going on?” a voice peeped from below, but no one seemed to pay any heed. “Sparx,” the voice’s owner whispered. “Fly up there and see!”

The dragonfly was more than curious as well, so he fluttered up above the other dragons to view the strange object as well, and whom had brought it to the Artisans.

“It’s a television, of course!” Marco proclaimed with pride.

Peacekeepers’ Realm

“Tele-vision?” a stout, heavy set, dusty orange dragon questioned, brown spikes covering his body
and a loincloth that resembled a yokozuna robe.

“No, just one word.” Gosnold corrected. “Though it has a bunch of other names, usually just ‘TV’ or if you’re one of the more accented type, ‘tele’ or ‘telly’.”

“That doesn’t exactly answer the question.” Another large dragon told the scarfed humanoid, green skin bearing hardened, black spikes and a set of jaws that were too large from his lips to contain. “What does it even do?”

“Glad you asked!” the balloonist giddily told the Peacekeeper, feeling quite important that the whole population was gathered around and listening to him for this one topic (even if said topic was minute for him and every one of his brothers).

**Magic Crafter’s Realm**

Tuco cleared his throat. A green dragon bearing quite an impressive staff looked upon him, not exactly impressed. “Television is a telecommunication medium used for the transmission of moving images.”

“Moving images?” a slim, tall, yellow dragon bearing a wide brimmed, purple hat questioned, his floating cards surprisingly stationary in his palm. “As in, it’s a magical device?”

“Like my book of spells?” another yellow, trim dragon asked, though his hat draped over his head and he bore three horns instead of simply two.

“A book doesn’t exactly classify as a magical item if it just tells you what the spells are.” Another dragon stated, yellow and bearing a belt of scrolls on his waist.

“Now, my staff on the other hand,” a green dragon declared, gesturing to the tip of his staff, an ever flickering, blue flame at the tip.

“Or is it like my crystal ball?” an elderly dragon questioned, a sphere with dancing stars held in its confines floating in his hands. “By the way…who brought that thing here anyway?”

**Beast Maker’s Realm**

“Wait, if it can show you stuff, then why is it blank now?” a green dragon questioned with a leafy ‘hat’ on his head and necklace with four, sharpened teeth and a sack of purple. What was in said sack, no one was exactly sure, yet such attire was the norm around the dense bayous that composed his home.

“That’s because it isn’t on.” Cray explained.

“Then…can we turn it on? Y’know,” a dragon reclining against a sizable tree root asked, a wide brimmed, brown hat upon his head and a piece of straw in his mouth. Some amongst them, Cray included, wondered if said straw ever left his mouth at all. “To see how it works?”

“Well, not exactly.” The balloonist answered, rubbing the back of his head. “It has to have electricity coursing through it first.

“Oooh.” A purple dragon with what appeared to be lips that resembled a beak uneasily said. “That stuff aint something that you should just mess with.”

“No, no, it’s ok.” Cray assured. “It’s not dangerous at all. At least, if you plug it in right.”
“Plug in?” a tall, lanky dragon bearing teal scales and a star shaped ornament floating in between his horns questioned.

“Yeah.” Amos answered. “Course, that would also involve getting wiring put in your homes, and then maybe setting up a satellite dish somewhere. Though you’re probably going to get nothing if it rains. So maybe getting cable another way would be-“

“What’s cable?” one with what resembled a night cap asked, now more confused than ever at all these terms the smaller being was throwing at them.

“Well…” Amos stammered, not exactly sure how to explain. Sure, he KNEW what it was, yet when it came to actually explaining it, he was left grasping at straws. “It’s…uh…well…” from beneath his purple scarf, he bit his lip. “It’s kinda like…it let’s you see different stuff.”

“Like what?” an elderly, violet skinned dragon questioned, a pair of thick, darkly colored spectacles upon his face and a walking stick of carved wood in his hands. Though it was a known fact amongst them all, Amos included, it was clear that his sense of sight was nonexistent. “Such as the stars? As in, there are many?”

“Uh, yeah. Sort of, I guess.” The smaller humanoid answered, though really, he wasn’t exactly sure if anything he was saying was doing any good. “Like, everything is there. But you just have to know where to look to see it.”

**Artisans’ Realm**

“Well, if I may be so bold,”

“And what’s stopped you before?”

Alban huffed at Lindar, then turning back to Marco. “Why do you want to show us any of this?”

Marco stiffened. True, it wasn’t exactly something he had hoped for, yet he sensed the moment he loaded it into his basket. “Well…it’s…I kinda just thought it’d help you guys out.”

“Well…it’s like this.” The red scarfed air traveler said. “Your society is totally cool. I mean, it’s leagues above what you should be, y’know, considering how you started and all.” He dare go no further than that. Such a subject was untouchable, even for him. “But, no offense, but isn’t a bit…well…behind the times?”

The collective of Artisans were befuddled at the balloonist’s comment, though some had said confusion evolve into a more insulted disposition. “Behind in what way?” Nils asked, hands on his hips.

“Guys, I don’t mean that your way of doing things is bad.” Marco clarified, though he was beginning to doubt it’d do him any good. “But, well, let’s be real.” Geez, he was saying ‘well’ a lot. “Let’s put this into perspective: Oswin,” he directed his attention to the librarian. “How long does it take you to receive texts and records from the other Realms?”

“A couple of days at best,” he answered. “And a month…at worst.”

“Exactly.” Marco said. “I like to think I’m pretty good at maintaining a schedule, but even then, I
can’t control things like the weather, the schedules of other dragons, and let alone how much is available for me to take.” He continued on. “And that’s not just delivering stuff here. Getting general information about anything can range from quick to slow. I mean, when you guys first arrived, how were relations with the Peacekeepers or Magic Crafters? Let alone with anyone outside of your own?”

No one answered. While yes, they knew of the other clans, relations and general interaction between them wasn’t exactly the norm. Let alone were they positive. True, strides to break such things were made, if not out of general necessity, yet old habits truly did die hard. If at all.

“With television, you can have so much available at your fingertips!” Marco exclaimed. “You can get and know anything you want!”

“What? What about books?” Oswin cried out, as if completely baffled by the fact another source of vast information could be so simple, let alone available.

“Of course you can still use books!” the balloonist clarified. “I’m just saying, this is just another source of information. Just…well…faster!”

Oswin seemed to be somewhat slighted by this. “I still don’t see how this could be better…”

“Aw, guys, come on!” Marco said. “There’s nothing to lose from this! Besides, even the Gnorcs have- “

He soon regretted ever letting such a seemingly simple thing come from his throat.

“Excuse me?!?” Alvar bellowed, slamming his hands on the table. “Are you implying that the mere possession of this box decides whether or not we’re more ‘civilized’ than those green skinned, overweight buffoons?!”

“N-No! Of course not!” the balloonist assured, hold his hands up, though whether it was to indicate he meant no harm or as a sign of surrender couldn’t entirely be determined. Heck, it could’ve been both. “I’m just saying that, well, you know…it’d help you bring into the modern age.”

“Well, what’s wrong with how we do things now?” Lindar questioned.

“Nothing, but…”

“I think,” Nestor cut in, everyone going silent. “That something such as this, needs some…consideration.” He then turned to Marco. “We thank you for this presentation, all the same.”

“No, no, I understand.” The balloonist assured,

Marco in turn nodded, clearly defeated. “I understand.” he rose from his seat (upon the seat, given the great difference in size between himself and the average dragon) and pulled the TV off the table.

“Would you like for any of us to assist you in- “

“No, no, it’s fine.” The smaller being cut the leader off, getting off the chair with the medium sized piece of technology in his gloved hands.

Sparx once again took his place by Spyro’s side, both looking at Marco leaving, curious at the strange box that had just come, let alone what the problem was with it everyone else seemed to have with it. After all…
Some Time Later

“...it seems relatively harmless.”

The six dragons gathered at the table all the Artisans were previously were quiet, the green dragon, though he dare not express it, feeling somewhat intimidated by the presence of the other heads of the different clans stationed at said table with him. Though there were general features shared amongst them, it didn’t take much observation to see that he and the others were from vastly different worlds, in more ways than literally.

A green dragon with violet, ornamental armor (in great contrast to the younger, purple maned Peacekeeper opposite of him sighed. “The fact we are even having this conversation is nothing short of ridiculous.”

“I take it that you weren’t too keen on it either?” the orange Peacekeeper questioned, though his tone bore a sarcastic edge to it, especially giving that it was a certain Magic Crafter he and the rest of them were currently having to deal with.

“What’s there to be keen about?” the Magic Crafter huffed. “It’s a completely useless creation presented in an abortive presentation.”

“Eh, I don’t know if I’d say that.” A greyish Beast Maker sporting a large, full hat composed of brown fur and yellow spikes lining it down the middle vertically and what appeared to be an eyeball around his neck added in. “It’s a...weird-ish doo-hicky, but them boy’s words were pretty smart. Even if most of it was just technobabble.”

“Yes, it would be, for you.” The Magic Crafter stated aloud, the Beast Maker opened his yellow eyes wide.

“Ya care to repeat that there?”

“I’m merely pointing out the environment in which you inhabit would limit your understanding of such things.”

“Oh really now?” the grey dragon snarled, rising from his seat, lifting his staff of wood up. “Well, maybe you’d want too put your understanding of your so called ‘magic’ to the test!”

The Magic Crafter then rose from his seat. “You want a challenge?”

“Children,” a blue, bearded dragon cut in, the tallest of the five and seemingly, until now, completely unaware of anything that was occurring, as if in another world. Though given where he hailed from, that was to be expected. “Bear in mind what this is about.”

“Let alone how miniscule.” Nestor added in, mouthing a silent ‘thank you’ to the Dreamweaver. The Magic Crafter and Beast Maker sat back down, the Peacekeeper in turn rolling his eyes.

‘And they say I’M the impulsive one...’ “Still, if I may,”

“As if that ever stops you.” The Magic Crafter added in, earning a growl.

“It won’t be a staff meeting you from me, Cosmos.” The orange dragon answered, displaying his axe.

“Do you go anywhere without that thing?”
“I don’t know. Do you go anywhere without that?” the Peacekeeper gestured to the green dragon’s staff. “At least I’m not trying to clear compensate for- “

“Cosmos, Titan,” the Dream Weaver cut in. “There’s a great influx of negative energy here when there is no need for it.”

“Exactly what I’ve been trying to say!” the greyish dragon bearing yellow rings on his slick skin answered. In comparison to the others, his skin resembled that of an amphibian.

“Bruno.” The Artisan leader urged him to be quiet. Really though, he wouldn’t openly admit it, yet he held some of Cosmos’ sentiments. The fact they were even discussing this was ridiculous. “The subject has still yet to be discussed.”

“Exactly.” The Dream Weaver agreed.

At least someone was on his side. “Thank you, Lateef.”

“And me and my fellow dragons have our answer.” Cosmos chimed in. “No.”

“No?” Titan questioned.

“Did I stutter?” he then turned to Nestor. “It’s not as if you wish to accept that ‘box’ into your Realm either.”

“Well, that’s…yet to be decided.” The carpenter confessed. “But what’s your reasoning.”

“Let’s see:” the Magic Crafter huffed. “We have no need of it, we can obtain any knowledge we want as we have been doing thus far, and plus, I refuse to allow some miniature piece of supposed ‘advanced technology’ lecture me in all I supposedly don’t know and tell me what I need.”

“Can’t believe I’m in agreement with you of all dragons, let alone lifeforms, but frankly, I don’t feel too confident about this ‘television’ either.” Titan answered. “If it draws us in for too many hours, that’ll incite inactivity and general laziness among us all. And, well, I don’t think I need to tell you why that’s a bad idea.”

“Personally, no offense to Cray or any of his folks, but I don’t believe we need it.” Bruno declared. “We have more than enough going on at home as it is. After all, these here creatures around here didn’t just rise up from the ground, y’know.” He paused. “Well, they kinda did. But still, the general ecosystem is already enough of a handful. Plus, we has our own natural entertainment right outside our doors.”

Well, it seemed that everyone had made their peace. Almost everyone.

“I say,” Lateef began. “That it is not an inherently a creation of either good or ill will. But one that, in the wrong ways, can lead to repercussions that no one can readily predict or prepare for.”

“So, you aren’t for it?” Nestor questioned.

“Are you?”

The carpenter went quiet. Truthfully…he wasn’t sure.

“That said,” Lateef continued. “It can also lead to a great sense of enlightenment on ways and things unfamiliar to us. After all, if one were to wish to gain knowledge about our fellow dragons in the other Realms, would not a source with such information readily available be of great...
benefit?” The other dragons, despite the insistence to retain their previous convictions, couldn’t help but understand what the Dream Weaver was getting at. “That said,” he went on, finally getting to the point he had set out to make. “It is ultimately up to the individual whether or not they wish to experiment with such things, let alone which direction it takes them. As with anything, for once, what was familiar to us now was new to our ancestors.”

Elsewhere

He docked his balloon on the landing platform, the metallic platform a far cry from the typical, wooden dock he had seen in the other places of this area of the universe. Heck, the entire area was a far cry from anywhere else in the universe. At least the part of the universe he was used to. Everywhere in the Dragon Realms held, even if there was a good sense of structure and civilization to it, it always had something of a ‘aged’ or ‘organic’ feel to each area. This place bore a more metallic, technologically advanced aura around it. Grated flooring, steel walkways, and electricity surging through the giant, metal dragon heads that lit up their eyes and nostrils, not to mention the billowing smoke that rose from the spouts around…yep. A far cry from anywhere his brothers frequently traveled.

Thus, it was up to him to deliver to this place. Something that, at first, bore quiet a bit of ire from the other dragons and his clients alike. Though, ultimately, it was decided that since he and his brothers were, for the most part, a ‘neutral’ party in their ongoing conflicts, they were free to come and go without worry of attack from either side. True, his brothers decided to stick strictly with the dragons, but he went and did his business with both.

Frankly put, such struggles were none of his business, and, why complain when money was involved?

“Oh, about time you got here!” that said, the clientele was sometimes a bit…moody. “We’ve been waiting forever!” a stout, heavy set, green humanoid complained a large set of canines protruding from his bottom row of teeth.

“It’s only been an hour, take a chill pill.” The turquoise scarfed balloonist sighed. These guys could be such a pain, yet ultimately, they always held their end of the bargain. Reaching into his basket, he pulled out a bevy of items that had been ordered from this very place. “It’s here now, isn’t it?” he said, handing the creature a series of wound up posters. “Your boss still in need of some motivational sayings?”

The creature now was the one sighing. “You’d think he’d have enough of these already. Guy’s room is totally coated in them.”

Again, it was none of his business. Even if it was funny. “Well, you know the drill.” The creature nodded, grumbling as he reached into his sack and pulled out a mauve gem. “Pleasure doing business with you.”

“Yeah, yeah, sure. Now, you know the drill of beating it.”

“Sure thing.” While the money could always be guaranteed, that didn’t necessarily mean he liked staying here long.

Boarding his balloon and igniting the fire, he set off for home, of which he shared with the rest of his five brothers. Again, it was none of his business, but this particular place…the Gnorcs hadn’t always called this place home. Once, it belonged to another, at least that was what was told. But such was in the time of his great, great, great, great grandfather. What, let alone who had lived here was lost to time, and to him, uncertainty, as he knew not the name of the former residents.
Let alone if there were any left.
History Lesson: The Gnorcs

Chapter Summary

Another history lesson is in progress, though this time, it’s on some of the less favorable residents of the Dragon Realms.

Chapter Notes

The first of these detailed the general details of the Artisans, now it’s time to give some spotlight to their natural enemies. Or, at least, their natural enemies since they first came to where their home is now. Again, given this is something of a personal take on the series and relationships involving the characters, some details may not be exactly like the game in terms of mechanics and whatnot. Yet hopefully it’s decent enough to where it makes sense and isn’t a problem. There WILL be more delved into regarding what’s said here in the future, as well as what happened before Spyro’s time.

I originally had some other shots planned after this one, in that it details events that happen just before the plot of the first game happens. But I think I’ll save that for just a bit later, as while these aren’t exactly in a specific order, I’d like to have some things out first to make it at least a little more cohesive.

That said, hope you enjoy!

“Gnorcs?”

“Yes, Gnorcs.” Nestor confirmed. “Of course, you know who THEY are.”

“Well, duh.” Spyro answered. “They’re those green doofus’ that keep trying to break into where we live.”

“Yes, but what else do you know of them?”

“That’s easy! They…” the little dragon paused. “They’re…um…”

“Bzz?” (Well?)

“I’m thinking!” he told Sparx. “They’re…” he looked to Nestor, of whom was also waiting for an answer. “…green?”

The carpenter gave a light chuckle. “Good try. But it’s clear you haven’t been keeping up with your reading.”

“Hey, last week’s chapter was around twenty pages!” Spyro retorted. “Besides, why do I have to know about the history of the Peacekeepers?”

“Because, without them, we probably wouldn’t HAVE the place we live right now.” Nestor told
him, voice firm and stern, he in turn crossing his arms. “Another lesson in these is the appreciation of what you have right at your fingertips and why. Let alone how they can just as easily be taken from you.”

Spyro looked to Sparx, befuddled, though a small sense of familiarity came to him. Especially regarding Oswin’s reaction to his questions not long ago. Did this also have something to do with this ‘witch’?

“The Gnorcs, as I’m sure you are aware,” Nestor began, gesturing to an artistic rendering on the board, courtesy of Gildas, the identity of said artist obvious due to its general shape and accurate details, yet the wide display of bright colors and small splats of pain purposefully placed on the canvas telltale signs of his work. It showed a slumbering, stout, green skinned oaf of a creature in the middle of the small area that lay outside of Nevin’s personal gallery. “Are a race of beings that came to be known during- “

“How’d Gildas even get to do that?” Spyro interrupted, more than eager, as well as confused as to how these supposed enemies managed to get a portrait of them done.

“This one was caught sleeping on the job.” Nestor answered. “Bizarrely enough, this one actually managed to sneak by the Peacekeeper’s border.”

“Then…why didn’t he say anything?”

Really, Nestor had asked the painter the same thing. Heck, even Delbin and Nevin asked him the same thing. ‘Well,’ he remembered Gildas saying, ‘It’s not like any of us have anything of them in any of our lines of work.’ He explained, completely oblivious as to what this breach behind the lines even meant. ‘So, seeing as the opportunity presented itself, I took it!’

“Nestor?”

The leader was drawn back to reality, he in turn clearing his throat. “Anyhow, back on topic, the Gnorcs first moved in on us when the first of us were little more than nomads, roaming from place to place in makeshift tents and with no set place for any of the clans.”

“Whoa, whoa, you guys used to just live anywhere?” the purple dragon questioned, more than a little taken aback by this information.

“Indeed, we did. Many of us were around the same age, even younger than you.” Nestor confirmed. “Of which you’d already know if you’ve been keeping up with your history like you should.” A small scowl formed on the younger’s face, yet his current teacher went on. “In what would later become the Artisan Realm, we dragons had our first contact with these creatures.”

Spyro felt that there was more that could’ve been added to that statement, yet the carpenter was intentionally withholding information.

“My father, Astor, went out to meet the leader of the Gnorcs back then:” he then pulled out a scroll that presented the monochrome capturing of a heavily armored, bipedal creature, helmet sporting three horns and massive shoulder plates. Spyro was frankly impressed. Heck, from the drawing, whomever had made it, this guy looked around as big as a dragon himself! “Gnoxious the Brawler.”

“Gnoxious?” the little dragon snorted, Sparx too giggling. Any and all coolness was quickly gone. “And here I thought Gnasty’s name was stupid.”

“Don’t take them lightly. Even now.” Nestor lectured. “We certainly couldn’t afford to then.” He
went one, seeing that his student had finally allowed him to continue with the lesson. “As I was saying,” he said, eyeing Spyro, of whom made sure to keep quiet. “Gnoxious made his stance on our being their clear, in that he wanted us to get out. Though, seeing as it was also our home, he gave us two options: don’t get in his or any of the other Gnorc’s way, and to keep out of, and I quote, ‘his land’.”

“Though…that didn’t happen.” Spyro concluded.

“Ultimately, no.” Nestor confirmed. He then removed the scroll from the board, retrieving another and pinning it up. This one appeared to display several figures, dragons, about to seemingly engage with a group of rounder individuals, presumably the Gnorcs. “As we came to live and establish ourselves, we came to see the injustices and general hardship that the Gnorcs brought to the other natural inhabitants of our home. Particularly to one of those that had tried to help us with the many hardships that came to us at first, the Fairies.”

“Fairies used to live with the Gnorcs?”

“The Gnorcs lived everywhere.” The Artisan leader told his current student. “And the Fairies were the brunt of many of their cruel pranks and mischief. Because we attempted to defend those that supported us during our difficult times, Gnoxious saw this as a breach of our agreement, and for a good few hundred years, the Gnorcs and Dragons engaged in combat and fought for control over the various lands, both those known and those yet explored.”

“So, there was, like, a war?” Spyro questioned.

“In a sense.” Nestor nodded. “Though you must understand, the Gnorcs of today are NOT as they were back then. They were fierce warriors, commanders and masters of the land that had been theirs for so long. We were driven back multiple times, and several of our lands were overtaken when they had been established. If not for the Peacekeepers, we wouldn’t even have our home as of now.” This seemed to quiet the little dragon up, his insect guardian too listening intently. And from their widened eyes, it seemed that the gravity of what the carpenter was saying was beginning to sink in. “There were several leaders that took over the Gnorc armies, all descendants and/or trusted allies of Gnoxious, seeing as, to our relief, the lifespan of a Gnorc is far less than that of ours.”

“So…” Spyro began, finally having come up with another question to put forth. Nestor only hoped that it was at least something that had to actually do with the lesson. “When did they start getting to be really lame?”

Not exactly the most articulate, but technically, it DID have some sense of belonging to the subject. “Bear in mind, Spyro, from when I was a child, the culture and general ways of Dragons has changed and evolved with the times. Once, we all had to partake in some sort of defense against those that threatened us. Yet as time went on, we were able to move away from that and pursue our true callings without the threat of battle or having our homes broken into. Such as the way with the Gnorcs. Simply put, it got through to them that we were simply too strong for them. And…well, a general wave of simply wishing to not have any more flames being blown in their faces overcame the populace.”

“That’s why they’re a bunch of wusses now?”

“…in a manner, yes.” Nestor concluded, taking the scroll off the board, replacing it with a map of the Dragon Realms. Albeit, said lands were far closer to each other, not exactly accounting for the distance between them all. From the top left to the bottom right rested the Realm of the Dreamweavers, then the Magic Crafters, then the Artisans, and stationed by each other were the
Beast Makers and Peacekeepers, though the Peacekeepers was more extended to the bottom than its neighbors. And at the very bottom rested the realm of the Gnorcs. There was another section stationed near the Artisan home to the upper right, yet it seemed to be more faded than the others. As if time had seemingly decided to blot that one out for one reason or another. “Seeing as they must pass through either the Beast Makers or Peacekeepers in order to even get a chance of invading the other lands, since the established borders, any attempts they’ve made thus far hadn’t been successful. The most they’ve been able to do was send a few scouts through the Beast Keepers, yet the swamps hold much more hiding places than that of the open, rocky terrain of the Peacekeepers. Still, they do not get far.”

“Because the Beast Makers have weird, voodoo powers, right?”

Nestor shook his head. “It’s not voodoo. It’s merely drawing power from the Earth and its energy. They’re not Magic Crafters, mind you, so their abilities are limited.”

“So, the Magic Crafters do voodoo?”

“No!” the green vest wearing carpenter sighed. “You’re missing the point. Look, the point I’m trying to make is that even if the Gnorcs make it past the Peacekeepers, given how close they are to the Beast Makers, traveling there is a breeze. Quite literally. And should they get caught by the Beast Makers, they’re not better off, given their abilities and the bevy of fauna that reside there.” A light shudder came over him. Scarcely did he or any of the other Artisans, let alone any dragons save for the Peacekeepers make their way to the swamplands unless they had to. Heavens knew that the wild boars and those horrid blue frogs were only a QUARTER of the creatures that resided under the waters and in lands still unexplored. “Thus far, they’ve gotten no further than our Realm, and given the efforts at the borders to keep them out, it’s doubtful they ever will.” It was then that Nestor noticed the little dragon biting his lip, Sparx raising a brow at this sudden action. “You have something you wish to share?”

“Well, kinda.” Spyro confessed.

“Such as?”

“…didn’t the Artisan home get invaded once?” A part of him regretted it when it came from his mouth, the sight of seeing the usually stalwart, calm leader freezing up with widened eyes not exactly a pleasant sight.

“Where’d you hear that?” Nestor asked, not exactly angry at him, but it was clear that it wasn’t exactly something he wished to have out in the open. Especially for him.

“I read it…somewhere.” Spyro answered, shifting his violet irises.

“Read it where?”

“On one of Alban’s scrolls…” the little dragon clenched his teeth. Oh Heavens, what did he just do? “But he didn’t show it to me! I just kinda knocked over the shelves and I found it!” much as he didn’t care for the persnickety scribe, he wasn’t simply going to let him get in trouble for something he didn’t do. Nestor went quiet, turning away from the little dragon and facing the map. Crossing his arms, neither Spyro nor Sparx quite cared for the silence that perpetuated the entirety of the shop’s interior. “Uh…Nestor?”

“Well…yes.” He finally spoke. “Yes, that did happen.” He confirmed, voice subdued, yet still audible. “And it was promptly taken care of. So…there’s no need for you be concerned about such things. It’s been peaceful for hundreds of years.”
He didn’t buy it. Not entirely. And even if Nestor’s words were honest, Spyro and Sparx couldn’t help but feel something was more. Though as Spyro began to open his mouth to ask more, a protesting buzz came from the dragonfly. “Ok. I guess…that’s good.”

“Yes, very.” Nestor answered. “Now that that’s out of the way, I’d say the lesson is over. Now… go play.”

Spyro didn’t need anymore to get the message. “Uh, ok. See you later, I guess.” With that, he exited the shop that had served as an improv school.

Now that the boy had made his exit, the carpenter promptly removed the map from the board, though he took a small glance over it, surveying the various lands where their kind resided. Indeed, they had come a long way…though not without just as much hardship.

As well as loss.

Loss that nearly happened yet again…and would’ve, if not for the little dragonfly.

‘You can’t keep this from him forever.’ His father’s words rang through his mind.

‘You don’t seem to be too eager to tell him either.’ He remembered arguing.

‘Because, as you’re the leader, I have respect for your decision.’ The mauve, elderly dragon told him matter-of-factly. ‘Yet really, why are you so reluctant to inform him of our whole history.’

Worst part of that was, he didn’t really have an answer. Still, his father’s words rang true. It couldn’t stay buried forever.

Question was…when would the best time be?
Chapter Summary

Gliding lessons have begun, and one dragon is a little too eager to start. It’s just the 'getting the hang of it' part that he’s having a bit of trouble on.

Chapter Notes

Again, covering some stuff before the 1st part of the game’s story happens, even if these are generally out of order. I won’t lie in saying this one had some inspiration behind it, particularly the squirrel scene from The Sword in the Stone. Though it won’t be a complete rip off of some of the dialogue, just more of a paraphrasing.

That said, hope you enjoy!

The rolling hills of green that served as the main border between the land and ocean held only one element off in their formation, that being a small blob of purple that rushed over each and every rise in the Earth.

“Spyro!” a voice not far off called out, approaching him upon seeing just how quick he was going. “Now, now, take it easy! Don’t go so fast- “said figure then saw racing right to one of the towering structures of ivory littered all around the area. “Oh no! Boy, don’t do it! No, no!”

Too late.

Spreading his wings out as he approached the edge, the little dragon leapt, a light chill overcoming him as he felt the cool air rush past his extended appendages. The roof was but a few inches away now! Stretching out his paws, he managed to clasp onto the edge, yet found that the moment he did so, he realized then that he had flown too low, now practically hanging on the rim of the already angled rooftop, grip slipping fast. His eyes turned downward, seeing the ground below, quite a distance compared to what it had been before.

Something that, unfortunately, didn’t help him keep his grip in any way, it lasting no more than a few seconds.

Thankfully, his fall was stopped.

“Now, look there.” Argus lectured, flying over and setting the adolescent back on the hillsides. “What were you told a million times before we started this?”

Spyro sighed, though his head was spinning at the moment. “Look before you leap.” He answered. “But…I did! I was aiming for the roof!”

“Yes, clearly.” The scholar noted. “Something that was clearly out of your league. You’re no flier yet.”
“Why not?” Spyro questioned. “My wings are plenty big!”

“Size means nothing without experience.” The purple dragon answered in turn. “All the more reason that you must make sure where you want to go, and how you’ll go about doing it.”

On the lower grounds of Stone Hill, some of the natural inhabitants looked on at the scene taking place above.

“What’s going on now?” Lindar questioned, sipping a freshly brewed latte courtesy of Gavin.

“Dear boy’s finally getting the hand of flying.” Gildas answered, taking a moment to adjust his spectacles.

“Looks to me like he’s taking a crash course. Literally.”

“Oh, hush.” Gildas shushed. “This is first lesson after all.”

“You mean first ‘official’ lesson.” The clockmaker corrected. “It’s far from the first time he’s tried to go off and try it out himself.”

The painter couldn’t exactly argue with that, though they had only heard of such. Whatever attempts before that had been promptly put to a halt were hopefully being put to some use now, even if it was unlikely that he even got off the ground.

“Now,” Argus began, gesturing to a platform stationed at the edge of one of the lower towers. “Remember your current position.” Spyro looked to his feet. “Gauge the distance between you and your goal.” The little dragon in turn looked to the platform. “Taking a few steps back if you feel you need a running jump, though don’t go in too hard, lest you propel yourself downward.” Then, the scholar stepped back. “Now, try going from here to there.”

Spyro’s eyes saw the platform, then where he was currently standing. True, it wasn’t as close as the roof, but it looked sort of…far.

The roof….geez, it was so high up.

“Bzz?” (What’s up?) Sparx questioned.


“Bzzt bzz.” (You don’t look ‘cool’.)

“By the way,” Argus suddenly spoke again. “You DO know what causes you to be pulled downward to the ground, yes?”

“Uh…gravity? What else?”

“Yes, but what exactly IS the phenomenon?” he received no answer. “Oh surely, you haven’t forgotten already.”

“No offense, Argus, but what does that have to do with anything?”

“Everything, son.” The scholar retorted, adjusting his small spectacles. “The phenomenon in which two material particles…”

Oh joy. This was going to take forever.
“…if free to move,”

Spyro didn’t pay him any mind, stepping back, all the while keeping the platform in his line of
sight. ‘I’ve got this.’ He mentally chanted. ‘I’ve got this. I’ve got this. I’ve totally got this.’ Then he
ran forward, his goal growing closer and closer. ‘Okay…go!’ he leapt up, spreading his wings and
gliding forward.

“…will inevitably be drawn towards each other. You see?”

Only to make contact with the wall just below the platform, the little dragon peeling off the wall
going down to the ground in this manner. Both Argus and Sparx wasted no time in making it to the
quite dazed Spyro, of whom was seeing little more than not just starts, but the entire milky way at
the moment.

“See?” Lindar noted, gesturing to the scene. “Crash course.”

“Well…it’s not as if ANY of us got it right away.” Gildas countered. “And besides, boy’s small,
especially for one his age.” He went silent for a moment. “Do you think that—”

“Oh, no!” the blue, blonde dragon immediately answered. “No, of course he’ll fly! Just…like with
everything else, it might take him some extra time.”

“But…he’s gliding. Not flying.”

CRASH!!!

Nor was he gliding either.

“Like I said. Extra time.”

**That Night**

Welp…that was a failure.

“Bzzt bzz bzz.” (Hey, it’s like Argus said: you’re probably not going to get it in one go.)

“Still…” Spyro huffed. “Why can’t I just…I don’t know, get things faster?” he outwardly mused.
“Sometimes I wish that, immediately, I could just pick up on stuff and zoom right through it, no
problem! Then NOTHING would be too much of an issue for me!”

“Bzzz bzz bzz.” (That’s why you ‘wish’ it. You can’t live it.)

“You’re being SO helpful right now.” The little dragon pouted, slumping down on the patch of
grass he had taken to sitting on.

“Bzzt bzz bzz bzz bzt.” (Look, all I’m saying is that you can’t just expect things to go right the first
time. You think I just up and sprouted wings like that?) well, he did sort of ‘sprout wings’, but still.
“Bzz bzz bzzt bzz.” (I spent thirty some days in a swamp, had to wait for the right weather, shed
my skin, and THEN I had to get the hang of flying.)

“You…shed your skin?” Sparx nodded, Spyro’s face contorting in disgust. “Aw, that’s sick!”

“Bzzt bzzz bzz.” (No one said my life cycle was a pretty one. And mine’s tame. You know what
happens when a cockroach has babies–)

“Okay, okay, I get it!” now, not only was he dejected, he was grossed out. Still, his situation
remained the same. He had wings that could support him in the air and the wind could carry him forward. Only he couldn’t even glide from one place to another.

“Why so blue?” the little dragon turned an eye upward, spotting a red, muscled dragon above him.

“Oh. Hey there, Delbin.” Spyro greeted, though said greeting wasn’t at all jovial. The painter was about to pry further, though a small wiggle of the smaller boy’s wings gave him some sense of an indication.

“Eager to use your wings?”

“…yeah.” He sighed yet again. “Can’t land worth anything though.”

“Wings aren’t something you—”

“Get the hang of right away. I know.” Spyro repeated. “That was Argus’ favorite thing to say today.”

Delbin was quiet for a moment or two, pondering as to where the portly scholar was at the moment. It’d take some adjusting, which would also mean giving Nestor a visit. Still, the kid had been doing good (attendance wise) with the rest of his lessons, so perhaps some flexibility could be worked in. That said, “Well, it’s not exactly ‘today’ anymore. Just barely. You might want to get in unless you want Nestor to find out.”

That got Spyro to shoot right up. “Sh-Shoot!” he needed no more, immediately barreling forward towards the castle.

It could be worked in maybe. That said, if it could, Delbin preferred for it to be a surprise.

The Next Morning

Despite the fact the stuff was forbidden to him, the little dragon would kill for a sip of Gavin’s brew. He didn’t care if it tasted terrible, at least it’d keep his eyes open.

“No, remember.” Argus told him. “Nestor was generous enough to fit this in for you, so you best not be sleeping it off.”

“Y-Yeah. Sorry.” Spyro mumbled, Sparx too not exactly the earliest of risers. True, he served part time as the boy’s alarm clock, yet here they were just a couple of hours after dawn, the sky still having the moon visible and small stars showing in the lightening sky.

“Now, I believe the first problem was that you were jumping and spreading your wings out too fast.” The purple, melon loving dragon told him. “And, well, an error on my part, you simply aren’t ready to go and try to land on elevated platforms. At least not at the distance those at Stone Hill. “ he then gestured to the series of towers before him that lay eastern part of the Artisan’s main hub, the portal linking Town Square to the rest of the Realm up top. “Perhaps it’d be best that you move downwards before you try doing it at even level.

“Exactly.” Tomas added in, having come here to muse on which series of notes would be best for the next piece he was writing. “Once you get that step done, everything else will simply come naturally. No need to fear breaking your-MPFH!” the bard had his mouth covered by Argus.

“Go on, son.” The scholar urged.

Spyro looked up at the series of towers, specifically the tallest. True, it wasn’t as if the location
was unfamiliar to him, yet it wasn’t exactly something he thought of to be used for this. Especially
since his first ‘attempt’ nearly sent him teetering over the edge. Still, he had gotten better since
then, gaining more of a hold of the use of his wings.

Still, it didn’t change how high it was. Or how far of a drop it’d be.

Yet, if this was the way he’d get closer to getting it…at least somebody would hopefully catch
him.

He went up to the largest tower in the middle, going inside and climbing up the set of stairs that
took him to the top, the entrance to Town Square right in front of him, one of his destinations to the
left and right. It was quite a drop. A really big drop.

“It doesn’t matter which side you choose, boy!” Tomas shouted from below encouragingly. “Both
result in you achieving the goal!”

Ok, that was a little better? Inching his way to the edge of the right side, Spyro looked down, only
for Sparx to force his head upward, and in turn, forcing him to focus on what was ahead, not what
was at the bottom. In a sense, Spyro was somewhat grateful for this little gesture, though he had to
look down partially as where he was going was down. Just…not all the way down.

“Well…” he gulped. “Here it goes.” Argus’ words echoed throughout his head, his claws hanging
over the edge as he looked at the small platform on the tower below. With one, tentative hop,
Spyro spread his wings and made a small glide to it.

Only to overshoot it completely.

Oh no. Oh, no, no, no, no!

“Don’t worry!” he heard from below. “Just keep at it! Let the air take you!”

What other choice did he have now?! He was just feet away from hitting the ground!

“Keep your wings spread out!” Tomas and Argus shouted from below. “Just come down towards
the doorway!”

Well…ok. Instinctively putting his front legs outward, Sparx flew beside him, gesturing with his
front feelers to do so. Spyro saw a wall approaching, though, to his surprise, he maneuvered
himself to the side, sending him in the path of the two dragons below. He…he was doing it. He
was doing it! He was gliding! He was making a clear, seamless glide!

“All right! Good job!” both dragons shouted. Though the celebration didn’t last long, Argus and
Tomas seeing the boy making his way right towards them.

Just before he would make contact, both of them jumped out of the way, Spyro going on and on
past the entrance to the small area and to the center of the hall, his claws lightly scraping across the
floor until, at last, he met solid ground again. A series of light, hurried sighs came from him, his
violet eyes wide as he looked to Sparx, then to where he had just come from.

“I…I did it.” he huffed out. “I did it.” he repeated, what had just happened beginning to settle in. “I
did it!” he raced back to the other two dragons, of whom were just getting back on their feet. “Hey
guys! I did it! I finally did it! I glided and made a landing! I did it! I did it!”

“Y-Yes. Yes you did.” Argus groaned, a small pain in his side from where he fell on in leaping out
of the way.
“Oh, lovely job, boy!” Tomas congratulated. “And look at that! Not one bone broken!”

“Uh…yeah.” Spyro answered back, shifting his eyes towards Sparx, whom did so as well. “Great.”

“While you didn’t exactly gauge the distance, that was a good glide.” Argus confirmed. “Especially for you.”

“Really?” the scholar nodded. “Awesome! Awesome, awesome, awesome! I’ve got to tell Nestor! Heck, I’ve got to tell everyone!”

“Spyro, wait—neither Argus’ or Tomas’ words would matter anymore, the little dragon practically galloping towards the castle.

Well…it was safe to say that some were going to get a rude awakening this morning.
Our Fair Winged Friends

Chapter Summary

Seeing a strange, flying creature, Spyro recognizes what she is. And instead of yet another accident happening, he finds that perhaps things may go in his favor this time.

Chapter Notes

Not exactly a lesson, but a small break from them. While they’re necessary for world building and getting out the different personalities of the dragons, I’m beginning to get a little weary of them. Also, I’m kinda having some difficulty on deciding on what to put next, as I want to do some stuff relating to the first game, yet I’ll admit that there’s more to cover regarding certain elements (the shepherds and druids, though that could be perhaps implemented in different ways via events in the first game). I just want to find more creative ways to do them. That said, here’s a lesson, but from a different source

BTW, this is NOT the fairy’s official name as there’s none to be found, but this is just one I came up for her. Again though, this is just another head-canon.

It was just briefly. Just for the smallest bit of moments, but when he saw it, he knew he had to see the rest of it.

“Bzzt bzz bzz bzzt.” (It’s nearly eleven! If you’re caught out here…geez! You’re already grounded because you messed up Lindar’s clock-)

“I know, I know!” Spyro hissed. “I heard it enough for a lifetime from you and everyone else!”

“Bzzt bzz bzz bzzt.” (I’m just trying to keep you out of more trouble.)

The little dragon sighed. “Yeah, I know. I’m sorry.” Really, he bore no animosity to the little dragonfly. It was just…a bad week. True, his grounding and work in cleaning off all those gears was nearly done, but still, it just increased the sheer amount of guilt he already had felt in regard to Lindar’s newest work. He didn’t mean to do it. Honestly.

But when he about to go to sleep, he swore that he heard something fluttering by his window. And he had caught just enough of a glimpse to make out some features. Whatever it was, it had two legs, two arms, and a pair of wings. Though they clearly weren’t wings of a dragon. And despite himself, Spyro doubted even dragons couldn’t get to be THAT small.

Thus, even with the ever-lingering sense of depression that perpetuated his room, he found himself unable to resist the urge to go and investigate. And seeing as they had already gotten out via the window (Sparx was surprisingly strong despite being a quarter…or was it an eighth his size?), there was no other path to go but onward.
And besides, even if he was caught, it probably didn’t matter, seeing as his current punishment was already as big as it could get.

His ears caught something. A small, flutter. Beating of wings similar to the sounds Sparx made. By the collection of fashioned bushes that lined the entrance to Dark Hollow. Creeping around the corner, the dragon and his dragonfly went inside the tiny formation of hedges and looked around to the very center of the area, eyes widening at what both of them saw.

It had two legs and arms. And indeed, it was small and had wings. Though it was no dragon.

The creature in question was a small, humanoid female with fluttering, insect-like wings affixed to her back, skin a light apricot color and her form bore a slim waist and wider chest and hips. Spyro pondered if this was what Anyte referred to as an ‘hourglass figure’. He had no idea what she was even talking about, let alone why she put such importance on having it. It wasn’t as if it made her any less of a pain. Unlike Anyte or most of the other dragons around here, this creature bore a full head of blonde, well kept hair, said hair fashioned into a long ponytail, of which reached her mid back, a small ‘dress’ of sorts that seemed to be comprised of stitched pieces of cloth and leaves of red on her small form. She held something in one hand resembling a bird’s nest while the other hand was busy grasping at what was seemingly the leaves of the bushes themselves.

Despite their collective shock, neither Spyro nor Sparx needed to be told what they were seeing. “A fairy.” The dragon whispered to himself. “An actual fair-” a pair of feelers came to clamp his lips shut, lest they be found out-

“Hm?”

Too late.

With a jump, the blonde fairy flew back, right into the bush, Spyro and Sparx retreating back to their hiding place. Both parties stayed as such for some time, the dragon and insect pondering whether or not the fairy had up and left. Though upon turning a corner, they saw nothing, save for the nest-basket overturned on the ground.

“Wow.”

Now it was their turn to jump back into the bushes.

“You’re a tiny thing, aren’t you?” fluttering just mere inches away from him, the red dressed fairy surveyed Spyro with her vibrant, blue eyes, overlooking each part of him as if he were some strange specimen. Though given her lack of complete and utter intrigue, it was clear she was at least familiar with dragons. “What?” she asked, the little dragon still nothing saying anything. “You know what a fairy is, don’t you?”

“Of course I know what a fairy is.” Spyro answered, finally finding his voice. “I just…never really saw one this close.”

“Hmm…” the winged young woman rested a finger under her chin, a small smile curling on her rosy lips. “Well, get a good look!” she declared, flipping her ponytail and turning around, seemingly posing for him. “Just so you’re aware, I’d appreciate if you don’t just start ogling at me. I’m not THAT kind of girl.”

“What?” the purple dragon asked. “What’ kind of girl?”

She immediately stopped, realizing that perhaps she had just let out a little too much. Just how young was this guy? “How old are you, anyway?”
“Twelve. Why?”

“Uh, no reason. Let’s…start over. What’s your name?”

“Spyro.”

“Bzzt?” (And?)

“And this is Sparx.” Spyro gestured to the dragonfly, of whom nodded in approval.

“Name’s Hazel.” The blonde fairy declared. “And while I should be a little sore at you for interrupting me,” she pointed back to her basket. “I was just about done anyway.”

“Done doing what?” Spyro questioned, he and Sparx leaning over to see the small bundle of sticks on the ground.

“Getting leaves, what else?” Hazel answered, then fanning out her dress. “These things don’t make themselves; you know.”

“Oh. Well,” the little dragon began trotting over to it. “If you’ve got them all, I…” he paused, stopping in his tracks.

“Bzzt?” (What?)

“On second thought…” he said, backing up from it. ‘The clock.’ “I should probably just get going.”

Hazel tilted her head, clearly befuddled. “Hm? What for?”

“Oh…” Spyro uncomfortably shifted his eyes. “I’ll probably end up-

CRACK.

Oh. Oh no.

“GAH!”

Oh no, no, no, no, no!

“Oh…” the fairy flew towards the source of the sound, the little dragon immediately leaping from his place and seeing the small bundle of sticks promptly crushed by him simply readjusting his foot. Completely destroyed. Just like the clock.

“I’m sorry!” Spyro cried out, Sparx already sensing he was growing frantic. “I’m sorry! I’m so sorry! I’m so, so sorry!”

Hazel was frankly caught off guard by this. “Uh…hey now,”

“Heavens, I’m so sorry! Really!” he knelt, paws fumbling to try and get the bundle back together. “I didn’t mean to, honest! I…” he stopped, albeit due to Sparx’s insistence. Ultimately, to his dismay, it was a fruitless effort. “I…I should go.”

What in the world? The blonde fairy was completely baffled. “Hey, look, it’s not that big of a deal—“

“Great.” She heard him mumble as he began walking away. “Just great.” He didn’t even notice that
Sparx wasn’t tailing along with him. “First the clock…now…ugh!” he tore up a small patch of grass and flung the uprooted blades up to fly freely in the light night breeze. “I can’t do anything right…”

“Hey!” he turned, though a flash of red and gold brought him to face forward. “Thought that since you made me drop it, you could help me gather them again.” In front of him flew both Hazel and Sparx, a perfectly intact basket in her hands to be seen by Spyro’s widened violet eyes.

“What the…” he stammered. “How did you…”

“Uh, yeah. If you know about fairies, then you should also know of a little thing that we’ve got.” With that, she reached behind her back and pulled out what seemed to be a small stick, a small, white light stationed at the tip. “It’s nothing compared to what the Magic Crafters can do. But it comes in handy.”

“But…” Spyro continued, looking to her, then the basket, then back to her. “How did you do that?”

“Oh please.” Hazel rolled her eyes, humored. “You think this is the first time that basket’s been smashed? I’ve had to put this thing back together more times than that guy can flap his wings in an hour.” She answered, gesturing to Sparx. The dragonfly was sure that she was exaggerating. Still, her words seemed to influence his purple charge, so it was perhaps for the best.

“Oh.” Spyro noted, biting his lip and shifting his eyes. “Well…that’s good. I guess.”

“Hey, you ok?” the winged girl questioned. Despite the small amount of relief in his features, he was still quite downcast. “Look, c’mon. Help me pick some more of these leaves.”

He was surprised. Sure, she had proposed it before, yet the shock of the restored basket had worn off somewhat. “You…sure about that?” He had already smashed two things, and only one had been able to be put back together like nothing happened. Still…it wasn’t like nothing else could go wrong.

“Hey, no sweat.” Hazel assured. “There’s plenty of leaves to pick. Not like there’s any way you can- “Sparx nudged her, shaking his head. “I think you’d pick leaves faster than I can. Bigger hands…” she looked to said ‘hands’. “Er…paws? Well, whatever they are, they’d be good for it.”

“You’re…ok with that?”

“If I wasn’t, I wouldn’t be asking, would I? C’mon.” she tilted her head towards the bushes. “We’ll get this done in no time.”

There was a part of him that didn’t wish to go, images of bundles of broken sticks and a messed-up clock coming to his mind. Yet…if that happened…then she could just whip it back together again, right? So…even if he screwed up, then at least it could be fixed. With a sigh, he began making his way towards the desired location. Besides, he thought, said thought bringing a light chuckle to him, at least he’d know better than to swallow any leaves.

“So…why do you need these again?” Spyro questioned, having gathered more than enough leaves in just a few plucks. In fact, it was far more than what her basket could even carry.

“For making into clothes, fixing roofs, curtains, etc.” Hazel told him, heaving as she lifted the small basket. “Basically, if it’s anything, there’s probably leaves involved in it somehow. That or
flowers. It depends on the season, really.”

“So, being it’s summer, you’re gathering now?”

“Bingo.” The blonde fairy confirmed. “Store it up for the winter as that’s when things get rough. Though I always paint my leaves red or orange. Take quite a bit to cover up the green, but the way it looks makes it worth it.” she then got a little giddy. “That’s why I can’t wait for Fall this year. Those leaves are the BEST!”

“Hmm, not as great as Summer, but Fall’s ok.” Spyro chimed in. “Though the leaf piles are awesome.”

“I know, right?” Hazel added. “Granted, I guess what counts as a ‘pile’ means a world of difference for me and you, but totally!” While she had thought so at the beginning when he offered to help beforehand, but now, the little fairy was convinced she liked this little dragon.

“Bzz bzz, bzzt!” though the dragonfly following him seemed quite insistent that they cut this short.

“Yeah, yeah, I know.” Spyro sighed, looking back to the castle.

“Guess you got to go back?” Hazel questioned.

“Yes.” The dragon confirmed. “Unless I want to stay cooped up in there even LONGER. I’m not even supposed to be out here anyway.”

“Yeah, in that case, you better get moving. Besides, I’ve got people waiting on me to get these back, so see you, I guess.”

“Sure thing.” With that, the two went their separate ways, she up and to places unknown while he back to the structure he nestled in.

While he said nothing, and if the little dragon was aware, Sparx knew not. But what he did know was that if she had the power to fix that basket, then she would’ve had no problem just putting all those leaves back herself. A part of him at first believed that she simply wanted them to do the work for her, yet seeing how, even if just slightly, Spyro’s mood improved, perhaps there was another motive behind her suggestion…

And at the moment, he was thankful for it.
That Broke My Back

Chapter Summary

Having been pushed to the limit, the leader of the Artisans finally unleashes his frustrations upon the young dragon, of which effectively pushes him to leave. Though perhaps, in a way, this may be a blessing in disguise.

Chapter Notes

Ok, bit of a confrontational shot this one is. As well as canon-breaking in a way. Yet given what the past shots have shown, I feel that this is a more appropriate set up for the events to follow (even if I won’t be delving too deeply into that, seeing as, well, it would just be reciting the game as a whole).

Also, not meaning to portray Nestor as a jerk, as this is mainly a breaking point for him, but what he does do goes over the line. Yet why exactly will be explained later.

That said, while this is a bit on a more explosive note, hope you enjoy!

“Honestly, you cannot keep doing this, Spyro!” the young dragon shrank back, Sparx having taken refuge behind his back. This was far from any standard lecture or correction the carpenter was giving him. Dare say, Spyro had never seen him so furious. “That was the BEST saw I had, and you go and completely ruin it!”

Hey, he was trying to simply cut wood for a birdhouse like he was supposed to! Nestor didn’t specify WHAT saw to use! There were dozens of them! True, Sparx told him to wait until he came back, but still, he wasn’t given much detail.

“Not to mention Delbin’s paints! Do you have any idea of just how expensive the are?!”

Again, he was just doing what he was told! Delbin told him to mix and plop out colors until he thought he got them right!

“The strings on Tomas’ lute need replaces because you tightened them too much!”

He was outright told to do so if the note didn’t sound right! How was he supposed to know that the string would snap? Better yet, if anything, it was better that he didn’t take his eye out!

“And Argus’ newest thesis was sprawled out all of his study!”

Ok, that one was DEFINATLEY not his fault! He just opened the door for one second, and boom! Gust of wind comes rushing in!

“Gavin’s coffee maker is broken!”

He was just trying to grind the beans.
“Lindar’s gears and springs are all jumbled and disorganized!”

At least the clock wasn’t broken, right? He didn’t lay a hand on the newest one. And Lindar finished it, right?

“The wall Gildas was going to cover is now covered with buckets of paint that’ll need to be painted over!”

He tripped! Honestly! And Gildas said he could help! He wasn’t told just how much!

“And I know my father’s been none the wiser, but I know well you’re harassing the sheep!”

How was he ‘harassing’ them? They weren’t hurt or anything! He was only playing! They were the only things around his size anyway!

“Nils is out of three blocks of marble in one week!”

The hammer was too heavy, not to mention, how was he supposed to know that you didn’t strike a rock in a particular place, otherwise it’d crumble apart?

“That creampuff made for Gavin’s birthday exploded all over the cake Devlin made!”

And he didn’t seem to have a problem with it, nor did Gavin.

“Thor’s newest pot was shattered!”

Ok, that one was his fault. Still, it was an accident. And Thor said that was just something he did on the side. Plus, he put it back together with that…whatever it was he showed the little dragon once with his own pottery.

“Yet that’s nothing compared to you putting a whole bottle of cider in Alvar’s stew!”

Hey, he was NEVER told that cider was alcohol! The phrase ‘not for kids’ was as vague as vague got!

“Nevin’s palette is split in two!”

Well…he didn’t mean to do that. And…he tried to glue it back together.

“Alban’s latest scrolls are charred!”

Hey, he sneezed!

“Darius’ set pieces are ruined!”

He tried to get them out of the rain…

“Oswin’s books fell in the water!”

…ok, that one was his fault. But they got fixed thanks to Magic Crafter magic!

“And Anyte…well…she’s complained to me as well!”

Really, what DIDN’T that snob complain about? Giving a sour note, last time he checked, WASN’T a crime.

“And…now this!” Nestor finished with a roar, throwing his hands up. “Honestly! What were you
thinking during ANY of this!?”

A moment of silence followed, Spyro seemingly believing that it meant the older dragon was waiting for an answer. “I… I didn’t- “

“Obviously not.”

“That’s not what I meant!” Spyro defended. “I was just trying to do what they wanted! Or at least what they were going to do anyway!”

“So, you just up and decided to go and insert yourself into their work, despite being told up front to NOT touch anything?”

“N-No!” the little dragon countered. “At least, no one up and told me not to touch anything. I mean, Lindar did that one time… but I didn’t touch any of the other clocks!”

“That’s not what I… ugh!” Nestor groaned. “It’s not just that! It’s the not listening! The disregard for simple instructions! The fact that it seems everything gets destroyed whenever you put your hands on it!”

Destroyed? He… he didn’t mean to-

“What is it? Answer me that.” Nestor went on. “Because each and every dragon here is trying to present and teach you to the best of their ability, and it seems you have absolutely no appreciation for it!”

What? No, no, he appreciated it! He never didn’t! It was just harder than everyone thought it was!

“Well?”

“I…” Spyro stammered, he, to his shame, feeling the wetness of developing tears welling up in his ducts. “I was just trying to make things…” he found himself unable to even conjure up a halfway decent answer.

“Well, it isn’t working.”

Those words caused something within the small dragon to react. For one reason or another, whether it be from the continuous string of reminders of all he had done ‘wrong’ or simply the fact this was just one lecture too many (though it was more like a tongue lashing to him), Spyro felt something ‘snap’. “That’s nothing new, is it?!” he shouted.

Nestor was somewhat taken aback by this, yet he far from withdrew his position. “Watch your tone, young man!”

“No!” Spyro yelled back. “It seems everything I do is wrong according to you! Whenever I try something, it’s either wrong, not good enough, or just stupid!”

“It wouldn’t be seen like this if you would just THINK for one moment before you go trying to show off!” the carpenter argued. Honestly, what in the world had come over the little one? He had never seen him… well, yes, he had seen him riled up, but this… this was different. Still, as far as he was concerned, the child was out of line. “Half of these accidents is just because of your ego getting the better of you and you end up creating problems for not only yourself and others!”

“Not like it matters because even when I do everything right and try my best, it’s always somehow wrong!”
“That has nothing to do with anything this conversation is about!”

“Yes it is!” Spyro retorted. “You just don’t want to admit it!”

“This isn’t about you looking good! This is about your blatant disregard for the rules and the property of others!”

“I’m trying the best I can! And if you’d just- “

“Do you honestly want to be seen as a bothersome, show-offish, immature little brat?! Some spoiled child or nuisance?! Because you’re doing quite the good job at it!”

Spyro seemed to freeze at that for a second, though his apparent shock didn’t last long. “And you’re seen as a stick in the mud that only thinks about how much knowledge is shoved down my throat!”

It was something he’d regret. “You have no idea how much of a privilege that is, let alone how lucky you even are!” He would regret it the moment it left his lips. Yet in the moment, “But it seems you’re so selfish, you don’t even care!” red was all he could see. As well as the desire to put this mouthy child in his place. “Though I should expect such! If you continue this, you’ll never grow to be a proper Artisan! In fact, it wouldn’t surprise me if you never did! By now, you’re already a lost cause!”

It was only afterward did he realize the gravity of what exited his mouth.

The young dragon’s eyes grew wide, any traces of anger completely removed from them, utter shock and dismay taking its place. Sparx had come out form behind Spyro’s back and looked on at the Artisan leader, completely flabbergasted at what he had just heard. Nestor’s own eyes widened, in horror, as he noticed Spyro slowly stepping back from him and turning away, hiding his face away and lowering his head to face the floor of his room.

Oh Heavens, what he just done? “Spyro?” Nestor softly let out, the little dragon shuddering seemingly in response. “Spyro, I…” now he was the one stammering. “Spyro, I didn’t mean-“ he wasn’t able to get anything else out, the purple adolescent barreled past him in a mad dash, he barely missing it, yet from the glimpse he could see, it was clear that the boy had fresh streams of tears running down his face. “Spyro, wait!” Nestor called out, though, once again, he was interrupted.

Sparx flew right in front of his face, the insect presenting him with, to the carpenter’s surprise, quite the ferocious glare and a leg stretched out as if to tell him to ‘stop’. His message was clear, the purple dragon disappearing around the corner. Upon realizing he was gone; however, the dragonfly abandoned Nestor and flew after his charge, buzzing out his name and pleading for him to wait for him.

The leader was left alone, though now, his position only served to make what had just transpired even worse in his mind.

What had he done?

What had he just done?
Chapter Summary

After the outburst, Spyro decides to run away, rushing to Marco to begin his first step. Though, a certain interview is taking place tomorrow, and a certain, far away Gnorc will be watching.

Chapter Notes

2nd part to the rewritten prelude to the first game. And yes, the title is a reference to a song from the My Little Pony: The Movie (G1). The lyrics actually fit Spyro’s point of view near perfectly.

“Bzz, bzz bzz bzzt bzz!” (Whoa, hey! Hey! Slow down!)

Despite the dragonfly’s pleas, the little dragon continued running off at full speed. On and on and on he went, rushing right out of the castle doors, past the portals, and only stopping when he got to the pier, plopping down on the wooden structure, he too exhausted and really, having little reason or any space to run anymore. Sparx finally caught up, yet his initial comment on how the purple child should’ve slowed down was tossed out the window at seeing just how dejected the poor thing was.

“Bzz? Bzz bzz bzz.” (Hey.) the dragonfly fluttered down near him. (You ok?)

“…what do you think?” Spyro hissed, the insect flinching somewhat. “…sorry.”

“Bzzz…” (It's ok.)

“No, it’s not.” The little dragon sighed. “It’ll never be ok.” His head slumped forward, eyes watching the gently rolling, lapping movement of the ocean below. “It’s never, ever, EVER going to be ok.”

“Spyro?” both he and Sparx turned, Marco standing but a few feet away from the two.

“Oh…hey.” Spyro in turn greeted. “What’s up?”

“Just taking some more texts to Oswin’s library. Guy was busy organizing the shelves, so…” his words died upon studying the little dragon further. “But what’s up with you?” he went forward, sitting next to him. “What’s wrong?” Spyro didn’t answer, save for light little hiccups that began emitting from him, Marco in turn noticing small droplets hitting the salty water below. “H-Hey now,” he placed a hand on the dragon’s back. “Calm down now.”

Finding little reason to hold it in anymore, the dam broke and Spyro unleashed everything, a sharp gasp followed by an unsteady wail came from him, startling both Sparx and Marco at first, though the realization of just how serious this was. And while it was clear that the poor thing was near, if
not completely inconsolable at the moment, the two didn’t leave his side, Sparx fluttering and giving the poor child light nuzzles while the balloonist continued give light, gentle rubs along the dragon’s spine as he released cries and streams of tears.

Some Time Later

“Never knew your house was so…big.” Spyro noted. The balloonist’s humble abode was, well, humble, being formed out of stone crafted in a spherical shape with a small spout atop of it, windows not having any set pattern and being scattered everywhere. A simple hammock served as his bed, and there were maps and charts hung all over the walls. Still, now, despite the clutter, the little dragon would take this place in a heartbeat compared to where he had just come from at the moment.

“Thanks.” Marco answered, coming to the small table stationed in the middle of the large room. “So, you feel like talking about it now?”

Spyro released a heavy sigh, yet it seemed that there was at least some improvement given by the small nod he gave the humanoid figure. “There’s…just been some problems at home.”

“What kind of problems?”

“EVERYTHING!” well…perhaps he had spoken too soon. Spyro slammed his paws on the table, jostling said table. “Everything I do is either wrong or stupid according to those guys! I can’t please ANYBODY! And according a certain ‘someone’, I’m a bothersome, spoiled little brat! And a ‘lost cause’!”

Marco was silent at first, pondering whether or not he should even question what exactly Spyro was talking about. Thankfully though, it seemed such wasn’t necessary, Spyro up and relaying to him what had occurred. “Well…” the scarf wearing individual uncomfortable answered, rubbing the back of his head. “That…that sounds bad.”

“It’s worse.” The purple dragon growled. Whatever former sadness he held before had transformed into sheer fury, Marco even hearing his claws beginning to dig and scrape into the wood of the piece of furniture. “But in a way…I’m glad.”

“You are?” Sparx too was confused.

“Because now…I think I know what I’m going to do.” Marco was puzzled, yet Sparx had an idea where this was going. “I’m leaving.”

“Bzzt?! (What?!)”

“Yeah, you heard me.” Spyro told the dragonfly. “I’m going away and never coming back.”

“Bzzt! Bzz zz bzz!” (Y-You can’t! Running away isn’t the answer!)

“If all those guys know how to do is tell me on just how much of a screw up I am, then the only mistake I made was not leaving sooner.”

“Bzz bzzt, bzz bzz bzz.” (Listen, I know you’re upset. But this isn’t the way to go about it.)

“I don’t care.” The dragon responded, turning his head away. “Besides, from what Nestor said, I and they would be better off.”

“Bzzz…bzz bzz.” (Ok. What he said WAS what everyone else probably did.)
“But do you really think you can make it on your own?” Marco asked, chiming in. “I mean…you are kinda…well…young?”

“You’re living on your own, and looks like you’re doing just fine.” Spyro countered.

“Yeah, but, no offense, but I’m old enough for that.” Marco retorted. “You’re not. Besides, don’t you think that everyone would miss you?”

“…no.”

Both Marco and Sparx looked to each other. Clearly, this was far from something that just came out at the spur of a moment. This ran far, far deeper that that. Still, both the dragonfly and balloonist weren’t too keen on the little dragon’s insistence on leaving. Besides, really, both were in silent agreement that, legitimate complaints or not, the young boy was making a rash decision and saying such things based on little more than his high emotions.

Still, Marco thought, perhaps it’d be good that he get some space, at least for now. “Hey,” he began. “How about you stay the night?”

Spyro’s eyes widened. “You…you mean that?”

“Yeah, sure.” Marco assured. “I’ve got extra blankets and everything. I even got an extra toothbrush. Guest or not, I’m not exactly a fan of morning breath.”

Spyro giggled at that, the balloonist and Sparx giving a small sigh of relief. At least there was some levity in the mood. “Thanks.” The dragon answered. “Sorry that…you know…”

“No, no, it’s cool.” Marco told him, placing a gloved hand on his shoulder. “I know. I’ve got five other brothers.” He chuckled, Spyro in turn doing so as well. “Now, let me go and get everything.” With that, he rose up and went to get some of those extra blankets, Sparx in turn following him. Once they were both out of earshot of the little dragon, the two turned to each other. “He’s just emotional right now. I bet you anything that come morning, he’s gonna change his mind.” Sparx nodded in agreement. “Still…was it that bad?” the dragonfly bit his lip, giving a low, buzzing sigh. “Oh, I see.” He wasn’t going to just up and insert himself in the dragon’s business, but still, it was very clear that he wasn’t in any state to be around any of the others for a bit.

That said, while it couldn’t be confirmed now, both hoped that at least some of this would be cleared up by morning.

**Gnorc Realm**

There. Perfect!

‘You can do it!’ read in white letters on a black border, the photograph of a rising sun in the center of the poster.

“Heck yeah I can!” the green skinned, large creature proclaimed with pride, pumping his chest out. He took a moment to survey and look over the bevy of posters with motivational sayings and encouragements all around him in the darkened room, they about as numerous as the various electronics on the shelves. “Oh, just you wait, world!” he went on. “Ol’ Gnasty’s back in business!”

True, he hadn’t exactly been back in ‘business’ for some time, not since he had a mild setback a few years ago regarding those blasted Peacekeepers. True, some of his men wouldn’t exactly call the loss of the Artisan homeland anything ‘mild’, yet heck with it. Who were they to question him?
Much less risk getting a full-on blast from him right in the behind? Besides, how was he to know that those stupid Peacekeepers could hit that hard?

If anything, at least he knew from then on to wear a helmet. And it was a flipping cool helmet too! He had horns on it and everything! Plus, he’s been doing some studying quite a bit since that little, ‘mild’ (it was mild, darn it!) setback. A particularly interesting spell came to be known involving the enrapturing of living beings in crystal.

‘Ha!’ he thought. ‘Those stupid Magic Crafters aren’t the only one who can do stuff like that! Heck, they probably don’t even HAVE a spell like that in ANY of their books!’

Oh, he was pumped now! Yeah! He could conquer the world! Especially those stupid dragons! In fact, he felt like doing an invasion right now! And this time, he’d CRUSH those stupid Peacekeepers and break right through their lines!

But first, some TV.

“Hm?” Gnasty raised his brow, a strange announcement coming on the screen. “Didn’t know those dragons had TV either.” Oh well. Not like they’d have anything interesting to say. Still, after flipping through some of the channels and finding nothing of interest, he settled on going back to the channel the dragons were on, the sight of a mauve, slumbering dragon resting against a cane seen. “Pfft! What a doofus!” he said aloud. If anything, at least he could see them make a fool of themselves.

“And we’re rolling!”

The mauve dragon was roused. “Oh! Uh…It’s been peaceful here in the Five Realms…”
Chapter Summary

Upon returning to the Artisan’s Homeworld, Spyro is adamant that he means what he said in going off on his own. Though upon returning to collect some belongings, he finds that things are a little…different than he remembered.

Chapter Notes

Here it is, first semi-canon (but not really) beginning of the first game! Just a forewarning, I’m NOT going to undertake writing a novelization of the first game, mainly just different bits and pieces throughout, as going through the whole thing would be too big an undertaking, especially given that it’d take up too big a portion of this already jumbled together, non linear story. I’ll probably do the same for when I cover Ripto’s Rage and Year of the Dragon.

That said (I’ve just realized how much I write that), hope you enjoy!

“So…that’s it?” Marco questioned, Spyro in turn nodding.

“Yep. Just getting my toothbrush and a few things, and then I’m out of here!”

“Don’t you think you’re taking this a little far?” the balloonist went on. “I mean, yeah, that wasn’t exactly the best thing to say to you, but don’t you think he would’ve realized that by now?” he took a moment to adjust his goggles. “Family’s kind of…well…that’s just how things are sometimes. Doesn’t make it anymore wrong, but I don’t think just up and taking off’s going to do anything.”

Spyro gave pause, turning away from both he and Sparx, of whom looked to Marco, then back to the little dragon. “Well…it’s not like it matters now. Besides, you heard him, right, Sparx?”

“Bzzt bzz bzz bzz.” (Yeah, I did. But Nestor’s not an unreasonable guy. Just talk it out, and thing’s be fine.)

Again, Spyro went quiet. “Let’s…just go get the stuff.” With that, he began making his way from the pier to the archway that served as the border between that and the rest of the Artisan’s main dwelling. The dragonfly sighed as he turned to Marco.

“Bzzt bzz bzzt bzz.” (He’s just emotional right now. He doesn’t know what he’s saying. Trust me, he’s going to settle down, and all this’ll blow over.)

“Here’s hoping.” Marco nervously stated. He didn’t understand perfectly, yet time with the little dragon and his accompanying dragonfly got him some sense of the insect’s language. The dragonfly bid the balloonist a small farewell before flying off after Spyro.

Still…while Marco couldn’t be entirely sure, something felt…amiss. Surely Spyro’s absence
would’ve been noticed by now. Heck, he was surprised that he didn’t hear banging on his door last night. Even with what caused the dragon to essentially run away, such negligence was quite out of character for any of the dragons here, especially their leader. Maybe the interview they were giving for that station that expressed interest halted looking for him, yet again, that wasn’t like any of them.

Maybe, just maybe, he should tag along after Spyro, he thought. Better safe than sorry.

Well, things were a bit…quiet today.

Quiet and…devoid of anyone.

“Uh…guys?” Spyro called out, only to receive no answer. “Um…” he continued walking along, mainly speaking just to break some of the silence all around he and Sparx, the dragonfly’s beating wings not doing much to dispel the ambience that had seemingly overtaken the place. “What am I saying?” he then said aloud. “I can’t just up and tell them I’m taking off! Then they’d never let me leave!”

“Bzzt bzz bzz.” (As they shouldn’t.)

Spyro sighed. “Look, I told you before and I’m telling you now: I’m going it alone. Well…alone WITH you.”

Sparx shook his head, exasperated. “Bzzt bzz bzzt bzz bzz.” (You’re not seriously doing this, right?)

“Of course I’m doing it!” the purple drake retorted. “Besides, you heard him. Everyone’s got a problem with me, and eve he said that I was a ‘lost cause’.” The adolescent grew quiet, facing the ground. The golden dragonfly fluttered closer, the dragon turning away, yet the insect was able to still see the traces of hurt embedded in his features. “Trust me,” Spyro began again, wiping his nose, as if he had been sniffling. “Me and them…we’ll be better off.”

He continued, Sparx shaking his head despondently. Like heck he’d be able to pull it off, yet if he was this determined, then what happened last night must’ve indicated more than simply being hurt by some harsh words. No, this highlighted something deeper. And while there was no guarantee, the little dragonfly could only hope that someone around here would notice them.

Question was, where WAS everyone-

“What the?” Sparx zoomed over to Spyro’s location, seeing firsthand what had drawn the dragon’s exclamation.

On the ground rested items such a long, black pole with a strange, soft sponge at the end, and a stand with three legs that the two likened to that of a stand or chair without the seat. Another object that stood out from the rest appeared to be that of a strange, rectangular thing with two wheels on the top and a telescope on the front. While not exactly familiar with it, both had seen such items before. The one with the sponge was some sort of…mic? A ‘boom’ mic or something? And the box-like object…Spyro had definitely seen that before. Something called a…camera? And the wheels had strips of brown called film.

Oh…that’s right. The interview was today, wasn’t it?
A wave of disappointment came over the dragon upon realizing that he had missed it...though again, what did it matter to him? He was leaving anyway.

That said, if it WAS today, then what was all this stuff just laying around for? And still, better yet, where WAS everybody?

“Bzz!” (Hey!) Sparx buzzed, tugging at one of Spyro’s horns to direct him in his line of sight. “Bztt bzz bzt bzz?” (What in the world is THAT thing?)

Spyro squinted. Indeed, there was something in the distance. Specifically, it was near the castle. Whatever it was, it was a vivid green and shining, reflecting the rays of the sun. Did that mean it was made of some sort of stone? Or crystal? But wasn’t crystal usually clear (at least, that was what that one lesson with Nils taught him.)? Maybe it was emerald or jade.

Nevertheless, it clearly was out of place here, especially given that such a thing would’ve probably never left Nils’ gallery. So, who put it here? Even more, why?

Wait a minute. Spyro and Sparx studied the odd sculpture, then to each other, then back to the sculpture. It appeared to have a defined shape. Two arms, two legs, a pair of wings, and a single tail. If both didn’t know any better, they would’ve said that it looked just like a dragon.

A very familiar dragon, upon inspecting it even closer.

“Nestor?!”

It seemed impossible, and if it were not right in front of his eyes, he would’ve outright called it little more than a mirage or a well-crafted and executed joke. Yet there was no mistaking it. Before Spyro and Sparx was the carpenter: seemingly coated in thickened layers of stone, looking towards the sky with a frozen expression of shock and horror.

“What…what the?!” the smaller dragon circled the statue as if to fully convince himself that this indeed was what was before him at this very moment. “How…” he stammered, looking to Sparx (whom was just as baffled), then to the statue. “How’d…why…who…” Spyro was at a complete loss of words. He tapped a claw on the calve of the sculpture (at least, he was hoping it was just that. Denial was a strong thing), a small ‘ting’ sounding out. “It…it can’t be.” The dragon shook his head. “It can’t…” whirling around, he found his chest almost bursting due to the increasing beating of his heart, his violet eyes frantically looking around the empty field. “Nestor!” he called out, only hearing his own voice come back to him. “Nestor! C’mon, this isn’t funny!” nothing. “If…if this is payback for me going off last night, ok! I get it! You can come out now!” again, nothing.

Sparx too found himself growing panicked, yet when the little dragon raced off, he followed suit.

“Delbin!?” Spyro shouted. “Tomas?! Argus?!” the only thing he heard was the echo of his desperation. “Hey! Anyone! HELLO!?"

Nothing.

Absolutely nothing.

It seemed, to his horror, that no one was here. Or...maybe they were. Maybe they were in the same state as...no. No, no, no, no, no. He was NOT alone! He couldn’t be! There HAD to be someone else here!

“Guys, this isn’t funny anymore! I...you’re scaring me!”
“Bzzzz bzz bzt bzz!” (Look, you’ve got to calm down!)

“No!” Spyro shouted. “No, I won’t! How can you say that when…when no one’s here! Everyone’s gone!”

Unaware to him, slowly, yet steadily, bits and pieces of the crystal shell began to crack.

“Everyone’s gone! And…what if they don’t come back!?”

Bit by bit, the ‘statue’ began to gain mobility, legs and arms moving, wings attempting to spread.

“What if…what if last night…” Spyro’s head lowered. “What if that was…the last time I…”

CRACK!

Wait. What was…

“GAH!”

A chorus of what sounded like shattering glass echoed throughout the green valley, Spyro and Sparx turning to the small, raised piece of land stationed near the entrance of the castle. Wasting no time, both of them rushed over to see what was causing said noises, only to be met with the sight of a green skinned dragon bearing a vest and a belt with a bevy of tools. Kneeling on the ground and seemingly short of breath, the carpenter wheezed as warmth and sensation came back to him, he lifting up head to see of whom was before him.
Pleasant Homecoming?

Chapter Summary

Upon Nestor being freed, Spyro comes to see that a good deal happened in his absence. Of which leads to the beginning of a quest no one saw coming.

Chapter Notes

Continuing from where we last left off. Again, alterations from how the original game began, yet adaptation can’t be taken and applied here, as it isn’t a video game, so just letting a child go off on his own wouldn’t make a lick of sense. That said, there will be an explanation, as you will see later.

And rest assured, apologies will be had later (I’m very much a person that, unless it’s made right, nothing will be ok).

Hope you enjoy!

He slumped forward, hands meeting the ground, dimly aware that he could move again. The heat on his back from the sun cemented that the chilled crystal no longer coated his back, let alone much else on his body. A light shiver overcame him, he in turn shaking, dislodging bits of green stone off him, said bits falling to the ground beside him.

Was…was he free?

“Nestor?” a small voice asked. A familiar voice.

The green Artisan looked up, a figure of purple before him. “Sp-Spyro?” he wheezed, unsteadily reaching forward to trace a claw along the bridge of the smaller dragon’s nose. No, this was no dream. The little one was here. And yet…

“Nestor, what…what happened?” Spyro asked, clearly caught in a mixture of confusion and fear.

The sight of the young dragon being in his presence again destroyed his focus, though only for a moment, as his head whirled up to seemingly look at the sky, then back to him. “No time to explain now!” he told him hurriedly with a voice full of panic, very unlike him. He then looked to the sky again. “You’ve got to hide!”

“Hide?”

“Yes, hide!” Nestor told him. “That beam or whatever it was may come back…” his voice then died down, something off in the distance catching his attention. Standing, albeit uneasily, the carpenter forcibly scooped Spyro up as he rushed over to yet another figure of green crystal. “Oh no…” he said, head shaking. “Oh no, no, no, no, no…”

“Is that…is that…?”
Before them stood the shape of Delbin, looking up to the heavens, posture clearly more causal and smoother than that of Nestor’s. His facial structure didn’t even bear any extreme traces of shock or horror. If anything, he simply appeared to be confused, as if some sort of peculiar thing had been spotted. Completely unaware of whatever danger that had presumably been approaching them all.

What the danger was, Spyro still was left unawares.

The little dragon was set down, the carpenter touching the crystalized artist before him. “This is not just a dream.” He mused softly, the cold surface of uneven stone underneath his palm. “This… this is not…”

“Delbin?” Spyro asked the motionless figure, he and Sparx looking up at the larger statue. “Hey!” he lifted up on his hind legs, placing his paws on the larger dragon’s thighs. “Hey!” he then began putting his weight on it.

“Bzzt bzz bzz… (Hey, what are you…)” it was then that Sparx heard something. Like glass cracking. “…bzzz?” (…doing?)

Nestor stepped back along with Spyro, the dragonfly flying back to beside his charge as the statue seemingly began to crack and split apart before their eyes. A leg unsteadily stepped forward, crystal pieces falling off to reveal reddened flesh, the body attached to said leg falling over completely to the ground, the shell of stone shattering due to the object incased inside unable to support his own weight. The carpenter rushed over to the fallen dragon’s side, kneeling down and seizing him, attempting to lift him up.

“Ngh…” the painter groaned, body completely wracked with aches and pains, his limbs not cooperating with him.

“Delbin!” a small voice was heard shouting at him. “Delbin, it’s me!” a familiar voice.

Opening his eyes, his vision was blurry at first, yet with time, it cleared up, a blob of purple and gold taking form and growing more detailed and complex. The world around him, to his surprise and thankfulness, had been restored to him.

Later that Night

The treasury.

The entire Artisan treasury.

Gone.

After Delbin’s release, the search for any others in the area was underway, Tomas and Argus in turn being found by the entrance to Town Square and the Artist’s Gallery. The two, like their leader and the painter, were completely baffled in that their prison had been shattered, as well as the reappearance of the little purple dragon. All at his touch, to their further bafflement.

Aside from the four, however, the entirety of the area was completely barren and quiet, they being the only four souls present. Yet given the absence of any gems in the treasury, it was clear that whilst they were incapacitated, someone had been present here in their dwelling. Or multiple someones.

Someones that no one needed to think hard on who they belonged to.

Truth be told, the treasury wasn’t completely empty. Small articles, such as helmets, pieces of
cloth, and a particularly evident display of disregard for organization and patience in stealing said treasure (the doors being practically blown away, as well as the frame being busted into as well as the wall it rested on).

All the markings of one particular force.

“This is Gnasty Gnorc’s doing!” Delbin shouted, eyes daring not gaze at the massive amount of empty space that was between the four dragons. The only four…


“Honestly, I’m not sure.” Argus admitted, the bard looking to him for some sort of theory or hypothesis. “If you would’ve asked me prior to today, I would’ve told you that such a thing as this from him, let alone any of the Gnorcs would’ve been impossible. I held no knowledge that Gnorcs were even capable of such magic!”

Nestor sighed, his words regarding one of the lessons he taught Spyro recited in his mind. “It seems that we all made an error in grossly underestimating them as a whole.”

“What of the others?” Tomas chimed in. “You don’t think they…”

Everyone went silent at that, the room with the rather sizable table completely engulfed in a veil of tension and fear of what could be. Though, at this point, it was more of what undeniably was.

“There’s…something I’ve been curious about as well.” Tomas continued, despite his guilt at only furthering the general uncomfortableness of their current environment. “Spyro, I mean.” He clarified. He had started now, might as well finish. “How did he…I mean, wasn’t he supposed to be here for the interview?”

To the bard’s surprise, the leader’s features began to twist, he seemingly unable to even look at the yellow dragon without a grimace.

“Well…he’s here now, isn’t he? I mean…”

“…that’s all that matters, right?”

Unbeknownst to any of them, two particular figures were listening in.

“Gnasty?” Spyro questioned. “Since when has that idiot been able to do anything right? Besides, Lindar said it himself: the guy’s no one to worry about.”

“Bzz!” (Hush!) Sparx buzzed. “Bzzt bzz bzzz bzz bzz.” (Actually listen for a minute and maybe you’ll hear it yourself!)

“That said, there is one issue that bothers me.” Tomas went on.

“Just one?” Argus interjected.

“Well…there’s also- “
“How about we stick with the ‘just one’ for now, yes?” Nestor cut in.

“How was it that neither of your touch release me, yet Spyro’s did?”

Again, silence rang out.

That…was peculiar, wasn’t it? In fact, it really wasn’t until now that the little dragon or his dragonfly even noticed such a thing. Why was this?

This couldn’t be pondered on much longer as they saw Argus begin to peer around the corner.

“Sh-Shoot!” Spyro hissed to himself, he and Sparx scampering (or zooming) down the hallway to the little dragon’s room, he in turn throwing himself under the covers.

So far, he couldn’t hear anyone following down the hall to his room, then again, the covers perhaps drowned out most sound. He wasn’t feeling the least bit tired, so much flooding his mind as to what, let alone how all of this even happened. They said something about the Gnorcs, particularly Gnasty, but how could HE have done all this? And how? Since when did the stupid oaf even know of such magic? He wasn’t even sure that even the Magic Crafters knew how to do something like that!

How did any of this happen?

Better yet…why?

Even more, if, for some reason or another, his ‘touch’ somehow caused the crystal to shatter…maybe…maybe he should’ve been here. Maybe…maybe then…they wouldn’t have been…

A part of him knew well that he was being ridiculous. That really, who among any of them could’ve predicted something like this would happen.

Still…maybe. Just maybe, if he had been here, then Nestor and the others wouldn’t have been…

Hours. He had been awake for hours.

He managed to get some sleep, granted, yet it was nearly dawn, and he had yet to get in even five minutes more. It was then that he knew he couldn’t put it off any longer.

This was it.

Sparx was jostled from his place upon the little dragon rising from his bed and to his feet. “Bzz?” (Spyro?) the dragon began making his way towards the door, yet paused for a moment.

“No…not that way. They’d put me back for sure.”

“Bzt bzz bzz?” (Spyro, what are you talking about?)

The little dragon froze. How was he going to put this? “Sparx?” he began, voice uncharacteristically hesitant. “You…still think you can push me through that window?”
“Bzzt bzz bzz?” (Window? What are you talking about?)

“I…I’ve got to go.”

“Bzzt? Bzz bzz?” (Go? Go where?)

“…go.” The dragon’s violet eyes shifted to the open space outside the window. “Out there.”

“Bzzt? Bzz bzz…” (Out? Out where…) Sparx’s already large eyes widened even more. “Bzz…bzz bzzt!” (Oh no…you can’t be!)

“Yeah I am!” Spyro retorted, all the while trying to keep his voice down. “But I can’t do it out this way!” he gestured to the door. “You’ve got to help me through the window-“

“Bzzt!” (No!)

Spyro sighed. Inevitable as it was, that didn’t exactly translate to him wishing to have to deal with it. “Sparx, look-“

“Bzzt bzz bzz bzz!” (I’m not hearing this!) the dragonfly shouted (or released a series of intense buzzing). “Bzz bzz bzz bzz bzz bzz!” (You seriously aren’t thinking about just going off on your own and…) he stopped. “Bzzt bzz bzz?” (Such as…?)

“Well, if they were frozen,” Spyro explained, “That must mean other dragons were too, right?”

“Bzzt! Bzz bzz bzz bzz.” (Duh! You think they don’t know that? But they’re not just going to jump in and mimic the Peacekeepers’ way of doing things! Heck, Delbin was easy to find! Tomas and Argus took the whole day to track down!)

“But they said it themselves!” Spyro countered. “For some reason, only me touching them does anything!” he then puffed out his chest. “I’m the only one that can do it!”

“Bzzt bzz? Bzz bzz.” (Do what? Spyro, I-I don’t get it.) Sparx flew closer to him. “Bzzt bzz bzz bzz bzz.” (What’s gotten into you all the sudden?)

“I told you, I…I’ve got to go out and…find them!” the little dragon argued, though his bravado was seemingly being chipped away, revealing something he clearly didn’t want seen. “I mean, if…” he stammered. “If I can’t…”

“Bzzt bzz bzz?” (Why do you have to?)

“Because…”

“Bzz bzz?” (Because why?)

“Well…just…because!” Spyro retorted, clearly getting frustrated. “And…and if you won’t help me,” he stepped back, eyes centered on the only available exit, at least in his mind. “Then I’ll get out myself!” backing up against the door, the little dragon charged forward, leaping upward at the last minute and spreading out his wings.

Sparx made no move. There was no way he’d be able to pull it off. Nope. It’d just be like when he went off last night. He managed to talk the boy into coming back (even if he was adamant in what he said beforehand), and once he failed to make it up to the window, then he’d be in a slump, in where the dragonfly could swoop in and drill some logic and reason in his head-

“Yah!”
Only…if that was what happened. Only…if he didn’t actually make it.

Lo and behold, while not entirely, Spyro had managed to wrangle his forelegs out of the window, the rest of him hanging out, of which he began to quickly fix. Sparx buzzed in panic, immediately going over to seize the cone-shaped end of the dragon’s tail and begin pulling. Only to be flying forward as the dragon managed to squeeze the last of himself through the window, gravity in turn bringing he, and Sparx in turn heading straight towards the ground.

THUD!

Needless to say, the landing wasn’t exactly graceful.

The transition between lying atop of a bed of bushes to standing upon his own feet took a bit, yet Spyro eventually managed to pull it off, he giving himself a small dusting as his violet eyes looked at the expansive, empty plains before him.

He had to do this. He had to. Otherwise…

“Bzzt! Bzz bzz!” (That is it!) Sparx shouted, having finally gotten his wings untangled from the leaves and twigs. “Bzz bzz bzz bzz!” (I’m getting Nestor, and you’re going back inside-)

In a flash, the young dragon took off.

Wh-What?! Sparx was left dumbfounded, not at the fact the little dragon had up and run away from him (well, somewhat), yet when Nestor’s name came up. It seemed right then, that the moment the carpenter’s name came up, he made a run for it. Buzzing in protest and for the boy to slow down (as it was clear that he wasn’t going to stop), the dragonfly beat his wings to their near maximum speed as he chased his charge down. Thankfully, it seemed that the adolescent ran out of fuel near the portal to Stone Hill.

“Bzzt!” (Finally!) Sparx wheezed, entire body drooping out of exhaustion. “Bzz…” (What…) he continued. “Bzz bzz bzz?” (What’s gotten into you?)

“Sparx, please!” Spyro suddenly exclaimed, the dragonfly taken aback. “Just…I just have to! Don’t you understand?!”

“Bzz?” (No?)

“It…” Spyro sighed. “Just…just let me…” he paused for a moment. He wasn’t going to go for it. Not in how he was originally planning. But maybe he could ‘work’ around it in a different way. “Just let me go to Stone Hill to check.”

“Bzz? Bzz bzz bzz,” (Check what? You do know the others aren’t just going to let this go unchecked, right?)

“I…I’ll just meet them there.” Spyro retorted. “But…please Sparx. Just let me do this. Please.”

The dragonfly was rendered silent. Honestly, he didn’t get it. Not at all. And given how adamant he was in even ‘escaping’, he clearly had more planned than just ‘checking’ the other section of the Homeworld out. And yet…this only put him in a position to go with him. Even in something as ridiculous as this, the insect would rather put up with the boy’s nonsense than take a chance at something actually happening to him. With a small sigh of defeat, he took his place beside the little dragon, the wavy, unsteady visage of Stone Hill before them.
Only Man

Chapter Summary

Whilst on his escapade to Stone Hill, Spyro and Sparx come upon a series of peculiar creatures, as well some rather aggressive behavior from the usually docile sheep…

Chapter Notes

Again, not going to novelize the whole game. Take WAY too long. But may perhaps go over each stage at least. Not confirming anything yet, as most, if not all of the Artisan Realm has been seen already. Also giving Sparx a little bit of a time to shine along with another of my favorite dragons, as I’m also giving the dragonfly a bit of an edge on the situation in where he can help Spyro in more ways than just watching over him. Also, this is just an introduction to both negative forces that will be expanded upon later, as well as explained just how they relate to Gnasty’s most recent actions. That said, hope you enjoy!

“Bzz bzz bzz.” (This is a bad idea.)

“I’m not going back until…”

“Bzz bzz bzz?!” (Until what?) Sparx argued. “Bzz bzzt bzz bzz bzz.” (You’re probably worrying the others to death right now!)

“I don’t think so.” Spyro answered, the dragonfly not exactly caring for the tone of his voice. “And…it’s not like I’ll be gone long. I just want to look around a bit is all.”

Sparx sighed, once again defeated. Sometimes he wanted to curse the little dragon at times.

Currently, the two were hidden behind one of the stone towers that stood all over Stone Hill, crafted from the very mountains that also surrounded the general area. Strange equipment similar to that found in the main dwelling was found littered around, indicating that there had been some sort of segment either planned or already going here. Whatever the case may be, they were long gone now.

Though at the moment, that wasn’t what drew both the dragon’s and insect’s attention.

At the archway to one of the halls that lead to the other side of the mountainous area stood a strange and, frankly, very unfamiliar creature that, until now, neither Spyro nor Sparx had ever seen before.

Its skin bore no scales of any kind, its flesh seemingly looking soft, most of it covered by a long robe of forest green. It bore a cane similar to that of Astor’s (of whom Spyro wondered was here), and a wide-brimmed hat of the same color. What appeared to be sandals of brown leather rested on its feet, of which bore no claws or any kind. Or the claws were trimmed to a rounded, dulled edge,
the same being that for its fingers.

“What good are claws like that for?” Spyro asked aloud, Sparx in turn quickly ‘shushing’ him.

Though it did little good, as it was too late. The strange, cane bearing creature heard the young voice and, after scanning the area, left his post and went to the tower, peering around. Spyro and Sparx hid on the other side, just out of view of the being currently seeking them out. “Ah!” though it didn’t last long, their attempt to sneak around the corner only prompting the hat wearing creature to whirl its head around, its long beard whirling along with him. “There you are.”

The little dragon froze in his spot, surveying the strange being up and down, completely baffled as to who, let alone what, was before him. “Uh…hi?”

Though it seems the sight of him gave the being pause. “What?” it leaned closer. From the tone of its voice, Spyro assumed that it was male and somewhat up in the years. “A dragon?”

Spyro uncomfortably shifted his eyes. “Uh…yeah?”

“Incredible.” The being said in turn. “They’ve all been…” he paused, leaning closer, giving his head a small whack with his cane, earning an ‘ow!’ from the dragon. “So…you ARE real.”

“As real as you!” Spyro in turn shot back, his initial nervousness replaced with anger. “And either you’re some sort of weirdo or one of the ugliest dragons I’ve ever seen-ow!” his comment earned him yet another whack on the head.

“I have no relation to any of you horrid beasts!” the being shouted, his hat almost slipping off his head. “If anything, you should be at my feet, begging for mercy, seeing as all of your larger ‘brothers’ are incapacitated at the moment!” the figure shouted, earning a growl from the little dragon.

“So, I guess that means you’re with Gnasty Gnorc!” the purple dragon readied himself to charge… despite the being have a good few feet on him. “You’re just messed with the wrong dragon, you hear me!” he dashed forward, only to find himself flying back via a swift swipe of the wooden cane. The little dragon crashed into the wall not too far away, Sparx zooming over to try and get the dazed adolescent back on his feet, large shadow then looming over them both.

“Never thought I’d see the day,” the robed being said. “Yet those green monsters have given the bravest of us the opportunity to remove the lot of you from the land! Finally, you beasts shall be rid of! Tis will be a glorious day for the race of man!”

Man? What was a man?

The little dragon got no time to ponder, let alone ask, as the ‘man’ rose his cane again with the intent to slam it down upon the smaller dragon.

With a firm push, Sparx urged Spyro to leap out of the way, allowing the two to run, though it was more of ‘running away’. The figure followed suit, swinging his cane in an attempt to catch the two. In fact, it wasn’t much long after beginning their trek away, both Spyro and Sparx heard a strange ‘whirring’ from behind them. With a frightened buzz, Sparx gripped the ankle of the dragon’s left foreleg, causing Spyro to trip: the only thing to save him from the spinning cane sent in his direction. Akin to a boomerang, the cane went in an arc, supposedly on its way back to its owner. Seizing the opportunity, Spyro and Sparx dashed towards the entrance to the passageway the being had been formerly guarding, racing down the corridor and emerging on the other side until they were stopped by a sight before them.
“L-Lindar?!” before them stood the frozen form of the clockmaker, looking to the sky with puzzlement and shock etched into his crystalized features. He began to approach, yet that was cut short, an angered shout not too far away interrupting it as well as a spinning cane nearly taking off his head. The clockmaker was still trapped, yet the approaching ‘man’ was more than intent on pursuing the little dragon.

“Get him!” the ‘man’ shouted, the sound of hooves beating on the ground heard by Spyro and Sparx. Soon, it came from all around them, though what was causing it wasn’t able to be seen as the speed the dragon was traveling caused him to trip over himself, he in turn tumbling down the hill.

“Bzz! Bzz bzz! (Hey! Hey, c’mon, get up!)

Shaking his head, Spyro saw that all around him stood a group of rams, clearly different from the ones Astor usually cared for. Far larger in size, practically towering over him, Spyro also noticed that their horns had also grown in size, and each of them seemed to bear a strange, unnatural glow in their eyes. And it wasn’t just them. A good number of ewes bore the same look, though whether ram or ewe, their sights were all on him.

“Uh oh.”

The impact was immediate.

A flurry of bashing horns and hooves assaulted the smaller dragon’s body, Sparx having flown out of the way out of reflex, though he later regretted this action as from above, he couldn’t see the purple dragon underneath the mass of white, though he could clearly hear the impact of hooves and horns. Poor thing was practically being trampled!

Just then, the dragonfly noticed something. One of the nearby towers seemed to have something ‘atop’ of it. That something seemingly bearing what appeared to be some sort of ‘stick’. Or a paintbrush. But…could he? Would he be able to? His large eyes looked down towards the collection of wool and horns, completely unable to even see him. He might not be able to do it… but he had to do something!

A hoof on his head. A horn in his side. The assault kept coming and coming! He couldn’t get on his feet to even try and fight back! What in the world was up with these sheep?! “I-ow!” he tried to get out. “If this is about-ow! Me flaming one of you, I’m-gah! Sorry!” he managed to get out. “I didn’t know you were THAT flammable!” ok, maybe that wasn’t the best choice of words. Heck, if anything, this seemed to make their blows even fiercer. What in the world was up with these sheep?! Better yet, if Spyro didn’t know any better, he would’ve sworn that they actually understood him.

“Not so fun when they play with you, is it?” a voice from above said, the sea of domesticated animals (at least, they WERE at one point) spreading to allow the green dressed ‘man’ to step forward and peer down at him, chin resting on his cane. “I don’t know how you were able to evade Gnasty’s spell, but someone your size will more than be easy to take care of.”

“Then what about me?”

He didn’t even get a chance to turn around before he felt a blunt, yet thick object met the back of his head. Spyro had the chance to get out of the way when the ‘man’ fell to the ground, he turning and seeing a far larger, blue skinned dragon with a rather sizable paintbrush. This brief distraction allowed the far smaller dragon to escape, though in the corner of his eye, he saw the ‘man’ currently making a stand against Gildas, the two duking it out with their long, wooden tools. The
other, unfamiliar being struck the dragon over the head, and then used the circular portion of his cane to loop around the painter’s neck and, with quite the impressive amount of strength, drug him forward and sent him to the ground.

“We’ve been waiting a LONG time for this!” the cane wielding ‘man’ stated pridefully. “You dragons have ruled this land long enough!”

“What is it to you?” Gildas questioned, the end of the cane pushed against his chest. Since when have the creatures gotten so strong? In a sense, the painter sensed that said strength wasn’t natural. Just like how not all, but a good number of the sheep seemed to be so aggressive. Dare say, it seemed only those out in the fields early this morning were the only ones affected. “We’ve made no move or any aggressive action against you!”

“And that is warrant to believe you’re peaceful creatures? Fire breathing, winged beasts?” the ‘man’ retorted. “It wasn’t what we expected, yet the green one’s spell provided some amongst us to finally rid your presence from all these lands!” he rose his cane, ready to swing it down.

FWOOSH!

Only to drop it upon feeling a great amount of heat hit him in his backside. Particularly, his rear. Leaping a good few feet, away, he looked to see, to his complete embarrassment, that area had been burnt through, the sight of red, polka-dotted undergarments visible to everyone, the ‘man’ seeing of whom was responsible for this. “YOU!” the little dragon couldn’t contain his snickering, the dragonfly by him mimicking this action. “YOU LITTLE-“ He didn’t get much further, as he felt a hand on his shoulder, he in turn being whirled around,

WHOP!

Receiving a punch right to his face.

The sheep appeared to recoil from the sight of two, larger dragons, as well as the cane wielding being now on the ground. Frankly, this was more than enough for them, the being getting up and making a beeline away from the three dragons, the altered, far more aggressive sheep following suit.

Yet though none of them could tell, there seemed to be a glint in his eyes. As if to say, this wasn’t over.

“What was that thing?” Spyro questioned, the now freed Lindar turning to the purple dragon.

“Well,” the clockmaker began, still more than a little baffled that the little one was here, let alone NOT previously coated in stone like the others. “You’ve just had a meeting with one of the most vile, annoying creatures in the entire Dragon Realms.” He narrowed his blonde brow in the direction the creature and the altered flock of sheep went. “They call themselves ‘humans’.”
Hope Freezing Over

Chapter Summary

Sneaking off from Town Square and Dark Hollow, Spyro finds that, like it or not, the others are left with no choice but to rely on the little dragon. Especially when their freedom isn’t as long lived as initially thought.

Chapter Notes

Again, taking some liberties, but this more or less solving something someone brought up in the comments: if the other dragons were all free, then what’s to stop them from going with Spyro? Better yet, how did some of the other dragons get frozen again a second time (not knowing whether or not I’ll cover that, but time will tell)? Well, here, I’ll delve into that, as well as give the red fairy (whom I named Hazel) some screen time as well.

That said, hope you enjoy!

It was the simple routine, that’s all it started as.

Gathering some leaves for whatever use, be it making bedding, clothing, drapes, etc. Yet upon hearing the sound of a larger mass crash its way through the bushes nearby, the ponytailed fairy nearly leapt out of her skin when she saw a blur of purple dash right in front of her, nearly toppling her basket over. Though upon seeing said blur brought back a particular event regarding an individual that bore a similar color.

“Spyro?” the fairy questioned, turning to see the little dragon panting like crazy in the corner of the small maze that lead to Dark Hollow. Given in the direction he came whizzing from, it seemed he had just come from there.

Upon hearing his name, the little dragon was the one to nearly leap out of his skin, about to hightail it out of there, yet upon seeing just whom was addressing him, his panic appeared to die down to a degree. “O-Oh…it’s you…” he wheezed, still trying to catch his breath. “Hazel, right?”

The red, leaf wearing fairy nodded in confirmation. “Where’s the fire?” she asked. “At least, one that you didn’t cause, I hope.”

“N-No. No fire…” Spyro coughed, Sparx urging him to stop talking and take in air.

“Bzzt, bzz bzz bzz.” (We’ve been running around all day.) the dragonfly told her.

“Running around?” Hazel questioned, she in turn looking around. “Uh…why? There doesn’t seem to be anything major going on.”

“Bzzt?” (What?) the dragonfly and dragon were baffled by what they had just heard. “Bzzt bbzz
bzz bzz?” (When did you last come here?)

“Just a few days ago.” The blonde fairy said. “The best leaves to get are from the Artisans, so I wanted to get in some extra for myself. I mean, can’t hurt to have a few extra pieces whenever a drape gets ruining or a dress gets a hole in it.” by now, the little dragon had finally managed to get a good amount of air in his lungs again, Hazel fluttering closer. “But seriously, what’s going on-”

“SPYRO!!!”

Spyro in turn shot up, jumping right into the thick bushes, Sparx following suit (albeit reluctantly). Hazel was completely baffled, yet the sound of feet beating on the ground coming closer and closer to her alerted her that someone, or several someones, were coming closer.

“Ah, look!” the fairy jumped, turning around to see two dragons running towards the maze, having apparently spotted her. One long, lean, and green, whilst the other sported a complementary red and appeared quite flustered.

“Oh, it’s just you, Nils.” Hazel sighed. “And Alvar.” She added.

“Pardon the intrusion, dear lady.” The green sculptor apologized, taking off his hat and giving the winged woman a small bow. The chef only rolled his eyes. “Yet you wouldn’t have happened to see a young dragon coming this way, would you?”

She didn’t need to be told just whom they were talking about. “Uh…” she bit her lip. Great. What to do…”You mind giving me a bit of info? Like…well, what’s he even look like?”

“Oh?” Nils asked, seemingly confused at her answer. “Surely you must’ve seen…” ultimately though, he seemed to abandon what he was going to initially say. “Well, perhaps not. The child’s not even supposed to be out this late anyway.”

“Bah! At this rate, this’ll take all night!” the red chef groaned, giving Nils a push and approaching the far smaller fairy. “The kid’s purple with yellow horns, a yellow crest, and reddish-orange wings. He also has a cone-shaped tip at the end of his tail.” He then turned to the sculptor. “There! What’s so hard about THAT?”

Nils gave a “harrumph!” and turned his head away, folding his arms.

“You done?” Hazel asked, Alvar directing his attention back to her.

“Oh…uh, yes.” The red dragon answered, having lost his former place with her. “Now, have you seen him?”

Hazel didn’t speak, yet gave a small look at the section of hedge that held two particular figures hidden in the thick collection of leaves. “Um…”

“Well?” Alvar questioned, folding his arms.

“Uh…” she heard some rustling.

“What was that?” the chef questioned, looking to the section of bush.

“Hey, what’s got you all worked up, big guy?” Hazel asked, flying right in front of his line of sight, ridding him of viewing the bush head on. “It’s a nice night, isn’t it? Stars out and bright, light breeze out- “
“You either must be ignorant or an idiot!” Alvar shouted, losing his cool (or, should Nils be asked, never had it to begin with). “We’ve all been through nothing short of agony since yesterday!!!”

As much as she wished to smash her wand over this oaf’s head or give him a good shock with however much power she could muster with it, Hazel bit her lip and continued on, all the while giving small gestures with her head that she hoped the hidden figures could see. “You’re kidding!” she exclaimed, exaggerating her shock. “Whatever happened?!?”

“You can’t be serious!” Alvar went on, he completely oblivious to the rustling taking place but a few feet away from both he and Nils. “First, that blasted boy up and RUINS my spice collection by putting everything in the wrong place!” Hazel noticed that the rustling momentarily stopped. What caused him to stop moving…oh. “And not just that! But a short time ago, he goes and spikes the stew, getting every one of us waking up with the mother of all migraines! I TOLD him he wasn’t to touch the cider!”

Again, Spyro seemed to not even be moving. “Heh heh…sounds like a bit of an experience, huh?” ‘C’mon, that’s you cue!’ “But hey, it couldn’t have been THAT bad, right?”

“The. Entire. Bottle.” The chef expressed. Again, the little dragon in the bushes seemed to be keeping put.

‘Don’t leave me like this! Get out of here!’ “Well…I’m sure he didn’t mean it.” Hazel replied. “Besides, the kid’s still…well, a kid. He’s just learning.”

“Oh, I wish!” Alvar said, exasperated. “I told Nestor; the boy’s completely hopeless! There’s not a talented bone in his body!”

The fairy admitted that she had no idea of whatever relations the little dragon had with the rest of the denizens here, yet she sensed that this wasn’t exactly sitting right with her. “Oh…I see.” She answered, not exactly acting in that moment. A low humming began to emit from the bushes, yet she had to keep talking. If anything, at least they seemed to be moving again. “Well…maybe cooking’s just not his thing.”

“Indeed.” The chef snorted, small trails of smoke exiting his nostrils. “Neither is sculpting.” He answered, shooting a look at Nils. Nils was still expressing slight over the chef’s comment wasn’t paying attention either, he too not even noticing that two figures managed to slip right by the two, dashing away.

“Bzz…bzz bzz.” (Ok…now what?) Sparx questioned, looking to Spyro. “Bzz bzz bzz bzz.”
(Everyone’s looking for you, you know.)

“Yeah. I guess.” The young dragon sighed.

“Bzz bzz bzt bzz.” (Everyone’s out of that crystal now. So…) the dragonfly trailed off, noting the young dragon’s demeanor. “Bzz bzz bzzt bzz.” (Guess you better go in. No sense in-)

“What in the world?!”

The shout came from the castle. Spyro and Sparx rushed towards one of the windows, peering in and seeing a shocking and quite unsavory development.

The dragons found both here and in Stone Hill were all gathered in one of the rooms nearest the
entrance, seemingly surrounding one particular dragon. Upon working around the numerous, larger forms, the smaller dragon saw that the subject of interest was Argus. Or rather…his claws. Claws encased in familiar, green crystal.

“What the…” Spyro said to himself, he and his dragonfly completely baffled.

“How is this possible?!” Lindar exclaimed, barely able to even believe what was in front of him.

“When did this happen?!” Delbin questioned, taking Argus gently by the wrist, only to let go upon doing so. Despite his shame in doing so, it seemed the scholar held no reservations against the painter. Frankly, he’d have perhaps done the same thing.

“I…I don’t know.” The stout, blueish-purple dragon confessed. “It…it just started now. I came to notice that my fingertips felt numb, and…” he lifted up his afflicted hand for all to see.

“This is bad.” Gildas noted, gripping his paintbrush tightly. “This is REALLY bad.”

“What do we do?” Gavin questioned. “If it takes only this period of time for the crystal to come back, then-“

“Don’t!” Nestor cut in. “Don’t panic!” he urged everyone present. “It’ll do no one any good if we all lose our senses at a moment like this.”

This seemed to not entirely placate the barista, he directing his gaze to the clockmaker. “Nice going.” He snarled. “Just HAD to throw in that ‘ugly’ comment, didn’t you?”

“Hey, how was I to know he was watching?!” Lindar defended. “Oh sure, it just HAPPENED to be at that channel, and he just HAPPENED to be watching when our interview was going underway!”

“Alvar’s right! This IS all your fault!” Gavin argued back, gesturing a sharpened claw at the other dragon’s chest, of which was batted away.

“You want someone to blame, blame that green oaf!” Lindar shouted back.

“Don’t! He’ll hear you!” Gildas begged.

“Things can’t get any worse!” the clockmaker retorted, then looking to the ceiling. “You hear me?! C’mon, Gnasty! Turn us all into- “the blue skinned artist’s hand came over his mouth to silence him.

“SILENCE!” everyone went quiet. “What are we doing, fighting amongst one another?” Nestor expressed, clearly disappointed. “Whatever the case may be, who started it or not, none of that matters.”

“Exactly.” Everyone was surprised to hear old Astor pitching in, his own son more surprised than anyone else though. “The one responsible is far off from this place.” He leaned down on his cane. “And if we’ve been raided and affected in such a way, then we surely aren’t the only ones.”

“Exactly.” Nestor agreed. “The first step of business is see how the other Realms are, and whether or not they are in a similar condition as us.”

“But what good will that do?” Argus questioned. “It’s not as if we will be able to do anything.”

“Why not?” Lindar stepped in. “All you have to do is touch someone trapped in that stuff, right? That’s how Spyro-“
“Spyro?” Nestor interrupted, seemingly forgetting all about his former call for everyone to remain calm.

“Yeah, he-“

“Where was he?” the carpenter asked, not even letting Lindar get in more than a few words.

“Last we saw, he was in Stone Hill.” Gildas answered. “One of those humans and sheep were giving him quite a bit of trouble.”

“Sheep?” the leader was puzzled. “And humans? They’ve managed to pass the borders?”

“It seems that this little ‘stunt’ of Gnasty’s got some of the ‘outsiders’ to get a little bold and make their way in.”

This wasn’t just bad. This was worse. From outside, the young dragon looked to Sparx. “They won’t be able to do it. They can’t get other dragons out of that crystal stuff.” Sparx had an idea where this was going…but at the moment, there seemed to be little he could do. His options were running low.

“Bzz bzz bzzt bzz?” (What are you going to do?)

The purple dragon was quiet for a moment, biting his lip. He’d have to be careful. Even more careful than he had been already. And sneaky. But…from the way things were looking…no. No more questioning. He had to go now.

“I just hope Marco’s back at the pier.”
Toasty

Chapter Summary

Just as he’s about to leave, Spyro finds himself at the mercy of a mysterious figure bearing a scythe and quite the peculiar ‘baa’ing sound…has he met this guy before?

Chapter Notes

Shoot, shoot, shoot! How could I forget? Toasty! Don’t worry, this here will rectify that mistake! Also, will be getting to Peacekeepers soon, though debating on whether or not something else should come first.

Hope you enjoy!

“Mmm…” he stretched his arm out forward, only to meet something coarse, yet flexible. He couldn’t see well, yet the small streams of moonlight that came from the small, open spaces in whatever he was in (a sack, perhaps?) alerted him that it was still night. But…just how did he even get in-“

“Bzzz…” (Oh…my head…) the little dragon looked, the dragonfly but mere inches away from him accidentally squishing him in the sack.

“Sparx?” Spyro whispered, the insect registering he was being spoken to. “You ok?”

“Bzzz? Bzz…” (Spyro? Is that you?)

“Yeah, it’s me!” he confirmed. “What….” He was cut short by a jostle, whomever was carrying the sack forcing him to nearly flip over himself. “What’s going on?”

“Bzzt? Bzz bzz bzz.” (I don’t know.) Sparx moaned. “Bzzt bzz bzz.” (We were trying to hide from everyone, and then…last thing I know, we were by the entrance to Nevin’s gallery…”

Ah, right. It was only when they realized that they hadn’t seen the painter, as well as avoiding the pursuit of the others trying to find them. Then, someone, or something, neither were sure, smacked them on the back of the head and…then here they were. In some sort of sack, being carried to Heavens knew where.

Then, both felt the sack turn upside down, the rope holding it closed was removed, allowing both dragon and dragonfly to fall out onto the ground. Upon getting their bearings (somewhat), both could see that, indeed, they DID see that they were near Nevin’s gallery.

Though a large, thickened staff of wood slammed down on the ground, discouraging any attempts in trying to race towards the painter.

Their eyes traveled up, the staff able to be seen as a massive scythe, the blade sharpened and curved, clearly ready to be used at any time. A robe of brown draped over the figure towering over
the two, its legs hidden from view, its arms stiff and bits of straw poking out from sections where the joints were. And if that weren’t enough of an indication that this was a creature far removed from any dragon he knew of, the large pumpkin serving as the head provided enough confirmation, said pumpkin carved with narrowed eyes and a sharpened, toothy smile.

“Uh…hi?” Spyro greeted, unable to keep stammering. The figure began to move, its steps uneven and wonky, yet its unnatural movement only serving to unnerv him even more. Sparx had long since taken refuge behind his back. “Uh…so…you new here?” the dragon questioned, violet eyes shifting uncomfortably. The tall, scarecrow-esque figure continued to approach. “Look, I…I’m Spyro.” He introduced. What for, he knew not, yet frankly, it just slipped out. “I’m…I’m looking for somebody. Maybe you’ve seen him? He’s yellow and has this funny hat—“

SLASH!

The scythe was brought down but mere inches away, the blades of grass being sliced in two with little effort, the wind created via the swift movement chilled Spyro’s cheeks, not to mention his blood. “Uh…ok.” The young dragon said, heartbeat increasing. “You…maybe want to be a little more careful with that thing?”

The figure still didn’t answer. Not vocally at least. It brought the seythe’s blade down and rested it but mere inches away from the little drake’s throat, it bringing even closer to where the flesh of Spyro’s neck was lightly grazed over. Instinctively, the little dragon backed up, even if said backing up meant tripping over his own feet. This seemed to only provoke the figure, it bringing its weapon up to swing down upon the smaller dragon.

SLASH!

Leaping out of the way, both Spyro and Sparx gave a yelp as the scythe embedded itself into the ground. Thankfully, said scythe managed to get stuck, so this gave them some time to make something of an escape. Only…where to? The rising panic and anxiety the two were currently experiencing didn’t exactly allow for a clear head. And that thing wouldn’t stay in the ground forever.

…

Finally!

With a mighty thrust upward, the figure’s weapon of choice was retrieved from its place, bringing it to be held in both of its ‘hands’. A low breath came from inside, it turning in the direction he saw the little dragon go in.

Yes…finally. At long, LONG last…

All those years…all those times of feeling that little demon’s hot breath assault and burn away at its flesh...oh...oh he would have a surprise coming from him. Oh yes indeed! He’d know! He’d know good and well all the torment and suffering he had put all of its kind through! And then…then this little tool would relieve him of this mortal coil!

But first…where was he?

…

This bush probably didn’t provide much cover, let alone room to avoid that thing when it started swinging, but it was better than nothing, right?
Spyro and Sparx stiffened upon hearing the sound of footsteps (rather light, and from presumably small feet) approaching them, the sight of a long, brown robe dragging along the ground able to be seen past the branches and briars. This figure looked a lot like that being with the cane…a ‘man’ he called himself. Yet this was far taller, its limbs far slimmer and…stiff. Not to mention, it was very unlikely that the pumpkin was its actual head.

It was then, though, that both dragon and dragonfly heard something.

“Baaa?”

Baa? Baa? If they didn’t know any better, they could’ve sworn that this thing sounded just like a-

Just then, its head whirled around, noting that one of the bushes had a peculiar shade of purple nestled in the middle.

Spyro leapt out of the way the scythe’s blade, it cutting through and taking the entire bush out with one swing. From bush to bush the little dragon ran, each meeting its end via the blade slicing through them. Of course, being that the bushes were placed in something of a circular pattern, Sparx noted and gestured to the figure attempting to cut them both in half. The constant turning and running appeared to be giving the figure trouble in keeping its balance. Maybe, just maybe, as they continued to avoid several slashes and swipes via the weapon, they could seize some sort of opportunity.

BOOM!

While it wasn’t the bladed end, the thickened wood knocked Spyro right in the stomach, sending the little dragon rolling headfirst into a nearby wall. Sparx panicked as the taller figure saw its chance, he in turn trying desperately to get the boy back on his feet and to come to his senses. His vision was still all over the place, yet the uneven visage of the scarecrow raising its scythe was more than visible enough. Yet given he was still unsteady, Spyro found himself rolling out of the way the moment the weapon came down to the ground, positioning himself near the backside of the figure.

A perfect place to let loose a little heat.

The moment said heat met it, the figure leapt upward and released a panicked, pain riddled bray, the robe catching fire and the owner immediately abandoning the dragon it was trying to chop in two and rushing around, both from the sizzling taking place and the attempts to try and put it out. Though upon doing so, the overturned and sliced bushes caught the fabric in its branches. And with the combination of high speed and pieces of overturned wood, the robe was pulled right off of the figure, both Spyro and Sparx’s eyes widening at what stood before them, the ruse destroyed completely when the pumpkin fell from its place, smashing when it hit the ground.

Stationed atop of wooden stilts, completely with stands and makeshift ‘arms’ stood a fluffy specimen of domesticated livestock. Fluffy, yet it was far from white. Its wool was singed black, along with a good majority of the rest of it, a pair of short horns rested atop of its head, it also bearing a pair of crazed, reddened eyes. Though none of that was the main draw of the uncovered adversary.

Around its neck rested a single, shiny, small golden bell.

“Hey.” Spyro began. “Aren’t you…” he drew closer, the creature still stunned that it had been stripped in a sense. “You are!” the dragon declared. “You’re the head of the herd!”
Indeed, the creature on the stilts was a sheep. A simple, bell wearing sheep.

A simple, bell wearing sheep that just tried to kill him.

The sheep turned in the dragon’s direction, eyeing the smaller, reptilian child that was below it, Spyro immediately registering that its eyes widened and then narrowed in clear, unspoken fury. Locating the scythe it had just dropped, it used its left stilt to kick the weapon in the little dragon’s direction, said weapon whirling around akin to a boomerang. Just barely, Spyro and Sparx managed to duck underneath the spinning blade, the sheep charging forward in turn, intent to send the little dragon tumbling right over the cliff.

“Whoa, hey, hey!” Spyro called out, the sheep just barely missing his head, it continuing to manipulate the stilts to either kick or stomp on the smaller dragon. “Whoa, what’s with you!?” he hollered, the sheep only seemingly enraged by this inquiry.

He dared? He DARED to question as to what was its DEAL?! The sheep released a rage filled bray in the dragon’s direction, slamming its stilt leg down and managing to catch him underneath it. The dragonfly with him all the while tried to relieve the dragon of the pressure caused via the sheep’s stilt, yet to no avail, the sheep leaning downward and snarling in the younger reptile’s face.

Whether it was due to this sudden, painful sensation jostling his memory or some sort of possibility that had previously been disregarded, the trapped dragon began to understand this sheep’s animosity was more than simply bad temper. No, it was centered on him, completely, its ‘baas’ coming off more as low, rumbling growls. It was then that what the human told him in Stone Hill came to him.

‘Not so fun when they play with you, is it?’

And didn’t Lindar say something about said sheep being…’altered’? What did that even mean? “Ah!” well, whatever it meant, it must’ve been something bad, as this stilt felt far from anything good. Sparx continued to try and make the sheep stop. Once beating against the wood didn’t work, he flew up and messed around with its head, flying around in various directions, pulling at its ears and nose (getting in a few pulls at it’s eyes), doing whatever he could to try and help the dragon below. Fortunately, this seemed to serve its purpose well enough, the dragonfly’s antics taking the sheep’s focus off a Spyro and allowing him to get out of the way. His chest was far from feeling one-hundred percent, it somewhat hurting to breathe. The sheep looked to the dragon that had escaped it, it batting the golden insect with one of its arms, and began making a charge right for Spyro.

And upon seeing Sparx flicked away like some sort of fly, he too charged, ignoring the pain in his chest. Two could play at this game!

Unfortunately for the sheep, the dragon’s horns proved to be stronger than the sheep’s stilt, the wood breaking. Through a series of events that the dragon hadn’t exactly foreseen or planned, the sheep was sent falling forward, teetering over the edge. Before it, or anyone else could do anything, it was sent falling over the edge, plummeting down, down, down to the rocks and ocean below.

Spyro and Sparx sat there for a good minute, looking over the edge to see if either of them could see it. There was no sight of it.

There was a distinct chill in the air…yet, in the distance, something green and shimmering could be seen. Something green, shimmering, and wearing a “funny hat”.
The two wasted no time in heading that direction, completely unaware of the hidden figure underneath the archway the two traveled on, red, crazed eyes watching the two go on, seething hatred for the purple dragon consuming its entire being.

This wasn’t over.
Gone

Chapter Summary

Still missing, everyone attempts to try and find the missing little dragon. Nevin, having just arrived from his gallery and noting sighting the boy, the elders fear that the worst has just happened…yet perhaps it may be what saves them.

Chapter Notes

While I admit it’s a bit of a cop out, if I went through the whole chase thing, this would take too long of a time, and I’d like to get to the other sections. Again, NOT doing a novelization, but I’d like to cover as much as I can. This is mainly a short vignette on where the little fairy you see throughout comes from.

That said, hope you enjoy!

Hazel looked on from the bushes, Alvar and Nils having long abandoned her when it was clear she hadn’t seen the dragon they were looking for.

An indication that she was a better actress than she thought.

Still, despite the red chef’s ongoing complaints leveled at the little drake, it was clear that the two were frazzled and not in the best of states. And as she saw more and more coming this way, ranging from the blue skinned clockmaker to the red skinned painter…it seemed everyone was in a panic.

“Spyro!?” Lindar called out, going in the opposite direction upon not receiving an answer.

“Spyro!?” Delbin yelled as well, making his way towards the fountain.

The blonde fairy watched on and on, more and more dragons rushing around, going through portals and generally all over the place, looking for the little one. While it had been asked of her, she held no idea that his absence would be causing this much panic. Maybe she should-

“Nestor!?” a voice came from the direction of the pier, a scarfed figure rushing up to one of the searching dragons, green, and wearing a vest with a jeweled fastener connecting the two halves. “I’ve got some news!”

“Go on, go on!” Nestor asked of Marco. “Out with it! What’s going on in the other Realms?!”

Marco took a moment to get some air in his lungs. “Let’s…let’s just say, I’m lucky that I was so high up.” He wheezed. “You guys are lucky; this place is at least quiet! The other Realms are overrun!” the balloonist said, stretching out his arms in emphasis. “And it’s not just the Gnorcs! Tuco’s said that the humans have stolen some of the Magic Crafter’s magic for themselves! Not to mention, there’s electric fields and machines being put in at the Beast Maker’s swamp!”
Hazel listened in on the conversation, though in the corner of her eye, she noticed a small shape moving through the entrance of the archway, she in turn following suit. She kept the flapping of her wings to a minimum as she followed the small shape concealed by the darkness, the golden source of light flying somewhat far in order to keep him concealed. Saying nothing, she went, further and further the figure went…right to the hot air balloon nestled at the end of the pier.

Spyro whirled his head around, eyes wide and looking.

“Bzz?” (What?) Sparx asked, turning around as well, only to see nothing.

“It’s nothing.” Spyro answered, continuing his way to the balloon. Nothing was there…yet still…he couldn’t shake the feeling that a pair of eyes were currently watching them.

“Bzzt bzz bzz bzz bzz.” (You have to go back.) the dragonfly told him.

“I told you, I’m not.” The dragon answered back. “You know I have to do this! You saw what happened to Argus!”

“Btt bzz bzz bzz!” (And you going off is better how?! Look now! You’re worrying everyone else sick! It’s a miracle that we haven’t gotten caught yet!)

“You know that they won’t let me go! Even if I’m the only one that can do anything about this, they won’t let me go!” it was then that Spyro’s frustration seemed to simmer down, the hidden fairy noting the solemnness in his face. “Besides…you heard Alvar. And Nestor. I…” he turned away from Sparx, biting down hard on his lip. “I have to do this. Otherwise…even with what they said…they may not be here much longer. Free anyway…”

Just then, steps were heard, as well as voices talking back and forth to one another. Hazel went to turn around,-

WHAP!

Only to meet the back of an incoming hand waving around, or rather, waving back.

“I’ll let Gosnold know how things are here!” Marco shouted back, making his way towards the balloon. He paused upon hearing a small splash, yet saw nothing. “And don’t worry!” he called out, making it into the basket. “I’m sure he’s around somewhere!”

Around somewhere…if only he knew, she thought.

From the water, Hazel huffed, knowing well that the water weighed down her wings. True, she could still fly with them, yet she needed to let them get out of the water in order to properly use them. Grabbing on one of the wooden stands holding the pier and climbing up, Hazel brushed a bit of wettened hair out of her face, looking on at the balloon.

“He has to be here, Nestor.” She heard a voice say, a low sigh following suit.

“If not…then…” the other voice seemed unable to continue before finally forcing out “I don’t know if I’ll even get the chance to apologize.”

Apologize for what, she was unsure, yet…no. No, she couldn’t. She couldn’t simply let this slide, let alone just LET that little dragon do this. Looking in the direction where the balloon had gone, she fluttered up, biting her lip. It’d be a bit of a trip, though mainly because she had no idea where it was going. She had flown far further, heck, her home was all the way in the Dream Weavers’ Realm!
Yet didn’t the balloonist say something about a Gosnold? She thought she had seen someone like that before. A someone like him. A brother or cousin maybe? Well, whatever the case may be, she’d surely be able to catch it on the way.

Besides, she thought, shaking the water off her, it’d certainly give her an opportunity to tell him off for getting her newly sewn dress all wet.

Argus continued to look at his encrusted fingers, wincing as he touched them with his good hand, only to feel the chilled numbness of the frozen digits. It hadn’t spread, yet when it would, let alone how much when that time came, the scholar didn’t wish to ponder it, despite it being necessary to.

Of course, given his habit and general disposition to delve deep into his own thoughts, he took a moment to adjust his spectacles and study the uneven yet smooth edges that composed of the tips of his fingers. How he had come to be in such a state in the first place had effectively been pinned on Gnasty Gnorc, though how was yet to be decided. Some suggested that it was the use of powerful magic, yet others thought that it was the result of some sort of machine, given from the reports Marco had given regarding the Beast Makers’ Realm. Whatever the case, it mattered not at the moment. What he was focused on was HOW exactly he had freed from his imprisonment.

More importantly, who freed him.

Why was it little Spyro’s touch that caused the crystal shell to shatter? Since his release, a bevy of theories and hypothesis’ had flooded his mind, each with its own potential ‘hows’ and ‘whys’, yet none of them were exactly conclusive. Was it due to the little dragon simply being out of range or having been completely missed by the spell or machine powered beam? If that was the case, then why didn’t the touch of any other dragon do anything? Delbin alerted him that Nestor’s touch did nothing, it was only when Spyro made contact with him did his shell shatter. And it wasn’t just the dragon either. Gildas had reported that Sparx had freed him, so the phenomenon wasn’t limited to just the boy.

Still, why was this? Better yet…why did it seem to only be temporary?

It hadn’t spread, yet Argus knew that his, and everyone’s time was borrowed now. He only hoped that, for now, he would be the only case. Besides, he far from cared about that at the moment, his and everyone else’s main concern was just where the boy was. He had up and disappeared before the interview (as well as the crew), and when he did come back, he seemed to be all over the place. Every Artisan here claimed to have either seen him directly or in passing, yet no one could catch him. There were attempts made, yes, nearly successful ones too, yet it seemed that the little dragon was intent on avoiding all of them. He had questioned as to why, though no one could exactly say. Nestor seemed to be the only one to conjure some sort of reason…though what reason that was, he only gave a brief explanation of. Apparently, from what Argus could gather, there were some choice words exchanged, and then…the boy was up and gone.

And given that he still couldn’t be found, everyone feared that it would stay that way if he was collected back soon.

Though, Argus couldn’t believe he was considering such a thing, given all that he had went over regarding what had transpired but the past few days…maybe, just maybe, the boy would provide some sort of key to be rid of all of this.

Yet still…he was just that. A boy.
A little boy.

…their boy.

As much as some of them were reluctant to admit such.
Not so Peaceful Entry

Chapter Summary

The Peacekeepers’ realm is far from as quiet as the Artisans’, not to mention dangerous. How’s a dragon supposed to contend with spears, cannons, and even more, some guy that claims to be some great doctor at the head of it all!

Chapter Notes

Entering the Peacekeepers, and while some things may be adjusted and/or added on, mostly, I want things to be mostly in line with how the events feel natural to a degree.

Here’s hoping it feels like that and you enjoy!

“Status report.” The stout, short, orange skinned soldier dressed in a coat and bearskin cap questioned the group of three similarly dressed Gnorcs.

“So far, all clear, sir.” One of them answered, albeit, after getting a glare for not giving a salute. “All areas from Cliff Town to the Ice Cavern are under surveillance.”

“And the spoils from the Artisans?”

“On their way to the boss as we speak.” The footsoldier confirmed. “As with everything else that’s been collected here.”

“Good.” His orange skinned superior answered. “I’ll report to Dr. Shemp immediately. Carry on, soldier!” with that, he went back to his post, leaving the three on their lonesome at theirs.

A span of silence passed on between them and the rest of the area, the landscape now just as still as the barren, dry, canyons that surrounded them all. “So…” one of the finally spoke up. “This Dr. Shemp guy, what’s he a doctor of anyway?”

The other two Gnorcs shrugged. “Don’t know.” One of them confessed. “I mean, he kinda looks like one of those ‘voodoo’ guys.”

“I heard that he spent some time in the Beast Makers’ swamps before Gnasty found out about him.”

“Though it’s not like anybody’s around to ask them.” They all chuckled at that. Indeed, it seemed things were turning in their favor in what seemed like forever. True, it was mainly a fluke that all of this started (let alone over a comment on a TV channel), yet who cared? Finally, those blasted dragons were being put down a peg and shown that they weren’t all that!

Still…”You don’t think that, well, SOME of them weren’t hit?”

One of the three Gnorcs looked to their fellow soldier. “You’re kidding, right? You saw the
broadcast. All those guys were frozen solid and the crew ran for the hills! There’s no way that the boss missed anybody!”

“Yeah, guess you’re right.” The other agreed. “Besides, it’s like they’d have any help coming to them either. And even if they did, it’s not like those balloonist guys or those pipsqueak fairies could-“

“Look alive!” they all heard a voice shout, the orange skinned Gnorc rushing up to them. “Unidentified flying object reported heading east above the portal to Dry Canyon!”

“What?” all three of them were shocked at this. “What did it look like?” one of them asked.

“Like, did it have wings or something?”

“Or did it start breathing fire?”

“It’s too high up to get any details, soldier!” their superior barked out. “Look, it doesn’t matter! What matters is that it’s entering OUR turf and that’s all the reason we need to take it down!” he whirled around, a large, black device in his sights. “Ready the cannons! Let’s see some fireworks!”

Above

Ok…so far, so good. The journey had been going smoothly with no hiccups. Marco rubbed his arms to lessen the chill in the air, he surveying his surroundings down below. From what he could see, he was just above the main hub of the Peacekeepers, a place that, granted, he had no intention on getting too close too, yet given this strange and sudden move against dragonkind the Gnorcs had made, the balloonist’s first objective was to check on his brother that made the deliveries here from the other Realms.

Of course, that brought another question: where to land?

He held little idea of how the Peacekeepers’ land was at the moment, considering he hadn’t heard any word from Gosnold, his trepidation was somewhat lessened by the possibility that something had potentially happened to his brother. He had asked everyone from Tuco to Amos (Hak had yet to be heard of at all, yet another concern for them all), but Gosnold had been all but absent last they knew. This only meant that where he chose to land was all the more important.

‘Gosnold…Hak…’ Marco thought, looking down at the dried Earth below him. ‘Please be ok…’ Just then, his ears heard something loud and booming down below. “What the-“

Said source of the booming noise was coming right for him, a large, circular mass of black was sent propelling right at him, flying above his hot air balloon and sending Marco to the floor of his basket, he in turn watching as the mass traveled in an arc above, then fell back down to Earth. Of course, in doing this, he began aware that the pile of sandbags and extra blankets he brought for the night of searching he was in for began moving.

“Huh?! What the?!?” a small, purple dragon popping out from the collection of sheets. “What was that?! What happened?!”

“Spyro?!” Marco exclaimed, this frankly being the furthest thing he anticipated, let alone dealing with what appeared to be cannonballs being sent his direction.

Speaking of, more of the heavy spheres were sent their way, flying over, under, and-POP!
Right smack dab through the balloon.

The sensation of gravity taking the aircraft was immediate, the descent not exactly fast, yet fast enough so that both Marco and the newly discovered dragon and dragonfly could feel the ground rapidly approaching them. Down, down, down they went, both quite easily throwing out the notion that they weren’t afraid and allowing themselves to scream at the top of their lungs. They continued on and on and on until-

SLAM!

Right atop of a collection of tents set up by the forces below.

The entire world had been spinning, and even as he tried to climb out from the collapsed balloon, Marco felt as if he had just slammed headfirst into a wall of bricks. Though judging by the spears that were pointed at him as he made his exit, perhaps the bricks were the lesser of two evils.

“Look Commander, look!” one of the green skinned soldiers cried out, an orange, shorter Gnorc wearing a tailcoat coming to see. “It’s another one of those guys that man the balloons!”

The orange Gnorc, or the ‘Commander’ as the others called him, drew closer and surveyed the balloonist, giving his scarf and goggles a good tug or two to fully gauge what he was looking at.

“So,” he began. “Care to explain yourself?”

Marco raised a brow. “Explain what?”

“What you were doing entering OUR territory without OUR approval, let alone without any alert!”

“Permission?” the balloonist struggled, yet ultimately rose to his feet, both he and unaware that two pairs of eyes were looking at what was happening. “What’s all this about ‘permission’?” Marco questioned, growing quite indignant. Then again, if these buffoons didn’t realize why, they their brain power was lower than he expected, though he dare not say it openly. “Last time I checked, there’s no license or pass needed to simply pass on by through here, let alone anywhere else in the Dragon Realms!”

“Dragon Realms! Ha!” the Commander barked a laugh. “Where have you been? These lands are far from belonging to any dragon! Not anymore that is!”

“Yeah!” one of the footsoldiers added on. “Take a look!” he pointed in the distance, a crystalized statue of a rather large, portly dragon in the distances, looking to the sky and seemingly bracing himself for what was to come.

“Not to mention, these guys’ leader is taking a little break in there!” another then pointed to the large fortress that Marco had seen before, both far away and close up thanks to his first, rather unorthodox meeting with the purple dragon. “And seeing as you guys are all buddy-buddy with them, I don’t think that you’re just here to say hi!”

“Huh? What are you-“Marco began, but was cut off.

“Don’t go trying to weasel your way out of this!” the Commander interrupted. “It’s as clear as day that you’re a spy!”

“Spy? What the…” Marco shook his head. “Hey guy, I’m no spy! Besides, didn’t you say yourself that all the dragons are…well…like that?” he pointed to the frozen form of the large dragon previously referenced. “So how the hay can I be a spy if no one’s around to appoint me as a spy?”
The all went silent at that. Though the Commander seemed to be fuming at this observation. "Well…they could’ve…they possibly might’ve foresaw that…” he stammered before throwing up his hands. “Oh, heck with it! Take him anyway!”

“H-Hey!” Marco yelped, pairs of green, clawed hands seizing him by the arms. “Get off of me!”

“Put him somewhere NICE and secure, boys!” the Commander shouted. “Hey, maybe throw him in with that other guy we caught snooping around earlier!”

Other guy…wait a minute. “Who are you talking about?!?” Marco demanded. “Gosnold?! What did you do to him?!”

“Same thing we’re gonna do to you! Guy’s been needing some company after all! Along with that one, hotheaded flame breath!” no further questions or threats to let him go could be said (like they’d do any good), and though he struggled greatly, Marco was forcibly led away, his protests growing more and more distant.

…

If not for the dragonfly dragging him (albeit slowly) by the tail back, his charge would’ve up and leapt out, ready to take on each and every one of those guys.

“Bzzt bzz bzz!” (You can’t go!) Sparx hissed under his breath. “Bzzt bzz bzz!” (What good would getting yourself captured do?)

“But…but Marco-“ Spyro protested, only to feel another tug on his tail. “He’s-“

“Bzz bzz bzz bzz!” (Only going to be helped if YOU keep yourself out of their hair!) Sparx argued. “Bzz bzzbzt bzz bzz bzz.” (Look, we’re here now, and if you want to help him, then we need to be as inconspicuous as possible.)

Spyro wished to argue back, say that he was wrong, if not outright cowardly. Yet he could find no rebuttal. Regrettably, the dragonfly was right. Still….now that they WERE here…what could they do?

“Bzzt.” (Hey) Sparx spoke up, both of them beginning to make their way from the underside of the massive blanket the downed balloon created. “Bzzt bzz bzz.” (Those guys said something about ‘their leader’ taking a ‘break’. ) yeah, Spyro remembered. As they continued to move, Sparx continued. “Bzzt bzz bzz.” (Do you think…)

As if answering said question, when they peeked out, the fortress that stood as the main landmark of this land was but a few yards away.

In a valley full of enemy troops and, from the looks of it, several cannons.

This was going to be tricky.

Easing their way from under the balloon, both dragon and dragonfly treaded (or in the latter’s case, fluttered) lightly, barely making any sound as the doorway to the fortress drew closer and closer. Close…very, very close. Just nearly there. Just a bit more, and they’d be-

“Hey, look!” a voice from afar shouted. “There’s one of those dragons!”

“What?!” others began to gather. “But they were all hit by the Boss’ magic!”
“Not this one!” the soldier shouted, he readying his spear, the congregation of other soldiers doing likewise. “Get him!”
Besiege

Chapter Summary

Suffice to say, Spyro’s not the most apt at making his presence unknown. And really, the only hope he has now is getting to some of the bigger dragons to at least have some sort of defense against those that’ve already taken the land over.

Chapter Notes

Left the last one on a cliffhanger, so here’s where we go from there. Granted, while Spyro’s got some assistance in this here, it’s still his journey (even if it’s still a series of one-shots) and, well, he IS the main character (at least the one most things revolve around so far). Also, two things: the small scene that occurs with one particular dragon upon Spyro and Sparx finding him will play into some one shots later, and, while again, this is one-shot based, I’ll give each area some exposure. Dragon wise, that’ll have to mostly come later, yet names will be mentioned. Sorry, but I don’t want to waste TOO much time given this is supposed to be a mainly non-linear story.

That said, hope you enjoy! Comments greatly appreciated and encouraged, as they're the best encouragement!

“GAH!” that one came a little too close for comfort. He looked to the side, relieved to see Sparx by his side, yet said reprieve didn’t last long yet another cannon ball was shot in their direction. Thankfully, they were as close as they ever were to the fortress. Just a bit more and-

BOOM!

If it wasn’t for the ringing in both of their ears, both of them would’ve been able to better register that the iron ball had just barely grazed them, the impact forcing them up in the air and flying forward, Spyro’s horns making direct contact with something quite solid.

Something that, had either of them been able to hear, was beginning to crack.

Shaking his head, Spyro came to be aware that the hilt of a massive axe came to slam down on the floor, the sight of its wielder steadily becoming reacquainted with the ground, stumbling slightly before getting his bearings. Low sighs came to be heard, the little dragon and insect’s hearing steadily coming back to them. “M-Men!” a voice shouted. “Battle positions! Man the…” the smaller dragon looked up, the orange, armored dragon having been released from his prison. “The…” the newly freed Peacekeeper held his head, everything all fuzzy and hard to recollect, yet the most he was sure of was that at his feet rested a far smaller boy, clearly more than a little frazzled. “What the…” Titan blinked his violet eyes a couple of times. “You’re that Artisan boy… what are you-“

BOOM!
Everyone looked in the direction the noise came from, as well as felt the entire foundation of the fortress begin to shake. Before he could even move, Titan wasted no time in scooping the smaller dragon up and tossed him to the side, away from the doorway, and immediately began making his way up the stairwell to get a better view as to what exactly was going on. Let alone where everyone else currently stationed in the area had just up and gone to.

With the leader’s absence, Spyro slowly made his way back to see that, thankfully, the soldiers manning the cannons had seemingly been distracted by something (or someone) higher up. ‘Well…’ he gulped. ‘Here goes nothing.’

Outside, given that the smaller dragon was sighted going into the fortress, a series of footsoldiers were sent in, interrupting said dragon’s exit. “Stop right there!” one of the green skinned soldier ordered. “Yeah, we’re…we’re licensed to kill!”

“You…need a license for that?”

A good majority of the Gnorcs lowered their weapons and glanced at one another. “Well…no. But…it’s not like we’ve needed one anyway!”

“Yeah!” they all shouted together. “Get him!” with that, they charged forward, spears in hand.

“Bzzt!” (Hurry!) Sparx buzzed in panic. “Bzzt bzzt bzz!” (Do something!)

“Like what?!” Spyro asked, having to back up and duck as the tip of a spear just barely scrapped by the crest atop his head.

Then, another spear came down swinging, the little dragon grabbing onto it to keep it down, yet the Gnorc clearly had the benefit of more manpower on his side, his fellow men reaching and assisting him in pulling his weapon up and dislodging the dragon from it-

“YAAH!!!”

And practically catapult him across the entire band, right out the entrance, and send him flying a good few yards before, yet again, meeting something quite solid with his horns.

“Bztt bzz bzz…” (Why do I get the feeling that this is going to be a running theme for the time being?)

“…shut up.” Spyro moaned, getting to his feet. Thankfully, it seemed his hearing was far less impaired than before, able to register the multiple cracking that was above him.

Whilst Titan’s release had some shards of crystal being shot out, the little dragon and dragonfly were showered with broken bits and pieces, practically having to dig their way out as they saw the dragon they had just released stretch his limbs (not to mention give his rather sizable stomach a few squeezes to bring sensation back to it). “Eh, what?” the dragon spoke, fanning out his wings before looking down. “Hey, aren’t you-“

“He’s over here!”

Spyro didn’t even bother whirling his head around, knowing full well what was coming. “Sh-Shoot!” he ducked and (while not exactly the best move regarding his dignity) hid behind the larger bulk of the Peacekeeper dragon.

“What the-“ Magnus looked down to the younger boy, then to the approaching troop with spears at the ready. “Well, what’s all this then?”
“Uh…” the group came to a halt, their spears not exactly feeling they would do any good. If anything, they were little more than sticks with little sharp thingies on the end. “H-Hey, big guy.” The one in front said (mainly because everyone else pushed him ahead). “Oh, assuming ‘big guy’ doesn’t offend you—"

“Hey, big and proud.” Magnus said, though his tone far from indicated any friendliness. Seizing his moment, Spyro began to sneak off. “Still, what are you fellas doing out in these parts. A little far from home, aren’t you?”

“Uh…yeah. Guess you could say that.” The Gnorc nervously chuckled. ‘Geez, I forgot how big some of these guys could get. This was NOWHERE in the briefing!’ “So…yeah. Kinda quiet around here.”

“Is that what you call firing cannons off at a time like this?” the dragon with the physique of a sumo-wrestler questioned. Frankly, his quota for his afternoon intake of food hadn’t been met, and thus, his mood wasn’t exactly the best. “In fact, it’s just come to my attention that two can play at this game.”

“…what do you mean by that?” the Gnorc regretted everything, sighting the trails of smoke rising from the dragon’s nostrils.

“This…wasn’t exactly what I had in mind.”

“Bzzt bzz bzz.” (Well, what DID you have in mind?) Sparx huffed. “Bztt bzz bzz bzz?” (What’d you THINK was going to happen?)

Spyro was silent for a moment. “Something…not like this?”

Sparx sighed. It was clear that, even with the risks that he CLEARLY tried to express to him, not even the insect predicted any of this. Walking into what could’ve passed as a literal warzone was FAR from what he had planned for the day. Let alone getting the hapless guy they had snuck on with getting captured!

“Well…now what?” Spyro asked, frankly looking for any sort of direction.

“Bzzt…” (Well…) Sparx began, gesturing to yet another nearby figure encased in crystal. “Bztt bzz bzz.” (There’s that guy.)

Titan looked down at the crowd below, all the while ducking behind the stone sections that were quickly done away with by the incoming cannon balls. What a way to get back into action, albeit, he would’ve preferred if it had been BEFORE these blasted Gnors could encroach on their homeland. How DARE these green wretches, particularly Gnasty, take them by surprise like this, let alone get THIS far into their lands! It was nothing short of both infuriating and embarrassing! It wouldn’t surprise him if their entire treasure hoard was completely raided too! Not one bit.

“TITAN!!” a voice shouted, both the Peacekeeper leader and platoon down below looking to an approaching (rather portly) figure, they in turn manning the cannons to fire. “Hey, what’d I-“

“MAGNUS, GET DOWN!” practically dragging him down when he got close enough, the two nearly being hit by yet another cannonball.

“Uh…guess I don’t need to ask what I missed.” The stouter dragon questioned, he, to his shock, feeling himself being dragged back into the trapdoor that lead back into the fortress.
I think it’s fair to say that we ALL missed it.” Titan commented, looking on at what was taking place outside. “I can only imagine what’s going on in the other lands right now.” He said with gritted teeth. “Go down.” He ordered. “I need to you to check on the boy.”

Magnus raised a spiked brow. “Boy?”

“That Artisan boy is here.” Titan answered. “I don’t know how or why, yet ultimately, that can wait until later. For now, we just need to figure out how in the world we’re gonna-“

“Titan,” Magnus interjected. “You’re talking about that purple one? Spyro, was his name?”

The leader shifted his eyes. “Yes?”

“I just ran into him, before he ran off.”


“Don’t know! A bunch of Gnorcs were giving him trouble, so I took care of them, but when I turned to check, he was…” both of them looked to each other. “Oh no… well… he didn’t know if he could say that it was the STRANGEST thing he had seen, yet still, the sight wasn’t exactly one he had anticipated. Stationed but a few feet ahead was the frozen visage of a dragon that bore several spikes lining his body and a mouth that could rival that of a bear trap. He had seen this dragon before, though only in passing via the incident with Marco some time ago. ‘Marco…’ Still, even then, he didn’t exactly appear to be someone you’d just go up and approach all casual-like.

Though the small collection of small, fuzzy creatures at the statue’s feet appeared to have no problem with his appearance. If anything, they were leaning up against his form, pawing at his legs and chittering as if to try and gain some sort of response from him.

Spyro looked to Sparx, then to the sea of white, furry, long eared creatures ahead. “That’s a lot of rabbits.” The dragonfly nodded in agreement.

Approaching, all the rabbits raised their ears and looked to the little dragon before scurrying away. Yet as he went towards the rather intimidating looking dragon, he noticed that a few of the wide-eyed creatures were looking at what was occurring from behind the rocks, even more so when the statue began to break apart and crumble before all of them.

“RRRAUGH!!!” if it wasn’t for Sparx dragging him out of the way, the newly released dragon would’ve up and barreled right into him, said dragon now arching his back as he dug his claws into the ground, his pronounced and enlarged teeth snapping. “All right, where are you?!?” he roared, his head shifting left to right. “Where are you green skinned, loathsome little cowards! Make it easy for yourself before I tear you apart with…” the area was…”With…” oddly lacking in any Gnorcs. At least from where he was standing.

BOOM!

Though it was far from quiet. Looking on, a good distance away, something caught the dragon’s one good eye. “The fortress is under attack?!” he exclaimed aloud. “Ohhh, those yellow-bellied cretins will pay! Pay with their lives!”

Spyro was heavily considering not even making conversation, yet Sparx urged him forward. They knew nothing about the land, let alone of anything regarding what they had just heard some time
ago regarding this ‘Dr. Shemp’ character. Plus, there was the issue surrounding Marco. Marco…”Hey, excuse me-“

“With their blood!” the green dragon bellowed. “Oh yes, indeed! My hide will be stained red with-“

“Excuse me?!”

It was then that the dragon looked to find a far smaller figure and a fluttering, golden object beside him. “Hm? What are…” he took a moment to massage his temples, the ‘flash’ or whatever it was that caused everything to go dark and black had given him a bit of a headache. But it soon became clear that, no, he wasn’t seeing things. “What the heck are you doing here, kid?!” he questioned, even if said question came out more like a shout. “This is no place for you! Go back home! Skedaddle!”

“Trust me, if I could, I would.” Spyro retorted, feeling insulted. Indeed, seeing how things have gone, he was pondering whether or not it WOULD’VE been better to at least TELL Marco he wanted to hitch a ride. Not that he’d probably let him. But still… “But I’ve got a bit of a problem-“

“It can wait kid!” the dragon interrupted. “I’ve got WAY more on my plate right now that whatever you’ve got going on! Probably just got a kite up in a tree or some toy lost somewhere…”

“N-No!” Spyro answered. “I don’t even have a kite!” he continued. “And I DON’T play with toys….much anymore…kinda.” A buzz from Sparx alerted him he wasn’t helping his case. “My friend’s been kidnapped!”

“And going getting your friend’s kidnapped! Look, this isn’t some game-“ This seemed to get the green dragon’s attention. “Wait…kidnapped?”

‘Finally!’ “Yeah! Kidnapped!” Spyro repeated. “His balloon was shot down, and a bunch of those Gnorc guys took him away!”

The dragon raise a brow. “What’s your name, kid?”

“Spyro.”

“Gunnar.” The green dragon said. “So, you said ‘balloon’.” He went on. “Did the guy have a green scarf?”

Green? “No, his was red.” But wait…before Marco was taken, didn’t one of those Gnorcs say something about somebody else? “But…what about the other guy?”

“Funny you should mention that.” Gunnar noted. “A few days before…whatever the strange flash was happened, the balloonist here up and went missing.”

“Missing?”

“Up and gone without a trace. None of us could find him. But me and pretty much everyone else suspected foul play. Mainly me.” He emphasized.

“His name would’ve happen to be Gosnold, would it?”

“Yeah, that’s him.” The older dragon confirmed, noticing the boy’s features growing grim. “Oh no…” he looked to Sparx, whom was too showing much concern. “This is bad…no, it’s worse.” But wait, there was something else. He looked to Gunnar. “They said something about a-“
“Look kid, love to stay and chat, but you need to hightail it out of here!” Gunnar said, looking on at the fortress currently being bombarded by cannonballs.

“But-“

“Get out of here! Go! Where it’s safe!”

“But-“ Spyro got nothing else out, the other dragon flying off, leaving him and Sparx alone. “…geez, you’re welcome.”

“Bzzt bzz.” (Hey, he’s got problems too.) Sparx told his charge. “Bzzt bzz bzz bzz.” (But…where ARE all the other dragons? Do you think they’re scattered like the Artisans were?)

It was only now did Spyro even consider that. “And…maybe one of those guys might’ve seen where Marco went!” he said hopefully.

“Bzz bzzt.” (Maybe, but-) the dragonfly got nothing out further as the dragon raced off. Right towards a portal with the words ‘Dry Canyon’ etched onto the archway. “Bzzt bzz! Bzzt bzz bzz!” (Wait! Don’t you think about it! Spyro-)

Too late. The little dragon leapt right through, the dragonfly (albeit, with a good degree of hesitance) following suit.

He could’ve sworn that, from the distilled, watery surface of the portal’s energy or magic (Argus had yet to find a definitive name for it), the area that they both were heading into looked rather familiar.
Having come to familiar ground, Spyro comes to see that he barely scraped the surface of Dry Canyon. Especially in how high those cliffs are.

Technically I’ve already covered this area before, so I don’t want to detract from the other areas, as I want to give them their own little bit of exposure. Yet one thing I could introduce is how the area is, as Boris says, good for gliding. Plus, while this is mainly spotlight for Spyro, another one of my original characters will get a small glimpse in this one. She and Anyte, along with the others that’ll be introduced will be expanded on later.

Link to her appearance can be found here- https://www.deviantart.com/rockmangurl/art/Spyro-Pingyang-798205089

That said, please comment! Thank you!

“You ARE a good glider, eh Spyro?”

Good glider…of course he was! He was BORN to glide! It didn’t matter how the bull-horned, yellow-skinned dragon looked when he stated such, he was!

Yep, he thought, continuing on with just barely enough room to climb. He was a glider through and through. Just…as long as he didn’t look down.

“Bzzt bzz.” (Born to glide, huh?) Sparx groaned aloud. “Bzt bzt bzz bzz.” (Know this place like the back of your hand, huh?)

“Hey, I’ve BEEN here befo-ORE!” Spyro argued back, his foot momentarily slipping for a bit as he continued onward.

Upon entering Dry Canyon, Spyro had to contend with a couple of armored Gnorcs stationed near the entrance, where he thankfully found Conan and released him, the lance wielding dragon taking to combating the green creatures, or as he called them, ‘crooked nosed, cox combed knaves’ (seriously, where DID this guy get the stuff he said?). Boris also didn’t take that long to look for, his location being near Conan’s. Though, the other Peacekeeper’s reaction to the little Artisan’s being here was not as…well…”encouraging”. Conan, despite the dragon’s own strange tendencies and quirks, was quite personable, and while it was simply due to a lack of time, he certainly appeared to have more faith in him than Boris.

‘Go home, kid.’ Was all he said upon Spyro’s assertion that he wasn’t just a good glider, that he was BORN for it.
“Go home, pah!” the purple drake scoffed, only to receive a cautionary buzz from Sparx to watch his step. “What does he kno-OW!”

“Bztt bzz!” (How to watch his step, probably!) Sparx answered, fluttering over to make sure the little dragon had all his feet on solid ground (what little of it was available.

Spyro sighed, continuing on, despite the ever increasing, ever intrusive thought of what could’ve happened should he allow his eyes to gaze downward. Down, down, down, a hundred, maybe a thousand feet below him. Nothing more than mass of black, a void beckoning from below for him to leap in and get it over with-

No! No, no, no, he was NOT going there! He could do this! He had gotten this far right? And, one, two, three…five dragons were freed already! If anything, he was on a roll! Besides, even if Boris didn’t see, he would later!

After all…it wasn’t as if they could get those guys of their turf with just the few of them. Even if said freedom would only be…

“Eep!” he nearly veered towards the edge again. He had to be more careful. Still, where WAS he?! Since he found Boris (and having to contend with those blasted buzzards), Ivor was located in one of the smaller strongholds littered around the area (of which he knew of previously when he and Marco took a little detour here). Marco. Maybe here, somewhere, he was here. Yet that’d also mean that Dr. Shemp guy was around too. Doctor of what, he wondered. If he was related to the Gnorcs, there probably weren’t many qualifications needed to be a doctor among their ranks. ‘Probably all he needs is one of those thingies you put around your neck with the silver little circle-‘” his ponder was stopped as he realized, to his horror, that he had run out of ground to walk on. “What the…”

Sparx flew over a little bit ahead, Spyro trying to maneuver his head around to see, yet unfortunately, the only way he could do that was to bring himself dangerously close to the edge. Far too close for his liking. Thankfully, Sparx’s absence didn’t last long, he fluttering back in but a few moments. “Bztt bzz bzz!” (There’s another guy over there!)

“What? Where? Where?” Spyro asked, only to nearly fall over, he practically smushing himself up against the cliff face and as far away from the edge as possible.

“Bztt bzz.” (Over there.) Sparx gestured. “Bzzz bzz bzt bzz.” (Just around the corner here.)

“Ok, great!” the little dragon said with enthusiasm, looking to Sparx. And looking, and looking, and looking. “Well…go on.”

“Bzz? Bzz bzz…bzz.” (Go on what? Oh…) the dragonfly then understood. “Bztt bzzz…” (Well, I would, but…)

“But what?”

“Bzz…” (Buzzards.)

He had absolutely no counter to Sparx’s reasoning for not going and freeing whomever was over there himself (Gildas’ release coming to mind). Both needed no reminding on how those dangerous those blasted birds could be. Spyro could at least toast their behinds and ram them, yet Sparx would be torn to pieces. He nearly was the last time! Still, if there was another dragon over there… what to do? Suddenly, the sounds of flapping came to them, the two backing up against the cliff side as a lone, greyish-black buzzard peering its head around the corner, its yellowed eyes peering
around as a low growl emitted from its throat. Something was here. Something it had smelt before.

“Bzzt…” (Don’t move.)

“Don’t need to tell me twice.”

The carrion bird continued to look around, trying to spy around and see the source of the scent that met its nostrils.

“Bzzz…” (Now what?)

Spyro looked, all the while trying to think of what to do. “Maybe…” he began to whisper. “Maybe you could…”

“Bzzt.” (Forget it.)

“What else can we do? This guy isn’t going to leave us alone anytime soon.” If the trapped dragon was on the other side, then maybe…just maybe…”Just…how fast CAN you fly?”

“Bzzz…” (Spyro…)

“It’ll just be for a second! I promise!” the dragon assured. “And there’s plenty of places for you to hide! I just need you to distract them for a minute.”

“Bzzt bzz bzz bzz!” (You distract them if you’re that desperate! I’m not in the mood to get eaten!)

“C’mon, pleas-“ the little dragon got no more out as both he and Sparx grew aware of a shadow looming over them. Multiple shadows. The buzzard leering over the corner was gone, having taken its place above with the rest of the flock.

Then, they dove.

In a blur of feathers and beaks, both Spyro and Sparx made a mad dash forward, his wings spreading as the end of the platform was but mere feet away. Taking a small hop forward, the little dragon glided, veering left as he saw another small section that would provide him enough ground to stand on. Though unfortunately, his reach was too short. Seeing that he wasn’t going to make it, he reached out, his claws scrapping against the hardened rock in a desperate effort to hold on. Unfortunately, the buzzards had other ideas. Sharpened beaks pecked and stabbed at the small dragon’s head and paws, he unable to see much as he was forced to close his eyes to protect them. His grip was slipping, he but a few moments away from falling. Sparx had himself hidden underneath the dragon’s chin; the birds unable to reach him from there. Yet it was clear that his charge was currently unable to do much of anything.

It’d be risky, something that he would’ve chided the little dragon for. Yet there was nothing else BUT this tactic left. Otherwise…

“Sparx?” Spyro asked, hearing the dragonfly’s wings going. Then, he felt a small bump on the underside of his jaw, knowing full well what was going on, even though he couldn’t see. “Sparx! Wait-“

Sparx didn’t heed his pleading, flying through the small, open spaces created in the flurry of feathers, some of the carrion birds distracted by the fluttering, golden insect and heading in its direction. Finally, something to eat!

He couldn’t hold on anymore. Slipping from his place, Spyro fell, he spreading his wings to
hopefully slow his fall, though he found that this didn’t do much. He went down in small circles, he coming dangerously close to the cliffside until he outright made contact with it, his marginally steady descent ruined as he fell straight down.

Sparx saw this yet fought the instinct to go down and assist (though really, he could only do so much in that department. And the buzzards that were now on his tail seemed to also be waiting for him atop of the imprisoned dragon’s head. Making a mad dash forward, his small head bumped into the green crystal casing, his small body falling to the hardened rock below. The birds surrounded him, more than ready and eager to see which bit and piece would go to whom.

“Hey,” a voice said from behind them, the birds then becoming aware of a tall, imposing figure casting a shadow from behind them. “Y’know, it’s been a bit since I’ve had any grub,” the newly released dragon told the avian creatures, morning star held tightly in his claws. “And with just a pinch of salt, you guys would probably do just the trick.”

He landed on something, that much was sure, yet the landing far from did him any favors. Much less in that he was slipping off. He didn’t even get that good of a look at it, as his claws couldn’t get a good enough grip, he continuing to plummet more and more. The ground was steadily approaching, it’d only be mere moments before he’d splatter like a purple pancake. Any minute, he’d-

Be snagged by a hand that caught him at just the right time.

Looking up, Spyro had expected to see the dragon he was initially going to free, yet a far different sight, let alone a different dragon, met his eyes.

 Compared to Maximos and the other dragons he had come to free in Dry Canyon, this dragon’s skin was shockingly pale, outright white even, a mauve underbelly, while light in color, still contrasting with the light tone of their scales. Her scales. Her attire consisted of a pink vest with shoulder pads of brown, and a belt of the same color with a mid-section extending down to around her mid-thighs. On her forearms and legs rested cuffs of pink. She bore horns, that much Spyro was sure of, yet they were hidden by white cloth wrapped around them, making them resemble white poofs atop of her head, said cloth secured with pink ribbons. Though perhaps the most notable, noticeable feature of this dragoness was the lacking of one of the main body parts that perhaps made a dragon a dragon.

Wings. She had no wings.

“Wait a minute…” she said, eyeing the small dragon in her hand. “You’re that…Artisan kid, right?”

“YAH!!!” Maximos roared, swinging his club, a dozen or so of the buzzards sent flying, both away and being hit a good distance away. With a hefty breath, the chubby Peacekeeper released a stream of flames, charring the few that dared to charge at the dragon in attempts to get at the dragonfly.

A frightened buzz emitted from behind the dragon’s back, Maximos turning to see the insect in the beak of a buzzard that had snuck up from behind, said insect pushing his legs against the sides of the beak in a fruitless effort to escape.

“Sparx?!” Spyro shouted from below, the dragoness that had a hold of him looked upward, though there would be no ascending done, as a slew of winged menaces swooped down. She looked down, then to the incoming flock, making her decision and leaping off of the platform they were on. “Are
you crazy?!” Spyro cried out, mainly due to the obvious, though, thankfully, the white dragoness dug her rather massive claws into the side of the wall of rock, slowing their descent to where she could leap off and let the little dragon drop to the ground. The buzzards came down, intent of finishing what they started.

Just as well, she thought, Spyro seeing her reach for the two sheathed items stationed on either side of her. She had been encased for some time, and frankly, was needing a bit of an outlet.

Raising his club high, Maximos smashed the buzzard’s head in, this thankfully causing it to open its mouth and allow Sparx to go free instead of crunching down and potentially splitting him in two (something he only thought of after doing the deed). The dragonfly was about to fly off towards his charge, yet another small group of birds blocked his path. “Out of the way, little guy!” Sparx flew upward, the birds, to their horror, seeing a sea of blazes being sent their way.

Down below, a buzzard just barely dodged the slicing of a sharpened instrument, several others of its ilk forced to back away from the swings being delivered by the dragoness, Spyro watching as she spun around with the instruments in her hands. At first, he assumed them to be swords, yet their shape was more…intricate than a straight blade. The swords had handles, yet they seemed to have smaller blades on the outside of them, and at the tips rested hooks that reminded him of Astor’s cane (and that of that strange ‘human’ creature). One of the bird’s began to make a dive towards Spyro, yet to its and the dragoness’ surprise, got a face full of fire, it retreating with a long trail of smoke following after. Though this seemed to motivate the others to increase their efforts, multiple birds then dog piling on the little dragon, pecking, pulling, getting a few scales off him even. That didn’t last long, however, one buzzard feeling a hook snatching it by the throat, its owner slinging it up against the wall, she bringing her other hook sword up to its long, bare neck. She looked down upon the bird with narrowed eyes, it clear that she could outright take its head off, should she wish. The other buzzards remained there, frozen in fear, though no for long as they immediately flew off, she holding her captured bird for just a moment longer before she decided to release it to fly off with the rest of them.

Looking up to her, Spyro momentarily shifted his eyes, she in turn putting her hook swords back in their sheaths. “Who…are you?”

“Oh yeah, you…wouldn’t know that, would you?” she stated, she then kneeling to his level.

“Name’s Pingyang. You?”

“Spyro.”

“Oh, you ARE that Artisan. The youngest one at least.” She said, getting back up. “Now then,” she began, sighing and stretching her limbs out. Geez, her claws were huge, even for a dragon, Spyro thought. “How’d a little thing like you manage to make it all the way out here without being picked off sooner?”
Chapter Summary

If it wasn’t the overwhelming cold that was getting to him, it was the newly developed hatred for rolled up balls of snow! Spyro couldn’t wait to get out of this stupid ice cave!

Chapter Notes

Shorter one this time, mainly because I want to meet the quota. Sorry about that. I’m thinking of doing one every week/two weeks to keep up with something of a schedule, because my idiot self has to go and load +100 projects on themselves because I can’t keep plot bunnies out of my head.
That said, hope you enjoy this short little entry!

“So, what IS a little guy like you doing here?”

He had grown used to such a question by now, yet upon alerting those that had just been released of his reason for being here, as well as the current situation going on in the main hub of their world, none of the other Peacekeepers objected in making their way to it. Though with that, it seemed that the little dragon was tasked with an assignment in bringing those that hadn’t been released yet to the desired location.

Which, to his dismay, lead him to this chilled cavern full of nothing but ice.

“Bzzt bzz bzz?” (Y’know, you COULD’VE just asked for a coat.)

“N-No way. I…” Spyro had to stop for a moment to shudder. “I’m fine! I’m on a mission, R-Remember?” he said with pride. Sparx rolled his eyes. Alerting him of such a responsibility (as well as the clear expression of trusting in him) was perhaps the worst thing the Peacekeepers could’ve done. Now the boy was parading around with a puffed-out chest and a head equally as puffed to boot. “Achoo!” though perhaps this place was a good place for him to simmer down in more ways than one.

“Bzz bzt bzz.” (You’re not going to be doing anyone any good if you get yourself sick.)

“I-I’ll be fine.” The little dragon answered. Despite himself, he was wondering whether he could stand this much longer. Even just walking was near unbearable, the chill under his feet practically making it impossible to walk. Not to mention the frozen patches on the floor that never failed to make him slip and fall right on his rear end (which also never failed to give him quite the painful sting in landing on his tail).

Still…he had to press on. And contrary to what Sparx believed, it didn’t ALL stem from inflated ego.
It was official.

He now HATED snowballs.

It was a miracle that he had found Ulric nestled in a corner of this dreadful place, which also brought questions as to how he wasn’t dying in this frigid cold.

“Taking any environment in stride is the sign of a true man!” he bellowed in pride, beating his chest. “Though, you’re far from that yet I guess.” Really, right now, Spyro would’ve taken all the reminders of his size if it meant getting out of here as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, the barrage of snowballs came his way yet again, several Gnorcs garbed in furred hats and skis (yet no upper covering, seriously, how could anyone stand this?!) coming their way. Ulric charged forward and barreled through the entourage, his small shield proving to be quite the defense against the incoming balls of snow.

Yet as he made his way to look for more dragons, he felt a snowball slam right in the back of his head.

Was it expressed just how much he hated snowballs now?

The sounds of a rather loud sneeze met his ears, indicating that he had been released from his prison. His yellowed eyes looked down to see a small, purple form shivering beneath him, he blinking and giving himself a small slap on the cheek to make sure he was seeing right. “Hm?” Todor was somewhat taken aback by what he saw. “Aren’t you-“


“Well, thank you for releasing me. I…” Todor knelt down, feeling the back of the small dragon. Though feeling the temperature of his skin wasn’t exactly needed to gauge the obvious. “You’re freezing.”

“N-No. I’m…achoo!” the taller dragon stepped back, mucus spraying out of the boy’s nose. “S-Sorry…” The blue skinned archer paused, looking behind him to his quiver, then to the little dragon below. Then, he took said quiver off, or rather, the brown fur covering that rested on it. “Huh? What are you doing?” then, to Spyro and Sparx’s collective confusion, the archer took one of his arrows and began to tear through the fabric in various places, looking back and forth to the smaller dragon and the covering. Then, after cutting what appeared to be four holes in the covering, he looked to the smaller dragon. Before Spyro could say anything further, he found the world growing dark as a sudden warmth overcame him, he feeling his limbs being pulled through openings created in the cover, followed by his head popping through. Upon his body now rested a ‘coat’ of some sorts, a fluffy lining of white fur surrounding his neck, his legs and tail poking out.

“Here.” Todor chuckled. “I thought it might be a bit too small for you, yet if anything, it looks a little too big.”

Now, Spyro couldn’t have cared less about the remark. He was completely satisfied in that moment, more than welcoming the heat that now surrounded him. “Th-Thanks.” He sighed in contentment.

“You should’ve had something sooner.” The blue skinned archer noted. “It’s a miracle that you haven’t frozen to death yet.” He then spread his wings. “By the way, you wouldn’t have happened to have seen Ulric around, have you?”
“Oh, the red guy? Yeah, he’s back near the portal.”

“Thanks.” Todor answered, making his way in that direction before turning back to Spyro. “By the way, I wouldn’t go too far ahead if I were you. There’s some big Gnorcs up ahead. Armored up and everything. If anything, I’d get somewhere safer. Not to mention warmer.” With that, he made his way from the little dragon.

At the moment, the rest of the world was lost to Spyro, nothing short of absolute relief coursing through him as the stinging chill that perpetuated this place was now gone. He rubbed and nuzzled the white lining of the cover now turned coat, drawing a leg into it to warm it up, which then followed with another and another and another, he coming to resemble that of a fur covered worm.

“Bzzt.” (Make room.) Sparx said, diving into the cover via the collar. “Bztt bzz bzz.” (I’m coming in.)

“Huh? What are you-ah!” Spyro began to ask, only to jolt the moment the dragonfly entered in his newly ‘made’ coat. “H-Hey!” he giggled, cringing and tensing up as he felt the insect maneuver his way around in the smaller space. “What where you’re going!” he began cracking. “I-It tickles!”

“Bzz bzzt bzz…” (Well, there IS another way to warm you up…)

Spyro’s eyes widened in fear. “Don’t you da-ah-re!” he shivered, though not from the cold. “Just… find a place already!” he didn’t want to admit such, yet his resolve was beginning to break. Finally, though Sparx’s movements stopped, he poking his small head out from just below Spyro’s.

“Bzz…bzz bzz.” (Ah…much better.) he then looked up to Spyro. “Bzzt? Bzzt bzz bzz.” (Well? What are you waiting for?) he then pointed a leg forward. "Bzzt!” (Onward!)

Whoa.

That…that guy was big.

Just a bit bigger…or as big as that other guy that guarded Oswin’s Library.

Standing just head of them stood a towering Gnorc garbed in metal armor, a large breast place and arm cuffs on his person, as well as an intimidating, firm look that showed off that he’d have no trouble smashing anyone, little dragons in particular, who came his way.

“Bzz…” (So…) Sparx began in hushed buzzes. “Bzzt bzz bzz?” (Any ideas?)

Spyro nervously bit his lip. “No clue.” Seriously, how the world were they supposed to get past this guy?

“Bzz!” (Look!) the dragonfly stated, pointing a feeler to the massive, muscled Gnorc. “Bzz bzz bzt.” (Looks like the guy’s standing near an edge.)

Spyro looked to see that indeed, the Gnorc was positioned by the edge of one of the ledges. “Yeah. What about it?”

“Bzz.” (Well,) Sparx continued. “Bzzt bzz bzz bzz?” (You know how you’re all slippy-slidy in here?)

What did that have to do with…wait a minute.

The Gnorc turned towards the source of some small noise behind him, seeing nothing and turning
back to the direction he was formerly looking in. Whatever, he thought, folding his arms and puffing out his built chest. He and his brothers were some of, no, scratch that, the BIGGEST BADDEST guys in Gnasty’s army. No, in the entire Dragon Realms! Nothing would DARE try to make it past him-

A sudden force met his backside, propelling him forward. He released a high-pitched yowl at the sensation of something sharp meeting his backside, only to find that the ground had become rather...nonexistent. Yet before he could fully comprehend anything, gravity took over from there, the Gnorc feeling himself being pulled downward further and further until-

BOOM!

“...ow...”

Spyro and Sparx looked over the edge, unable to see the armored adversary, yet from the sound of it (and from the looks too), it’d probably take him a bit to get over that tumble, as well as climb out.

“Well, that takes care of that.” Spyro noted, beginning to turn from the edge, only for his ears to pick up something.

“Hey, you hear that?” a voice from afar said, echoing throughout the small section of the Ice Cavern.

“Yeah, that sounded like Jimmy!”

“Yo, Jim!”

Then the sound of footsteps began to be heard. Or rather, footsteps with said feet attached to long boards of wood.

“Hey, it’s that little guy!”

One of the incoming, purple skinned Gnorcs raised his hand upward, snowball at the ready. “Get him!”

Snowballs...

He now HATED snowballs.
Chapter Summary

Upon getting a tip from Cliff Town, Spyro finally gets some more info regarding this Dr. Shemp and the whereabouts of both Marco and his brother, Gosnold. Only problem is: how do they find where he is?

Chapter Notes

Sort of making up for the late update last time, yet given Shemp’s gonna be the main highlight of both this entry and the next, I don’t want to delve too to much into this entry, as I have other stuff to work on, as well as think of how to do future entries for these.

He was somewhat saddened he had to part with Todor’s gift, yet everyone else in this Realm was so danged hot! Hopefully the little corner he hid in in by the rock outside of the portal to that chilled cave would be safe.

All around the little dragon and dragonfly stood towering structures composed of tan, clay bricks (it looked like something Nestor had told him about once, abode, he thought) amidst the dry Earth that he had grown accustomed to seeing. That and the blistering heat. “Maybe taking some of that ice would’ve done me some good…” Sparx sighed in agreement.

“Bzzzt. Bzz bzz bzz.” (Well, it can’t be helped now.) the dragonfly told him, sitting atop of the little dragon’s head, both of them currently hidden behind a block of bricks that served as a platform of sorts. “Bzz bzz bzzt bzz.” (Right now, all that matters is that we find the rest of the others.)

Spyro nodded, though even now, it seemed surreal that he was tasked with such a thing at all. If anything, the Peacekeepers were either far laxer than the Artisans, or simply held more faith in him. Then again, as Sparx suggested before, perhaps children running around, getting into danger was part of some sort of ‘mark’ of ‘manhood’.

“If that’s true, then I’ll be the man above ALL men!” Spyro declared, puffing his chest out proudly. Oh, the others were going to be SO proud of him.

The others…

Argus’ hand…

“Bzz!” (Look!) the dragonfly alerted the dragon that someone was coming, so they both ducked their heads down. Two Gnorsc began to make their way over, one seemingly garbed in wide brimmed hat and some sort of ‘cape’ with pieces of metal tied onto it, as if trying to make the cape some sort of ‘shield’ (either way, both Sparx and Spyro thought it looked super tacky). The other was far larger and wore some sort of tunic of red with small feathers or hair coming out of the top
of their head, something that looked like a ladle clutched in their hand.

And what luck, the sight of green crystal was in the distance.

“So, any sign of that little troublemaker?” the smaller Gnorc questioned, voice heavily accented, he taking a moment to curl his mustache.

“Nope.” The larger answered, taking a moment starch their back with the ladle. “No sign of the munchkin.”

If it wasn’t for the shock both he and his dragonfly felt at that moment, the little dragon would’ve taken offense to that comment. Once again, they scratched their back. Or rather, ‘she’ scratched her back.

“That’s a girl?!” Spyro hissed under his breath, Sparx looking to him with equally widened eyes.

“Bzz…bzz bzzt.” (I…guess so?)

“Eugh…ew!” Technically, he supposed girl Gnorcs HAD to exist, otherwise there wouldn’t be any at all. Even if the whole process of how any of that worked hadn’t been explained to him (everyone back home seemingly refusing to do so until he was ‘older’), yet he didn’t suspect they’d be so… well, ‘ew’.

Sparx wasn’t exactly please to get a look at the more ‘feminine’ side of the Gnorcs (if it could even be called that), yet he pulled on Spyro’s horn and gestured to the sculpture a short distance away. Though before they could make use of this opportunity-

“Caramba, the Doctor’s getting impatient.”

They stopped.

“Eh, don’t stress out over it!” the ‘woman’ told the caped Gnorc, now using the ladle to get at an itch on the top of her head. “Shemp’s already got one of them goggle guys with em’! It’s not like he’s getting anywhere anytime soon.” She paused for a second. “Assumin’ the youngin can’t fly yet.”

“Two, I believe!” the other, smaller Gnorc mentioned. “And besides, even if he could, he’s got a whole lot of surprises waiting for him elsewhere if he gets far enough! And not from just us!”

Not from just us? What was that supposed to mean? Well, whatever. No time to dwell on that now, they had to go make a move now before-

“Hey, you hear that?” the woman asked, the caped Gnorc looking in the same direction as she.

“Eh…what?”

She paused for a moment, taking her ladle and tossing it forward.

“OW!”

“Ha! Knew it!”

Oh…shoot!

“It’s that purple pipsqueak!” she cried out, the other drawing out his sword. “After ‘em!”
“Camaradas!” the caped Gnorc cried out, several other Gnorcs garbed in attire like his coming at the sound of his call. He then pointed to the dragon running away. “After him!”

He went as fast as his feet could carry him, going on and on and on. The frozen dragon was just ahead of them, yet he could hear pounding behind them. They were drawing in on them, but they were so close too! Just a bit more! Just a bit more…

“Aha!”

Shoot!

“Stop right there!” a caped Gnorc shouted, leaping out in front of Spyro, a satisfied grin stretching on his lips. “Well now,” he began, giving his cape a brush back, though given the metal attached to it, the wind couldn’t bring it higher. “I think that this little one has been a rather naughty boy, isn’t that right, boys?”

All around the dragon and dragonfly emerged several other Gnorcs garbed in the same attire as he, swords drawn and at the ready. ‘Great.’

“What do you think, boys?” the head of the band asked. “Shall we skewer or flay him?”

“Why not both?” one amongst them asked, the head pondering this for a moment.

“Eh, why not? Never had a dragon before. And who knows? Maybe it’s true what they say: almost every meat tastes like chicken.” He pointed to the purple, smaller dragon. “Get him!”

With that, everyone charged, bladed objects coming in from all sides of them, ready to make contact and slice through.

“Bzz!” (Quick!) Sparx cried out, Spyro momentarily frozen in fear. “Bzz! Bzzt bzz bzz!” (Wings! Use your wings!)

But…he couldn’t fly! Nevertheless, given he had no other option, Spyro made a small jump and spread his wings, gliding over to one of the small platforms that rested on the other end of the small collection of Gnorcs. Unfortunately, while the journey was successful, he winced as he felt a few sharpened points graze the skin on his stomach. Upon landing and giving said stomach a look, he was relieved to see that the skin wasn’t broken, but there were still some scrapes on the yellow tissue.

Though he was far from safe yet. He hopped up higher when the opportunity presented itself as the caped Gnorcs were continuing to pursue him, climbing up and trying to get at him. Spyro continued upward, going up the platforms that apparently served as a staircase of sorts to the roof, though even upon reaching said roof, his pursuers kept on following. Though it was also then that he and Sparx spotted yet another dragon in the distance. Just a glide away.

Yet…could he?

There was little time to argue now, Spyro spreading his wings and leaping forward, letting his wings and the wing carrying him forward, heading right towards the imprisoned Peacekeeper.

BOOM!

Only to have a ladle slam right in his face, propelling him back onto one of the small bridges connecting the raise platforms that lead to a higher area in Cliff Town, Sparx only spared the
painful interruption due to his small size.

“Nice try, kid.” Another large, ‘female’ Gnorc told him, the rather overweight specimen towering over him. “Hmm…y’know, maybe me and the girls COULD make something tasty out of you.”

“Uh…yeah. How about you make something tasty out of my dust!” Spyro darted off, the far larger ‘woman’ (seriously, he thought the guys were ugly enough) unable to make a grab at him as he raced along, Sparx gesturing to yet another dragon not far away.

“Ha!”

…why not?

One of the sword wielding, caped Gnorcs leapt in front of him, Spyro about to try and make another run for it, yet from above and from behind, more and more of the Gnorcs stationed in the area surrounded him.

There was no getting around it now: he was trapped.

Trapped and, from the sudden darkness that came over him, ready to be prepped and served in a stew.
Doctor Shemp Part 1

Chapter Summary

Finding himself in the middle of the main headquarters of the one responsible for holding dominion over the Peacekeepers, Spyro comes face to face with a ‘Doctor’ that’s promised to finish what Gnasty should’ve finished with him…

Chapter Notes

So, so sorry for the late update! Holidays usually mean slower output for me. Plus, I couldn't contain all this in one part, so I hope that you can forgive me in that this won't be super condensed into one chapter. I plan to at least give each boss some semblance of personality, and while I won’t give too much away, one particular figure from a few shots past will be making routine appearances, albeit it'll be in the shadows.

That said, hope you enjoy!

Well…what a way to go and start the day.

True, it wasn’t as if the last couple of days were anything positive. Every realm in chaos, at least assumedly so, and like so many other dragons, here he was, stuck in a prison with no escape. Though, if there was anything positive, at least he knew the whereabouts of his brother.

“You ok there?” Marco asked the other occupant of his cell, Gosnold looking over.

“Hanging in there.” He replied. “Granted, this is probably the best it’ll get.” The other balloonist sighed, looking outside to the darkening sky through the bars. Indeed, what a fine, fine mess. Of course, it was then that guilt began to seep into him. He had just been in here for a day. How long had his brother been cooped up in here? “So,” his brother began. “What are you in here for?”

Marco scoffed. “Get this: these jerks shot me down, nearly up and killed me, THEN they have the gall to accuse ME of being a spy! Haven’t these guys heard of due process?!” he huffed, folding his arms. Despite himself, the whole situation frustrated him to no end. “And you?” he asked.

Gosnold sighed. “Similar to you, though I was just making a delivery from the Artisans to here. They left my balloon alone, thank Heavens, but apparently, they think that just doing business with dragons is enough to be thrown in prison.”

The red scarfed balloonist was baffled. “What’s gotten into the Gnors?” he questioned, tapping his foot. “They’ve NEVER done this before. At least, not since the times our great, great grandfathers.” It was somewhat surreal saying that, yet it was an undisputed fact that some of the dragons since that time were still around.

“Maybe this isn’t as random as we think.” Gosnold suggested. “I mean, it’s like you said. When our great grandparents were around, and heck, even before that, the Gnors were a little more
Marco had to admit, that sort of made sense. Even if this whole coup was spurred by something trivial, if not outright stupid, it was a little more organized than something that just went and was put into action without any preparation. Or maybe that was giving them too much credit. Marco wasn’t sure, this whole thing was crazy.

“Do you think he made it out ok?” Marco turned to his brother. “That little purple dragon. Do you think he…”

“Why do you ask?” the other balloonist questioned. “Kinda a specific question, isn’t it?”

“Well, it doesn’t make much sense, I admit,” Gosnold admitted. “But, well, you know, the beam might’ve missed him or something. I mean…he is tiny after all.”

Marco sighed, biting his lip from underneath his scarf. “Well…truth be told, I- “

“Make way!” a distant voice shouted, both balloonist’s focus drawn away from each other to whatever was occurring outside the darkened cell. “We’ve got a live one on our hands!”

Live one? What did they mean?

Whatever it was, it probably wasn’t going to be able to help them get out of here. Least of all, the frozen dragon standing right outside of their cell.

‘If you are out there,’ Marco thought, sitting himself down on the hardened earth below him. ‘Hope you’re at least ok.’

Blasted pot! Blasted Gnorcs! Especially that fat, ugly thing that was even considered a ‘woman’. Yuck! As the pot was carried, its occupants bounced, flipped, and were tossed all over the place in the small space inside, the larger dragon nearly crushing the smaller insect inside multiple times! Though, finally, after what felt like forever, they finally seemed to stop.

“OOF!” though not without a rough landing, the pot being dropped to the ground, a small, pained buzz heard from beneath the purple dragon’s back. “Sorry…”

Both Spyro and Sparx tried to push the pot’s lid open, yet it was for naught, it being held down by ropes secured around it. Still, at least they could get a teensy bit of it up. At least the Gnorcs had the forethought that the newest potential addition to their ‘stew’ would need to be ‘fresh’, and thus, breathing. But it wasn’t as if they’d put any airholes in the top, oh no. They thought that a small, tiny crack in the lining of the lid would be enough. There was barely enough air for them since they were stuffed inside! Still, they stopped now, and from what little they could see, the fat ‘lady’ that had carried them here was momentarily leaving the pot to go inside what appeared to be a large building of sorts, its formation more circular and seemingly lacking a roof.

‘I think I’ve seen one of those before.’ Spyro thought to himself. ‘Colosseums…I think that’s what Nestor called them.’ From what little he and Sparx could see, despite their current situation, he couldn’t deny that the place looked wickedly cool. Indeed, if not for all this craziness, he would’ve liked to explore this place and the other areas that resided in the Peacekeeper’s Realm. Minus that icy cave. He NEVER wanted to go back there. Ever.

He straightened the feathers atop of his head and adjusted his sunglasses. Indeed, he was looking FIIIINE.
“Hey, Doc!” a voice from behind called out to him, he coming out from the inner quarters stationed at the top of the coliseum to see a stout female Gnore below him. “I know you’re up there, so don’t even bother hiding!”

The ‘Doctor’ rolled his eyes from behind his shades. “I’m in the middle of prepping for my grand entrance, Martha!” he shouted back, pounding the metal breastplate that covered everything from his chest to his lower stomach. “That fortress is going to have a new guy in charge, and…” he looked to his empty hand. “Hold on a sec.” he briefly ducked back into the inner quarters before coming out again, this time with a staff bearing a skull atop of it, a green mask resembling an angered face underneath. “And I’ve GOT to look the part for the occasion!” he proclaimed, standing tall and proud as if he had a grand audience.

“Yeah, about that…” the Gnorc, Martha, began, rubbing the back of her head. “The Peacekeepers…”

Dr. Shemp raised a brow. “What about them?”

“They’re…” oh geez, how was she going to word this? “They’ve begun to fight back against our forces.”

Just a little more. Just a little more, and…

POP!

Sparx flew a good few feet before he hit the ground, yet the sensation of earth beneath him was still welcomed, as it was a for sure sign he was free. Oh, did it feel GOOD to move his wings freely again!

“Uh…you done flapping around yet?”

Oh, right. Fluttering over to the pot, the dragonfly looked to the ropes that secured the top to the rest of the pot. Thick, and, from the looks of it, very tightly tied ropes. He gripped on and gave it a little test pull. It didn’t even budge.

“Any luck?”

Sparx shushed the dragon inside. “Bzzt bzz bzz!” (I can’t do much if we get caught right away!)

“Ok, ok, sorry.” Spyro apologized. “I just need some air…”

The dragonfly began really attempting to pull this time, his wings flapping rapidly as he pulled, pulled, pulled, only to feel little to no give at all. This could take a while, though they both could only hope that ‘a while’ wouldn’t be too long.

…

His face was rapidly becoming redder than the hottest fire any dragon could release from their throat. “What?!” Shemp roared, nearly sending Martha off her feet. “What do you mean?!” he then gestured to the frozen, still form of a Peacekeeper bearing rather notable dreadlocks near the entrance, looking to the sky as if unable to comprehend what was happening. “Does THAT look free to you?!” he bellowed. “There’s no possible way that any of those roid-raging idiots could-“

“That’s just it, Doc!” Martha interrupted. “Gnasty didn’t get all of them!”
The orange skinned ‘Doctor’ froze. “What do you mean ‘didn’t get all of them’?”

The female Gnorc rubbed the back of her head. “Well…”

He was getting nowhere with this! The ropes were so tight! Seriously, did they think that they were just going to spring out at any time? They could barely get any sort of footing in there, let alone go five seconds without toppling over each other!

“It’s getting a little hard to breathe in here…”

“Bzz…” (I know, I know.) the dragonfly sighed. “Bzz bzzt.” (I’m trying.) a thought then occurred to him. “Bzz bzzz bzz.” (Try pushing with your horns. Maybe it’ll loosen these a bit.)

“I’ve been doing that since we were put in this thing!” Spyro protested. Still, that was mainly due to the constant movement before. Now that his current prison was still, perhaps his efforts would be more likely to bear fruit this time…

Lifting himself up as best he could, the little dragon pushed against the lid, both surprised and relieved that it seemed to give a little bit. Still, from the strained buzzes outside, this seemed to do little in making Sparx’s task any easier.

“Hey, you hear something?” a voice from a short distance away, Sparx immediately taking shelter behind the large pot, hearing footsteps growing louder. Two Gnorcs dressed in metal armor and a metal faceplate with feathers atop of their heads and holding staves like the Doctor’s came over.

“No, you see anything?” the other asked, lifting his face plate, the other doing the same.

“Y’know,” the other began. “I don’t know why we’ve got these stupid things on anyway. The chest I can understand, but the face?”

“You ever feel a dragon’s breath on your face? It HURTS. And that’s just ONE of the worst things about it.” the Gnorc shuddered. “I STILL get sick at the smell of charcoal and ash.”

“Ugh.” The armored Gnorc looked down to the pot, a grin coming to his face. “Having fun in there, little guy?” he asked before giving it a good kick with his sandaled foot, the pot shaking and a small cry of ‘ow!’ being heard from inside.

“Good to hear!” the other laughed, knocking it with his staff. “Don’t know how Martha’s gonna serve you up, but I’m up for trying some dragons stew!”

Sparx absolutely despised his current position, as well as his size and general lack of strength, though he had little time to muse on the general helplessness of the situation as suddenly, the pot began to fall towards him, the two Gnorcs knocking it over to where it was laying on its side.

“And,” one of them said, going behind the overturned object. “I’ve never tried dragon soccer either!” he then lifted his foot up, ready to release a hardy kick.

“So…let me get this straight.” Shemp began. “A dragon about this size,” he made a small space between his index finger and thumb. “Has been running around, freeing all these other dragons?” Martha nodded. “And it’s only NOW that anyone’s managed to catch him?” again, Martha nodded, expecting the worst. Yet instead, Shemp appeared to sport a grin upon hearing this, then releasing a hearty laugh. “Well, what’s the problem then?” he chortled. “Far as I see, problem’s been solved!”
“Um…what?” the female Gnorc was confused.

“We’ve got the little sucker, right?” Shemp asked. “Well, then there’s no reason to worry! He’s been caught! Problem solved!”

“Well…you know that there’s the issue with the Peacekeepers, or, at least those he DID let out.”

The Doctor took a moment to slick back his feathers. “They’ll be dealt with.” He assured. “Even if they DO manage to take the fortress back, they won’t have it for long.”

“What?” Martha tilted her head, puzzled. “I don’t get it.”

The metal wearing staff wielder presented a toothy grin, his two prominent front teeth unable to ignore now. “I’m going to be honest with you, Marth, you mind if I call you Marth?” he didn’t even bother waiting for her reply, going on without it. “Who do you think taught Gnasty the spell to turn things to crystal?” he puffed out his chest. “Who do you think even FOUND the way to do it?” he proudly swung his staff over his shoulder, resting it atop of it. “And who do you think has spent years sneaking around those pompous Magic Crafters and those stupid Beast Makers? That’s right, baby, moi!” he beat a fist on his metal covered chest. “I know everything from Voodoo to Hoodoo to Cat-Man-Do, who want to do what you want to too!”

“…what?”

“Point being, babe, Gnasty, and by extension, ME, have EVERYTHING under control!” Doctor Shemp proclaimed. “Those dragons, as long as we’re around, aren’t going to make ANY progress!” he then adjusted his shades, eyes hidden in shadow. “And even if they do…their moment of glory won’t last. The magic’s made sure of that.”

“Oof!”

“Hey, I think I heard him that time!” BANG!

“Gaah!”

“Oh, that was a good one!” BANG!

Back and forth, back and forth he went, his current prison forcing him to roll around in rhythm with his current tormenters’ kicks. His body twisted and flipped over itself more times than he could count, yet even during his current predicament, he saw that the lid of the pot was beginning to rise with each kick, allowing more and more light into it. And from his current position, perhaps the little dragon could make this work.

Only thing was, how was he going to get out of this little back and forth?

“Bzz!” (Hey!)

“What’s that thing?”

Hey, wait a minute,” the other said. “That’s the glowing thingy that’s with that dragon! Get it!” the two made their way towards Sparx, leaving Spyro on his lonesome and still, finally.

He began to try and push the lid off with his horns, yet no such luck. Even with their kicks, they still couldn’t loosen the rope’s hold on it. Still, there was option B, even if it meant, ugh, more
rolling. Getting on his feet (the best he could, given the ‘flooring’ wasn’t exactly flat), Spyro began to steadily move, feeling the pot moving along with him. Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes! Finally, at long last, he was getting some traction! And even better, it felt like he was reaching a slope-

Wait…oh no.

“You see him?!” one of the armored Gnorcs called out, his current partner peeking his head out from behind the tower the two had chased the dragonfly around.

“Mff mmm-“he paused, realizing he didn’t take off his mask. “Nope! But I cam super, SUPER close! Honest!” just then, they both heard a sound from a short distance away. “What’s that?”

“The pot…” the other said, realizing in horror what had just happened. “Oh, great…”

“Hm?” Shemp and Martha looked, a round, black object bouncing right for them. “Oh geez! Move!” they separated as the pot bounced off the ground, soaring high into the air until it smashed into the wall, though this didn’t exactly stop it, it going off and bouncing off other walls until it was shot around like mad pinball. Shemp and the fat female Gnorc ducked in order to hopefully avoid the incoming pot that had essentially been transformed into a cannonball. Though finally, at long last, after hitting the walls for what seemed to be the fiftieth time, the pot stopped, the top coming off and releasing its purple contents.

“Owww….” Spyro moaned, trying to get to his feet. It wouldn’t have surprised him one bit if something was broken.

Shemp looked on at the young dragon, quickly shutting his agape mouth, then turned his attention to Martha. “I take it as my cue.” She said, the Doctor nodding. “Though try not to crush him too much. I still need him intact to chop up.” With that, the stout chef made her exit from the coliseum, leaving only Shemp and Spyro inside.

“Spyro?” Well, the only ones not imprisoned somehow.

“Marco?!” the little dragon raced over to one of the cells that lined the inside of the structure’s walls, the balloonist running up and reaching out towards him from his prison. “Oh Marco…I… I’m sorry.” Spyro told him. “I…I didn’t mean to. I really didn’t.” it was hard to even look at him. “Are you ok?”

“Yeah, yeah, I’m fine.” Marco answered. “A little bruised, but hey, I guess, all things considered, it could be worse.” That didn’t exactly make Spyro feel any better, but, as he said, it couldn’t been worse. If anything, from the looks of it, at least his brother appeared to be safe.

“Oh, I remember you.” Gosnold said, looking up from his sitting place. “You’re…” he paused. “Though, I guess now’s not exactly the time.” He gestured to the frozen dragon stationed by mere feet away from them.

“Oh, no you don’t!” Yet before Spyro could even take make a step a blast of blueish green was shot, electrifying and singing the spot in between him and the crystalized dragon. “In fact, I’ve got something just for you!”

Then, everyone felt the ground begin to rumble. “What the-“ the little dragon, let alone anyone else, got no further word out as suddenly, he saw the ground begin to leave him, he elevating higher and higher up, just about to teeter over the edge until he stopped himself and forced himself to keep still. Finally, after the shaking stopped, the little dragon saw that he was however many feet
up atop of a platform that raised from the floor. Then, the sound of something meeting the ground in a loud ‘SLAM!’ drew his attention.

“So,” a voice from behind him said, deep and abrasive, though there was an undeniable boisterous nature to it, albeit it was subdued now. “You’re the one that’s been causing so much trouble? You?” Spyro uneasily turned his head to see a larger, towering figure above him, the most prominent features being his sunglasses and wand. And perhaps his teeth. “They must’ve got it wrong; you CAN’T be the one they’re talking about!”

“Who…” words were flooding his mind, things that he should’ve said, things he wanted to say, yet were currently robbed from him. “Who are you?” the little dragon questioned, his courage not exactly at its high now.

“Who am I?” the figure questioned with a laugh. “Who am I? Well, little one, there’s not a better question than that!” he gestured to himself. “I am the Master of Magic! The Emperor of Crafting! The Deity of Wonder!” he went on. “I am the magnificent, the dashing, the impeccable, the spectacular, the glorious Doctor Shemp!” it was then that he slammed his wand down, a large amount of sparkling, swirling magic poured out, lighting the area around them as if he had just released a firework from the staff.

“Y-Yeah?” Spyro began, the ‘Doctor’s’ display easing him somewhat (doctor of what, he wondered). “Well…those other guys didn’t make any mistakes! I AM the one that’s been giving you all a lot of trouble!”

“Oh, are you now?” Shemp questioned, raising a brow and adjusting his shades.

“Y-Yeah, I am!” the dragon attested. “And unless you free everybody, I’m gonna keep GIVING you trouble!”

“Oohoho! Don’t YOU have an attitude on you?!” Shemp chuckled. “It’s no wonder that you’re considered such an annoyance.” He growled. “But,” he continued, switching his tone. “I kind of like that. A lot of these Peacekeepers were like that. Course, with you, it’s a lot funnier.” Spyro huffed, more than tempted to charge right into this guy. “But it is curious.” Shemp then began circling the dragon, seemingly studying him. “How DID you manage to avoid Gnasty’s blast?”

“I…I don’t have to tell you anything!” Spyro retorted, Shemp’s grin fading.

“No, I suppose you don’t.” he responded. “Besides, how you managed to do it doesn’t matter.” He leaned in, gripping his staff. “Especially when I can just deal with you myself.”
Finally facing the supposedly 'great' Doctor, Spyro is left at a loss at what to do. Yet perhaps the good Doctor should watch his back...

So, so, so, so, SO sorry for the late update. Holidays put things of a gridlock, yet here's hoping the new year brings things back to speed.

The staff slammed on the ground, barely missing its target by mere inches. Said target flapped his wings to gain some hangtime, yet it didn’t last long, a slew of projectiles of concentrated magic of green and blue blasted him back, slamming into his chest. Said blasts forced him to fall back and, before he knew it, he felt the ground below him disappear, grabbing with his front paws and hanging off the edge of the platform.

“Well, well, well,” he began, inching his sandaled foot closer, his intentions clear. “Looks like someone’s in a bit of a tight spot, aren’t they?” before Spyro could even respond, he was delivered a hard stomp on his left paw. “You think that you freeing everyone will do anything? Think again!” Shemp applied more pressure. “That spell was concocted and crafted by yours truly, SPECIFICALLY made to keep you all in place! Literally.” He chortled. “Quite a piece of work, if I say so myself. May be one of my finest.” It was then that Spyro noticed, whether intentional or not (he was leaning towards the latter) the pressure being applied had lessened. “Anyway, it’s going to take far more than a single little dragon to reverse this! Especially if it’s MY handiwork!” it just then occurred to Spyro that before him lay something that looked…quite flammable. “And so, with that, I must big you adieu! Pity, seeing as- YOW!!”

Red hot flames met his foot, searing pain immediately assaulting him and forcing him to step back. It took some effort, yet the little dragon managed to work his way back up off the edge, Dr. Shemp trying to put out the fire on his foot.

“Oh, so THAT’S how you want to play, huh!?” Shemp growled, readying his staff. “Fine by me, brat!” Spyro charged forward, meeting the Doctor’s armored chest with his horns, this actually managing to send him stumbling back. Growling, his staff began to glow, he spinning around in order to cast this particular spell that’d surely put this little cretin to an end.

“What the…oh, EW!!!”

Dr. Shemp stopped. “What?”

“You don’t have anything to cover THAT up?!”
Shemp looked behind him, knowing well what Spyro was talking about. “Hey, this is a FINE rump I’ve got! You know how many crunches I’ve done in order to get it in this shape?”

“I don’t care! It’s still gross!”

“Says the guy that doesn’t have a lick of clothing on!” Shemp retorted. “Well, it doesn’t matter! It’s not going to matter once I pound you until you’re dead!” he began again on his spell, spinning yet again to fully go through the motions of casting it. Only to find searing pain meet one of his most private, vulnerable areas. “YOW!!!” he flew a good few feet across the bridge to the second platform, Spyro in turn following suit. Turning around, behind his shades, Shemp’s eyes blazed with rage. “YOU BRAT!!!”

Spyro chortled. “Y’know, usually grilled is my favorite kind of food, but I think I’d spit you out right away!!”

“Oh, you little…” Shemp made a motion across his throat with his thumb, he then spinning his staff around and releasing several blasts in the dragon’s direction. Though, unlike before, it seemed the little one was better prepared, maneuvering his way around each one that fell by mere inches. Drawing closer, Shemp slammed down his staff, though Spyro only rolled out of the way of the incoming object, continuing to roll and mind the space he was given until- “YAHOW!!!”

Now the two were on the last platform, staring each other down. Shemp gritted his teeth. It still made no sense to him. This dragon was just a kid! A rather annoying kid, but still, just a kid! Either he was more capable than he initially suspected or he was just lucky. Whichever one it was, neither certainly would help him now. But now, he would see fit that this kid’s luck would run out. Lifting his staff again, he blasted magic out of it, yet instead of going towards Spyro, it went right above his head, severing the ropes that held the bridge, essentially leaving both with no way out.

“Now then…” the shaman began, lifting his staff on high. “TIME YOU TASTED THE FULL FORCE OF DR. SHEMP!!!”

From the staff poured what Spyro assumed to be hundreds of swirling, highly concentrated blasts, flying high above them, then hurling down straight for him. He was pelted left and right, on and on, and on, no mattered where he turned and went, Spyro found himself beaten down again and again. The form of the little dragon couldn’t even be seen anymore thanks to the blinding light produced by the continuing, seemingly never ending slew of blasts!

And finally, after what one would’ve assumed to be an eternity, the blasts stopped, Shemp adjusting his shades and stepping forward. A motionless, limp form was in front of him, seemingly unconscious and, best of all, unable to go and flame his behind again. “Hm.” Shemp huffed, resting his hands on his hips. “What’d I tell you, kid?” he asked, not expecting an answer. “Now,” he began to kick the form of the little dragon, closer and closer to the edge. “Let’s see if you make a better pancake than a would be hero-“

He got out no more, wincing in horror as searing pain, once again, met his rear end.

He leapt and yowled, leapt all the way over the walls of the coliseum, flying further and further until he became little more than a little light seen in the horizon, potentially being mistaken for a star should one see him in the coming evening sky.

“Hey…hey, get up.”

Voices?
“Hey, c’mon kid, rise and shine.” He felt a nudge in his side. “C’mon now.” Steadily, he opened his eyes, finding several other eyes looking down at him. Lifting himself up, he found that he rested on a bed that had quite a few holes in the sheets and covers, yet still, it sure felt a lot better than those blasts from…wait.

“Where’s…” the young dragon began, looking around. “Where is he?”

“Who?” Todor questioned, able to lean over the others crowding around due to his height.

“That guy. Shrimp, I think—”

“Oh, Shemp!” a dragon sporting dreadlocks, Trondo, laughed. “Eh, I don’t think we’re going to have to worry about him for a while. If ever again.”

“Huh? But…”

“Bzz!” a fluttering, golden form came to the little dragon. “Bzzt bzz bzz.” (I took over where you left off.) Sparx explained, lifting up his feelers. “Bzzz bzzt bzz.” (Who knew one little pinch was all it took. Then again, you DID roast his rump rather good.) he flew over to nuzzle the dragon’s cheek, said dragon in turn returning the favor.

“Thanks…I owe you one.”

“Bzz bzzt bzz.” (Oh, you owe me MORE than just one…but that’ll come later.)

“Wait a minute, where’s—”

“Right here.” A voice said, Marco emerging from the crowd, along with Gosnold.

“Marco!” Spyro cried out happily. “Oh, Marco, I am so, so sorry! I didn’t mean for you to—“

“Hey, look it’s fine now.” The balloonist assured him. “Everything’s fine now. Besides,” he looked to the other balloonist. “If not for you, I wouldn’t have found my bro here, and I’d still be in that cage.” He then gestured to Trondo, who puffed his chest out with pride.

“Wait,” Spyro then realized. “Where are the Gnorcs?”

“Beaten back, thanks to you.” Titan confirmed, folding his arms, battle axe still very much in his possession. “And if Dr. Shemp is any indication, they probably won’t be coming back for a while.” He said with pride, though said pride faltered upon seeing Spyro’s downcast expression. “What’s wrong?”

He shifted uncomfortably. “Um…guys? I think…I need to tell you something.”

Everyone was silent. Some looked to each other, others displayed clear signs of denial at what they had just heard, and others left the room altogether. Titan wasn’t exactly comfortable with the unease that filled the room, though, he wasn’t willing to display such openly. “…if this is true, then…” he began, struggling to conjure up words. “Then there’s no time to waste.”

“No kidding.” Gosnold then spoke up, then looking to Marco. “Looks like we’ll be needing to head off as soon as possible.”

“As soon as possible?” Spyro asked.

“Well, yeah, you heard the man, er, dragon.” Gosnold answered. “Besides, that’s why you came
here, right?"

"Uh, yeah, but...you're...ok with me just going?"

"Why not?" Titan told him. "You've proven yourself capable so far. Besides, if anything this is the perfect way for you to prove you're a real man."

It was clear that customs here were FAR different in comparison to the Artisans, yet really, he had no room to complain. Besides, in a way, it was rather gratifying. He didn't feel as small as he usually was made out to be.

"And from what I've heard, or rather, haven't, the Magic Crafters have likely been hit too." Andor mentioned, having not much to say until now.

"What ho!" Conan suddenly interjected. "This be the mere beginnings of a grand quest!" he then looked to Spyro. "Onward, brave child! Your adventure is nigh!"

"Hold it." Marco then said. "He can't exactly go anywhere without transportation." He then lightly took ahold of his artificial wings. "And...well, if what he says is true, then any of us flying him there might lead to both of us splatting on the ground."

The room went silent again, though this period didn't last as long. "Hey," Marco began. "My balloon's wrecked..." he said, Spyro lowering his head in guilt. "But," the dragon then lifted his head again. "Anyone here got some spare cloth...and maybe some sewing needles?"

"And," Gosnold then stated. "I think that, when it's done, you can take it easy. I'll take it from here."

"You sure about that?" Marco questioned, Gosnold nodding in reply.

"All right, we have a plan." Titan confirmed. "Well, no time the present to get started." He then turned to the rest of the dragons. "You heard him! Search and gather as much as you can! And look for some needle and thread! Lots of it!"

"Yes sir!" with that, they all ran off, leaving Spyro and the two balloonists alone.

"Thanks, guys." The little purple dragon thanked.

"No problem." Marco said. "Besides, this affects all of us now."

"Exactly." Gosnold continued. "If Gnasty and his cronies are free to run all over the place, then we're all going to be in trouble."

Marco then drew closer to Spyro. "Whatever happens though, we've got your back. Right?"

Gosnold nodded.

"You guys..." the little dragon answered. "Thank you."

Despite this, they all figured that repairing the balloon would take more than just a little bit of elbow grease, and perhaps a few more hands and/or paws on board would be welcome. With that, the three (four technically) went off to search for materials to add to the growing collection.

And whilst he had gained more traction than he initially suspected, Spyro couldn't help but feel that things weren't going to get any easier.
Intermission-Back at Home

Chapter Summary

The little dragon’s absence hasn’t gone unnoticed by those he left at home, leaving many to wonder of just how much danger the little one could be in…

Chapter Notes

Working on some other things and am planning out how the Magic Crafters are going to go. Anyway, Jesse mentioned how the guys back at home are undoubtedly worrying about Spyro, even the likes of Alban and Alvar. And, apparently, they also have got me thinking of the Hercules soundtrack to the thing, XD.

That said, I thought that perhaps that would be a good transition to the Magic Crafters, and maybe would serve as transitions to each new section. But hey, we’ll see in the future.

Hope you enjoy!

The purple skinned scholar gazed upon his gem encrusted digits, they having gone stiff and lost all feeling, the flesh that they met growing cold at its touch. A sure sign of things to come, he predicted.

“You found nothing?” Argus heard Nestor question, he merely shaking his head. It wasn’t as if he wished to accept it either, yet it seemed the carpenter was still unwilling to swallow what everyone else already knew. “Nothing at all?”

“Nestor, we’ve been over this.” Lindar sighed. “He’s not here.”

Gavin shifted uncomfortably, rubbing his apron in between his fingers. “I don’t want to say it either.” He said. “But Lindar’s right.”

“We’ve searched Stone Hill from top to bottom.” Gildas told his leader.

“For hours, I might add.” Astor noted, letting out an exhausted sigh, Nestor feeling even more guilty due to the clear strain the search had put on his father.

“And he’s not in Town Square either.” Nils then said. “Though the mess those blasted Gnorcs left is…” still, despite that, he couldn’t really bring himself to lament about his smashed sculptures, nor Devlin of his ingredients. Even Alvar made no mention of his tools or meats that had been stolen, and Thor hadn’t even noticed his pots were reduced to rubble.

“Or in Dark Hollow.” Alban sighed, Darius and Oswin, even Anyte having scoured every inch of the library. Then, the scribe’s eyes widened. “You don’t think- “

“Relax, I checked.” The blue skinned Anyte said. “The waterways are clear. Only things I found
were frogs.” She shifted her eyes. “Though…aren’t we being a bit hectic?”

The regular resident of Dark Hollow and several other dragons looked at the songstress. “You can’t be serious.” Lindar stated, marching over to her. “A dragon no older than a child is missing, but we’re supposed to simply relax?!”

“No, that’s not what I meant!” Anyte defended, taken aback by the clockmaker’s sudden aggression. “Yet…it’s as you said! He’s a child! Even if he isn’t here, he couldn’t have gone that far, surely!”

“Then where, pray tell, do you think he could have gone?”

“Well, have any of you checked the shores?”

Everyone went silent, they more than a little taken aback by Anyte’s words, though her suggestion had merit. “Well, what are you waiting for?” Nestor told her. “Get on it!”

She was somewhat surprised by the normally level-headed carpenter being so abrasive, yet she began to make her way towards the portal to Stone Hill, the easiest access point to the shoreline (even if it’d be easier if they just made a portal to there). Even if she meant to what she said, it wasn’t out of a lack of concern. She was simply being honest. He…Spyro couldn’t have gone far. He was, after all, just a child. Surely…surely he wouldn’t have. She hoped not.

“So, nothing?” Nestor asked everyone. “Nothing at all?” no one said anything. “Then…then we look again! Leave absolutely NOTHING unturned- “

“Nestor, it’s over!” Lindar groaned. “He’s gone! He’s not here! We can look a hundred times, and the results will be the same!”

“Then what do you suggest we do?!” Nestor shouted back. “Nothing?!”

“No, of course not!” Lindar responded. “But it won’t do any good if we keep looking around here! And I doubt Anyte will find any trace of him at Dragon Shores.”

Nestor went silent, the clockmaker too not long after. “So…what do you suggest?”

Lindar looked to the ground. “I…I don’t know.”

“But wait.” Gildas suddenly spoke up. “If he’s not here…and assuming Anyte doesn’t find anything at the shore, then where else could he…” it was then that he went silent, everyone’s blood running cold. “No…”

“He couldn’t.” Tomas said.

“He wouldn’t.” Devlin replied.

Then again…wasn’t it sort of odd that Marco hadn’t been heard from for at least a day by now? And the little dragon was nowhere to be seen…

“I-Impossible!” Alban immediately protested. “Ridiculous! It’s preposterous! He…he couldn’t have!” he continued to declare the idea absurd, though he was running out of means to keep up his denial.

“He…how did he…where would he…” Nevin began, at a loss for words, the possibilities making his head swim.
“Where would he even go?!” Nils shouted, pulling at his mustache.

“But Marco would’ve noticed him, surely!” Oswin noted. Then again…if they hadn’t heard from him…”Oh no. Oh no!”

“Eh, what?!?” Thor suddenly shouted, roused from Oswin’s exclamation. “The boy, has he been-“

“No.” Astor told his fellow elder, fingers tightening around his cane. “No…”

“He…that stupid kid!” Alvar suddenly shouted, Gavin turning to the red dragon, clearly enraged.

“Shut it! Don’t you dare-“

“That stupid kid!” the chef continued. “That stupid, stupid kid!”

“Shut up!” Gavin ordered, though Alvar kept going on.

“He’s going to get killed out there! He’s…he’s going to…” Gavin’s rage simmered down, the red skinned dragon looking to the ground, fists clenching. “He’s…he’s going to…you…you stupid…. He didn’t protest upon the blue barista bringing him into an embrace.

Delbin took a look to Nestor, of whom looked as if all life had been taken out from him.

“Maybe…” the painter then suggested. “Maybe we could go out and look for him.”

“Y-Yeah!” Tomas shouted. “We could just go and fly and look for him!”

“Don’t be so sure.” A voice suddenly said, Argus coming out, everyone gasping at the sight of his hand. Or rather, his forearm, the green crystal having traveled further up his limb. “If this is any indication…then we would be doing him no good.”

“But…but it’s going so slow!” Nils argued. “Surely we would be able to…” it was then that he realized everyone was looking at him. Or rather, his tail. Looking himself confirmed what they were seeing was indeed horrific, crystal having started to form at the tip.

Then, Argus noticed Gildas’ ankle, then Gildas noticed Nevin’s elbow, and soon, each dragon noticed a portion of their anatomy, either a small part of a larger part, or a finger or toe, were crystalizing yet again, panic arising among them. Nestor, it seemed, was the only one spared, though how long this would last was yet to be seen. With little else to do amidst the growing chaos, the dejected, defeated carpenter looked to the sky, fittingly clouded over, hiding the stars and moon.

Yet despite that, he swore he could see the little one’s face forming in the darkened collection of vapor above.

Everywhere held a thick layer of mist, the little dragon and dragonfly, much less the one manning the hot air balloon, barely able to see anything. “Uh…you wouldn’t happen to know how much further it is, would you?” Spyro asked, he regretting not bringing Todor’s little gift for him. Heck, Sparx could’ve sworn that his wings were THIS close to freezing solid.

“We should be close.” Gosnold told him. He never really thought of it before, yet he was more than grateful for the fact he had clothes right now, the little dragon shivering under the blanket he was provided. “Magic Crafters were always a little hard to find.”

“It must be harder to stay.” Spyro noted. “How can anybody stand living in this?” memories of that
horrible cave came to mind, fearing that the environment would be all there was in where he was going.

Just then, something began to form before his eyes. A large shape, a tower of sorts with a circular, dome shaped roof that came to a point at the top. Spyro remembered, Nestor had once told him of buildings that looked like that. Onion tops, he believed they were called. Suddenly, more and more of them began to appear, along with rolling hills and pouring waterfalls, the entire area covered in softly, slowly, ever falling snow.

“There it is.” Gosnold stated, adjusting his goggles to better gauge the distance. “The Magic Crafters.”
Entering into the Magic

Chapter Summary

Arriving in the Magic Crafter’s Realm and releasing the trapped dragons in the main sector, Cosmos isn’t entirely too keen on simply allowing a child to go off and supposedly ‘save’ them all. Though upon seeing that a secret cavern is empty of its valuable contents, it seems that there is more at risk than just the current population of dragons.

Chapter Notes

Ok, so this is sort of a canon break (sort of), because it kinda goes against the whole origin of the eggs in the Dragon Realms. According to some official material, the fairies bring them there, yet I find it to be a cop out, as well as leading to a good amount of questions: do the eggs just pop up out of nowhere? Are they laid naturally? If so, do female dragons just stay elsewhere? If the fairies bring them, then why did Zoe say that they were too heavy to carry back in Spyro 3?

Ultimately, I decided that it was bull, so I went with a different direction. Granted, there IS an explanation as to how this is possible, and it also ties into the ‘curse’ that’s been making things go so bad for the dragons. And, this marks the first appearance of an infamous little guy in blue…also, a brief bit involving one of the few female dragons that exist here. And a certain fairy will make her appearance in the next one shot.

That said, hope you enjoy!

He felt the chill of the air assault his skin the moment the crystal shell was broken, a shiver running up his spine and he instinctively bringing his arms close to him to warm himself. Though upon realizing that he was being observed, the green dragon straightened himself out, holding his staff up and presenting himself as composed and proud. “Welcome to the home of the Magic Crafters, my boy!” Cosmos greeted. “Although…what ARE you doing here?"

Spyro merely looked to the larger dragon, shifting his eyes for a moment. “About that…I think I probably need to find everybody that’s here first.”

Cosmos was puzzled, though he and Spyro were completely unaware of the hidden figure watching them from behind the corner of a wall, eyes centered on them and following as the little dragon made his way past the befuddled head dragon.

The red-haired human was sent flying as horns contacted his metal armor, the rest of the group following suit. Another human, far taller than the shorter hoard of metal armor wearing sorcerers, he bearing robes of green and what appeared to be leaves atop of his head, his beard long and white. Seeing the dragon coming, he rose his arms, the earth beneath him rising with him, the little
dragon slamming headfirst into the rocky wall that had been brought up.

The red-haired group that had previously been knocked down then aimed their staffs right in the dragon’s direction, ready to fire. Blasts of magic shot in his direction, though luckily, the purple dragon leapt upward and managed to glide over to where he stood atop of the one of his current attackers’ heads. The taller sorcerer looked as he hopped from one head to another until he suddenly jumped up and came over the edge of the raised earth, his cheeks puffed out and smoke rising from his nostrils.

A yowl echoed throughout the snow bound area, the other figures hightailing it out of there, then even more when the dragon bearing a deck of cards fired each of them in their direction, the cards slicing through their beards until a good majority of them were near bald.

Indeed, the rumors that he had heard were proving to be true. This guy, small as he was, might’ve been more than just talk.

It continued to watch as more of the invading creatures were dispatched, the green robbed figure with no face and only a pair of glowing, golden eyes shooting bolts of lightening in the little dragon’s direction. This time, it seemed that the dragonfly with him saw to diving into its robes, the wizard twisting violently as the insect assumedly whizzed this way and that, tearing at whatever served as its insides (if it had any) before the robes fell as if nothing lay in them at all.

The figures clutched its prize tighter, taking a moment to adjust its wound up turban. Indeed, this one could prove to be a bit of a problem…

He wondered whether he had done something wrong, because the moment the crystal had fallen from the far taller form, a large explosion occurred, the dragon now free coated in blackened soot that coated a good portion of her form.

Said dragon was, bizarrely enough, apparently female, her form thin and lanky, her skin a very similar shade to that of Spyro’s though her underbelly was of a magenta color than yellow. She bore a tuft of light, lilac colored hair atop of her head and at the end of her tail, as well as at the end of her long semi-floppy ears. Her horns were somewhat tucked underneath her hat, they curled like rolls, their color a dark indigo. She wore a wide brimmed, dark magenta hat that bent in several places, a part of a weathervane at the tip of it, a large bow wrapped around the mid-section that linked the brim with the rest of the hat. This followed with the short cape of sorts she wore, a large bow keeping it on her shoulders, arm and leg cuffs of light pink and dark purple with torn edges also having ends of sorts, pink ribbons tied before the cuffs cut off. Though the brown belt around her waist was what drew Spyro and Sparx’s attention, mainly due to it likely being the source of where said explosion was caused. Several vials of chemicals and whatever else were held in places, though a good amount were now little more than shattered beakers.

“Note to self,” she coughed out, voice choked with dust. “NEVER mix the green with the red. Ever.” It was only when she had finished her coughing fit did she notice the little dragon staring up at her. “Hm? Oh, hello!” she greeted, the paused. “…who are you again?”

“Uh…well, kind of funny, because…well, I don’t think I know who you are either.” Spyro confessed, though just as he said this, he felt himself being lifted, the dragoness’ peridot eyes surveying him.

“Hmm…” he felt himself being turned left and right. “Hmm…” then upside down and right side up again. “Hmmmmmmm….”
“Uh…lady?”

“Hmmmmmmmmmmmm…”

“Lady, blood’s going to my head. I’m kinda feeling a little woozy- “

“AHA!” she then declared, subsequently dropping the one she was examining right on his head. “I know you!” she said. “You’re that Artisan child!” she then declared excitedly, her behavior mimicking that of a child despite her age. “…who are you though?”

Spyro allowed himself to fall over once again.

The figure watched the green dragon bearing the staff make his way to one of the several entryways into the mountainsides stationed throughout the land, two of the freed Magic Crafters following in tow (where the third one was, he was unsure, yet something about her just seemed ‘off’ to him, so perhaps it was better she was left imprisoned). He slinked back in the shadows further, feeling that perhaps he should make his escape soon. True, the discovery of what he and the rest of his crew had done during the span of time in between Gnasty’s casting of the spell would come, yet aside from that, there would be little than their leader, let alone anyone could do to stop them.

And even if the tales of the little dragon were true, he couldn’t be THAT lucky. No one was, save for himself.

The effects of being encased for such a long time was taxing on his limbs, yet Cosmos persisted, Zantor and Boldar following close behind. “This can’t be happening…” the green, staff wielding dragon huffed as he tried to go as fast as he could.

“You’re getting ahead of yourself; don’t you think?” the older Boldar told him. “They COULDN’T have gotten them all, surely!”

“Those blasted human sorcerers have invaded the land already, along with those green wizards! If they managed to get in past the borders, then why shouldn’t someone have found them?”

Zantor shifted his fingers uncomfortably, his cards remaining in his hand, of which he then began to flip through to comfort himself. “Even if the thie-"

Cosmos shot him a look. “Don’t say it.” they continued on, hoping and praying that the horrible scene in each of their minds wouldn’t be what they would find.

“Ah, so YOU’RE the Artisan child!”

“Yeah. That’s what I said. Already. Three times.”

“Well, always nice to make sure!” the dragoness told him, adjusting her burnt hat. “Repetition is the mother of all learning after all.” She then coughed; a good amount of soot being expelled. “Painful as it can be…” Spyro got the feeling that her current state wasn’t anything she wasn’t used to. “Anyway, I suppose I should get some introductions out of the way,” she said, kneeling and holding her hand out. “Hi, I’m Mim.” She then straightened out the collar of her cape. “Mim the Marvelous!” though it was clear that Spyro and Sparx weren’t exactly convinced. “Or…at least I will be once I get this down.” She gestured to the broken vials on her belt. “Speaking of which… ooh…Eldrid’s NOT going to be happy with me when he sees-“
“NOOOOO!!!”

All three of them looked in the direction the holler of despair had emitted from, completely aghast and puzzled as to what could produce such a cry. Then, it appeared that Mim had a revelation. “… oh no.”

“Oh no, what?” Spyro asked, he then finding himself being taken up in her arms. “What the- hey!”

Mim didn’t respond, she merely flapping her feathered wings and the two flew in the direction the voice was heard. After a short while, they saw three dragons below them at the mouth of what appeared to be a cave of some sorts, the purple dragoness’ eyes widening and blood running cold. No. No, it…it couldn’t be.

Landing, Spyro immediately leapt out of her arms and rushed past Boldar and Zantor to reach Cosmos, who was at the front of the trio. Though upon reaching him, he was confused. “What’s wrong?” he asked obliviously. “There’s nothing here.”

Cosmos continued to stare wide eyed in the empty cavern before he finally spoke. “Exactly.” His voice emotionless. “Nothing. There’s nothing…”

Spyro looked to Sparx, not exactly caring for the present tension in the air. “What was…in there?”

The leader of the Magic Crafters gripped his staff tightly, not even looking at the younger dragon. “…our future.”

Hidden away, the figure watched on, making sure to keep himself out of sight. While it was regrettably that they had now discovered what he and the rest of his fellow comrades had done, it was ultimately inevitable. That said, perhaps it didn’t matter in the end. After all, whether that oaf Gnasty knew it or not, he had just provided them with the opportunity that they’ve been waiting a long time for…

“Eggs?”

Zantor nodded, he, Cosmos, Boldar, Mim, Spyro, Sparx, and now Gosnold all gathered around the mouth of the cave. “Yes. Several eggs.”

“But…who’s eggs?” Spyro asked. “I mean…last time I checked, there’s not a lot of…well, girls around here.” He then looked to Mim, of whom bit her lip and twiddled her fingers.

“It’s…a long story, son.” Boldar answered. “A story that, unfortunately, we don’t exactly have time to tell.”

“Why not?” the little dragon pressed. He received no answer, only dejected looks. It perhaps had no relation, yet he began to suspect that somehow, maybe it bore a connection to the ‘curse’ he had heard whispered around, as well as this supposed ‘sorceress’.

“The matter at hand is finding where those eggs have gone and getting them back.” Cosmos declared, having slipped back into his commanding, proper persona.

Gosnold and Spyro looked to each other, each coming to the same conclusion. “Well…I can do it.”

The older dragons all turned to him, completely flabbergasted. “You?” Cosmos exclaimed aloud. “Don’t be absurd! You’re little more than…” he paused. Truth be told, he didn’t exactly know the child’s true age. “Well….impossible! You’re nothing more than a child!”
“Don’t be too sure about that.” Gosnold interjected. “Look, yeah, he’s a kid. But he’s actually made a good deal of progress already.”

Cosmos raised a brow skeptically. “Such as?”

“Well, for one, I don’t think the Gnorcs are going to be trying to make it past the Peacekeepers anytime soon. And their head guy over there, Dr. Shemp I think he was called, has already been dispatched—“

“Did you say, Shemp?” the Magic Crafter leader interrupted, Gosnold nodding. “I knew it. I KNEW that he had something to do with this!” he clenched his staff. “The insane fool’s been slinking around here for weeks, stealing manuscripts and spells from Cedric’s archives to Jarvis’ personal collection! We knew well he was the one doing it, the Beast Makers having already tried dealing with him, but he must’ve been better at the arts than we gave him credit for, as we couldn’t never catch him!”

“So, did he steal the eggs?” Spyro asked.

“No, this isn’t his handiwork.” Zantor interjected. “No, this points to an even sneakier culprit.”

“Make that culprits.” Boldar added.

Culprits…Spyro looked to Sparx and Gosnold. “Well…then it’s even better I’m here!” he declared. “I’ll save the rest of you AND get those eggs back!”

“Don’t be ridiculous!” Cosmos protested. “You simply expect me, the head of the Magic Crafters, the most prestigious, powerful of all dragonkind to simply allow a child to do the work for us?”

Spyro glowered at the larger, green dragon, though he found his head turning to the ground. Gosnold stepped in. “Ultimately, sir.” He started. “I don’t think you have a choice.”

“Hm? How so?”

It was then that the balloonist relayed what had occurred in the other Realms since the leader’s imprisonment. The Artisans, the Peacekeepers, what occurred in each of their lands, as well as the less than savory discovery the little dragon had in his own home Realm. With all this being brought out, Cosmos grew silent, turning to his other dragons.

“What say you all?” he asked, still very against the idea, yet he couldn’t exactly deny what the balloonist had said.

“If he’s the only one that can free anyone, then…I’m afraid our hands are tied.” Zantor admitted.

“But he IS still just a boy.” Boldar said, albeit his tone was more along the lines of a concerned elder figure than Cosmos’ sense of pride.

“An Artisan boy.” Mim added, though a cough full of soot came out. “Yet…” she paused, another cough coming out. “Yet he DID manage to free all of us and take care of those druids.”

‘Better than you could mix simple chemicals.’ Cosmos thought, rubbing his chin in thought.

“Uh, guys?” the four all turned to Gosnold, though…only Gosnold. The little dragon and his dragonfly were gone.
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