

Chapter 1

The outcast

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My paws slipped as I stepped on the moist ground. The sun was so bright my eyes were about to pop out. I quickly got smushed by my siblings, who bambused on the sidewalk. Somehow, I ended up in the middle of the crowd.

“Hey! Move out of the way, you stinky dicosorus!” I heard a dragonet screaming behind me.

“You are a stinky dicosorus,” I mumbled, as I got pushed to the back of the crowd.

Ugh, annual festival of the blue moon. The beautiful time of year, when kids get their own dragons. Every ten-year-old in our stinky little village got their own one-year-old dragonet. Nice, just nice. What can be better?! I was so mad, the thick black smoke was getting out of my nostrils. I hate kids! They are loud and annoying, always blasting out my eardrums, and are the absolute worst! I can’t physically imagine someone like THAT riding on my back.

Just then I saw them. Those little monsters. There were a whole army of them. All trying to get their dragons. All trying to lay their dirty hands on my precious scales. Although, the last part is not true. See, I am not like the other dragons. Funny, but here in the North Lunaris Valley dragons typically have chalk-colored scales that beautifully reflect the sun, and ocean-blue eyes. My scales, however, were obsidian, and my eyes were amethyst. And since everyone knows black is the sign of dark magic and bad luck, of course I was hated. What a bummer.

Well, at least I didn’t have to worry about those gremlins annoying me. In fact, none of the kids were even looking at me, and a little girl even said, “Ugh, is that a rotten dragon or something?”

Good for you, you stinky little dicosorus, I thought, as I looked around. There were less and less dragonets on the sidewalk. All the pretty ones go first. All the most perfect and strong dragons get the better riders. They are the ones who maybe end up surviving as warriors, while judging by my appearance I will end up in the library with some nerd that always has his nose in a book. That would be such an exciting life!

It’s not like I care. All the children were pretty much the same. All dressed in light-colored robes. Yellow, pink, blue, everything that would look good with white-scale dragons. Ugh! Most had platinum blond hair, though I saw some flaming redheads. They all had light blue eyes just like the dragons...

Just then I heard quiet crying. I turned around and saw the tiny dragonet I'd stepped on literally tearing up.

"Hey, what's your problem?!" I snapped.

The dragonet looked at me with really big, sad blue eyes. "No one will pick me," she said quietly. "I am literally the size of a kitten. There is no way I am getting a good owner."

I slowly looked her up and down, examining every part of her.

"Look at me. You shouldn't be the one worrying," I hissed at the dragonet.

"Look, this one is perfect!" I heard a cheerful and annoyingly high voice behind me.

I turned around to see a boy standing and pointing... at the dragonet next to me. Shoot. Well, it's not like I want an owner with that kind of voice anyway. This humanoid had big and fluffy orange hair that was very messy and looked like a carrot. His emerald eyes shined with happiness, like he had just hit the jackpot. This child almost seemed to have a light inside of him that shined farther than you see.

He walked up to the dragonet with the brightest and most innocent smile I ever saw a human being have and said, "Hi, little one, my name is Haiku. I will call you Chinchavenda, but for short, Chaiy. I am one hundred percent sure you and I are going to be an amazing team!"

With that, he picked up the little dragonet and walked away.

There were less and less dragons. One by one, they go. To their new happy home. To their new bright future...

Less and less. Until the last dragon left, and I was the only one standing. All alone on the dirty sidewalk. All alone against the cold wind blowing in my face. I didn't want an owner, I just wanted to be wanted. With someone on my side. Not to be an outcast.

"I guess you are the only one left for me," someone said behind me.

I jumped up and turned around to see a kid standing there all alone. Though I never heard him come behind me. It was like he spawned there out of thin air.

I swear I never saw him before, and that was surprising, because he wasn't like anyone else. He had thick black hair that covered one of his eyes and was around shoulder length. His eyes were very dark brown, almost black, with an eastern curve. From the first glance, it seemed like there was no soul in them, but there was something behind the cold, distant stare. Empathy, maybe?

He was dressed in black high boots and a black robe. Hm, yeah. He was definitely not the friendliest person on Earth, but it's not like I have a choice.

"What is your name?" I asked carefully.

The kid hesitated. "Um, Neru..."

"Neru?" I asked again, thinking I might have misheard this kid's mumbling.

"It's Neron," he said quickly, "and you need a name, right?"

There were a couple of minutes of awkward silence. Then I finally said, "So, give me a name."

A couple more minutes of awkward silence. I was starting to think that I should go into the forest and become a wild dragon, just to not deal with this dumbass again. When finally, FINALLY! Neron said, "I don't know. Um, you decide."

I can tell that he enjoys making things difficult.

"I also don't know, you idiot!" I snapped.

"Fine, you are mad, I get it. How about Amber? That is a pretty name."

"I ain't a fire dragon," I protested.

"Coal, that should match you."

With his monotone voice, it is hard to tell whether he is being sarcastic or not.

I narrowed my eyes. "Would you like to be named Coal?"

Neron rolled his eyes. "Now you are just being sarcastic."

My patience was about to burst like a soap bubble. "Then pick a decent name and we will be done with it."

"Okay, okay. How about, I don't know, Alen?"

Surprisingly, that wasn't a bad name at all. It was kinda pretty. Alen... This name felt like power, but also like a mystery. But I have to be strict with this kid and not let his hopes up that I, the greatest and most powerful dragon of all time, will be his friend. Hah, never.

So I gave him a cold stare and said, "Fine, it is okayyyy."

For a split second, I saw a small smile on Neron's face, but then his face became neutral again.

"Sure, Alen," he said, not even looking at me. "Follow me, my house is not far away."

Neron turned around and walked to the nearest house, clinking his boots. I followed him, thinking what mess I could possibly have gotten myself into. When I saw that carrot boy I saw earlier running towards us, he smiled wildly and turned to Neron.

“Hey, is it okay if my dragon Chainy and I come to you for a sleepover? I mean, if you don’t have any other plans, of course,” he said in a cheerful voice.

This time Neron actually smiled. “Sure. Why would I have other plans? You are my only friend. The only person who doesn’t think of me as an outcast.”