

The Legend of Raan



Based on a text found in the recently discovered Dragon ruins of Ga'hadar, translated from the original Dragonese. This is believed to be the cornerstone of Dragon mythology and religious belief, but its original author and exact origin remain unclear.

In the beginning, the gods found the world, floating alone in the great emptiness. But when they descended from the heavens, they found that it was black and lifeless, so the gods held a great council atop the highest mountain. After almost a century of deliberation, they decided Je'ok, their greatest smith, would create life on that new world. So, shut in his forge, he made life on the Earth. First he made the small things, insects, birds, mice. Then he moved to greater creatures, animals, horses, and eventually humans. But once all that was done, and the world was populated as the council of the gods intended, Je'ok, unbidden by the council of the gods, secretly crafted a new creature. Deep in his hidden forge, he made the first Dragon out of gold and lava. Its name was Raan. When the other gods found him, they were at first incensed with anger, for they had planned to be the only things with intelligence on the planet. But after a short time, they began to appreciate the beauty of Raan. He had two large wings, and his skin was of solid gold. His face was that of pure beauty and power. And so the gods did not kill him, but allowed him to descend to the Earth. For a long while he ruled the other inhabitants of the world, and all was peaceful. But eventually, after many a century, he grew corrupt with his power, and became evil. He was tyrannical, toying with the lives of his subjects, killing

at will. He showed mercy to none. And so it came to pass that the gods, with much sadness and remorse, smote a great crack in the surface of the earth and cast him down through it into the fires of Hell. They tasked Je'ok to forge a new Dragon, and after twelve days and twelve nights, the great smith brought forth his new creation. This one's skin was of blood, and its eyes were of iron. He was more lithe and swift, if smaller, than Raan, and his name was Jelosa. His temperament was of fire, and he never became ruler of creation as Raan had. The other animals and beasts were left to govern their own affairs by the gods, and for a long while the world was peaceful and happy. But deep in the fires of Hell, Raan had not died. Instead he had festered among the rocks in the care of horrible dæmons, his anger and wrath consuming him until he was a creature of pure hate and evil. After nine centuries, he deemed that his time was right. Gathering an army of dæmons and beasts, he created a great fissure in the crust of the earth. His forces were massed for an invasion of the free peoples of the earth that the gods had created. The board was set. War was coming.

But at the same time, on the surface, Jelosa had created a great kingdom, with many halls and cities. His subjects were of many races, humans, animals, eagles. This glorious realm was peaceful, although Jelosa would often go outside of the borders hunting wild dæmons. And so it came to pass that the fissure of Raan was created under the capitol of the great realm when Jelosa was away. The spies of Hell emerged, small dæmons with large eyes and long snouts, and seeing that the King was gone away into the hills, signaled to their lord. And so it was that the host of Raan issued forth. Dæmons, beasts, and far worse unnameable creatures flooded the city, and slew its residents, and burned the great hall to the ground with flame and magma. Only once the city was obliterated, and all the people's bones

charred and blackened, did Raan come forth. And lo! he was grown to a size so great that when he walked the earth trembled. Four legs he had, instead of the two of his forging, and four wings, and the underside of his tail was as sharp as the swords of the gods of old. He gripped a great spear, and his skin was of lead and brimstone, so all who looked upon him were touched by his malice, and withered with sickness. He breathed forth great rivers of lava, and when it cooled even the great stone bridge of the city, built by the gods long ago, collapsed and was buried. And when the host of Hell left, and the lava cooled, and the fires died, all that was left of the great city was a vast plain of hard stone, where none dared go ever after, and it was called Raanaköeq, the desolation of Raan.

“See what I have become!” shouted Raan to the heavens. “See what I have done to your city, O *king* Jelosa! I am supreme! Even the gods cannot stop me!”

And when the gods heard him, they turned their all-seeing gaze, and when they saw what Raan, their firstborn, had become, they trembled with fear, and hid themselves, shedding their earthly forms and cowering as pure thought. And so it came to pass that when Jelosa returned to his city from his hunting, he saw the Raanaköeq, and roared with fury and anguish, and went into a rage, roaming the countryside, killing all, whither they be friend or foe. And the gods in their hidden halls far off realized that neither they nor Jelosa could match the might of Raan. And so they made a second Dragon. This one had eyes of blood, but skin of the hardest steel, and her temperament was more wise and controlled than Jelosa's, and she was called Jalana. And it happened that she found Jelosa in the forest of Mir-ela, and they fought.

“I am the first Dragon!” said Jelosa.

“Nay,” replied Jalana. “That honor goes to Raan, the Enemy.”

“I care not,” shouted Jelosa. “It is my birthright to rule alone!”

“It is the birthright of none to rule,” said Jalana.

“How dare thou challenge my claim?” roared Jelosa.

“To what?” asked Jalana. “Your kingdom is ruined. The Enemy’s troops roam freely across the land. Will you not act?”

“I do act,” said Jelosa, his voice low and filled with fury.

“Thou art no king,” said Jalana. “You are rash, and foolish. You allowed your city to be razed to the ground while you were out hunting wild dæmons. I should rule.”

And so it came to pass.

Their battle led them to the hall of Ga’hadar, and there they fought to the death, each mortally wounding the other. They collapsed upon each other, their molten blood spilling onto the dark marble ground. But the gods, knowing that they were the only hope to stop Raan, resurrected them, and they saw each other in a new light, as allies. But it was then, at the moment after their rebirth, Raan marched on Ga’hadar. His army was eight thousand strong, and the dæmons and creatures of death breached the defenses of the fortress with little effort. They poured into the great hall and surrounded the two Dragons. Jelosa and Jalana knew that it was here that the fate of the world would be decided. And there they fought, the two Dragons against eight thousand beasts and dæmons. They fought for thirty days and thirty nights, and eventually the great hall and all the surrounding city lay in ruin, and all the host of Raan was dead. But still stood firm Jelosa and Jalana, and across a great cavern in the earth which the blade on his tail had cleaved stood Raan.

“Thou fools,” he sneered. “You think you can defeat me. You cannot. For I am the firstborn of the Gods, and have ruled creation for longer than you have been alive. You are mere insects in comparison. Surrender, and I will spare you needless torment.”

“We will never surrender,” shouted Jelosa.

“We have slain your host,” Jalana said in a softer tone. “You have lost.”

“I live still,” said Raan.

He attempted to cause their will to break with his malice, as he had done to all others who had opposed him, but they stood strong, not looking into his eyes, and as one they leaped across the yawning cavern and fought him. Of that battle little is remembered, for the glory and terror of it was so great that it caused all who looked upon it, even the gods, to turn away in fear. All that is known is that it was long, and hard, and eventually together, Jelosa and Jalana slew Raan, the enemy. They cast him down on the mountainside, and his corpse bounced thrice off the black rock before he landed far below. And behold! A new light shone through the darkened clouds. It brought hope to all it touched, and in a crystal-clear voice, Jalana shouted to the heavens,

See now, O peoples of the Earth!

Raan the enemy is dead!

Be joyous, for peace is come!

The tyranny of Raan is over!

Come back to your cities!

Come back to your homes!

The light of a new era shines!

An era of life!

An era of glory!

And the peoples of the earth heard, and were glad. They came out of their hiding places in the caves and the mountains and returned to their old homes, if they remained standing. They began to rebuild, and all traces of the tyranny of old were obliterated.

With Raan's passing, his skin of lead and brimstone cracked and fell off, and his original hide of gold shone through. And with that gold and the stone of the Raanaköeq, Jelosa and Jalana built a new city, more beautiful and fair than the old one. And so Dragons ruled the world, and the gods came back out of their hiding to claim what was their own. But when they came to the city of Jalana and Jelosa, they were driven off, for Jelosa and Jalana had now grown more powerful than they.

“Go back to the heavens,” said Jelosa, “You are no longer welcome here!”

“We are the Gods,” said Ui’kol, the chieftain of the great spirits. “We created life on this planet.”

“We care not,” said Jalana. “We are now the rulers. Go back to the void from whence you came.”

And the gods obeyed.

They left their halls and palaces and retreated beyond the world. But just before their flight, they tasked Je’ok the smith to bring forth many more Dragons, so that Jelosa and Jalana would not remain unchallenged.

And when Jalana and Jelosa finally died, after many a century, they passed on their kingdoms to their sons and daughters. Their dynasty lasted ten millennia, and when it finally failed, a new one sprung up. Dragons ruled the world for longer than the gods had ever intended it to exist.

This tale ends here, but the story of Dragons is far from over.