

THE QUEST OF THE RAINBOW DRAGONS: A UU Hero's Story

PART VII - Installment 28: Rainbow Principle **Violet**

"The color violet reminds us to value the relationship we have with the earth and all living things "

We affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Our story thus far ...

Jared and Delia have successfully befriended seven dragons: Krasnova, the Red Dragon of love and compassion, Yantarov, the Amber Dragon of justice, Zheltizna, the Yellow Dragon of learning, Zelyonov, the Green Dragon of growth, Golubnaya, the Blue Dragon of conscience, Lazyurov, the Indigo Dragon of peace, and Bagranka, the Violet Dragon who embodied the wild and precious earth. Today is the day when they will call on the dragons to fly! However, the prophecy they have been following is very clear on this point: the dragons won't fly without the Rainbow Dragon to lead them, and for the Rainbow Dragon to come, Jared will have to call on it by name.

Our story continues ...

In the morning, after a quick breakfast, Jared and Delia gathered up the tokens they'd received from some of the dragons and headed up the hill to call them for the great flight, the fulfillment of their long and difficult quest. As they walked, Delia asked Jared, "So, Jared, do you know the name of the Rainbow Dragon, yet?"

"Nope," said Jared. "No clue."

"You're kidding, right?" said Delia, shocked. "Surely, we couldn't have come this far only to fail because we don't know the right name!"

"Delia," said Jared, "I don't think we're going to fail. So far, every time I've needed an answer, it's come to me in time. I don't think I can rush this. I'm thinking about our journey, and I'm thinking about Les's clue ..."

"Oh, yeah," said Delia. "What was that again?"

"She goes by many names, and he has no name, they take many shapes and sometimes no shape at all. All around, and inside every person, the spirit of the Rainbow Dragon dwells. Read the familiar name written in your heart, and speak it, and the Rainbow Dragon will come."

"I still think it sounds like gibberish," said Delia.

"I'm not going to worry about it," answered Jared, determinedly. "I'm going to call the dragons, and when they're here, I'm sure the right answer will come to me."

They arrived at the top of the hill just as the sun reached the top of the sky. Taking off their backpacks, Jared and Delia took a deep drink of water. Then Jared said to Delia, "Okay, then. It's time. Wish me luck!"

"Luck, Jared, oh, I'm wishing as hard as I can!"

Proudly, Jared began to call their names..."Krasnova, Red Dragon of love, from you I learned that each person is important, that everyone deserves respect and compassion, no matter how different they might seem! I lift up your token, this ruby heart, and call you to me!"

It took but a few moments for Krasnova to arrive, immense and beautiful, to hover above their heads. "Well done, children! I knew you could do it!" she said.

"Yantarov, Amber Dragon of justice, from you I learned that justice demands we be kind in *all* we do - that we must offer fair and kind treatment to everyone, friends and enemies alike. I lift up your token, this amber medallion, and call you to me!"

Yantarov, much smaller than his older sister, arrived almost immediately. "I have been waiting for this moment for many, many years," he said.

"Zheltizna, Yellow Dragon of Atlantis, from you I learned that learning is an essential part of life, and that we have to be free to learn from each other and the world. I brought you the gift without price, your friend and assistant librarian, Polly, and you gave me your token - this crystal prism representing our many perspectives. And now, I call you to me!"

Zheltizna, who appeared most often as a librarian, was magnificent in her dragon form, with markings around her eyes vaguely reminiscent of her glasses. "Yes, yes," she said. "I hope this won't take too long. We're still in the middle of cataloguing."

Jared almost laughed, but he knew he had a job to do. "Zelyonov, Green Dragon of growth and courage, I restored your sight with iridescent lichen. In return, you taught me how important it is to keep growing our whole life long, and you gave me this emerald token as a reminder. I call you to me now for this new adventure!"

Jared needn't have worried. Zelyonov was laughing out loud as he swooped near. "Oh, kids, it's been such an amazing time for me! Thank you for getting me out of that lava lake and into the world again! It's just all so beautiful and alive!"

"You're welcome!" said Delia, who had become especially fond of Zelyonov.

"Golubnaya, Blue Dragon of conscience," continued Jared, "Freed from the prison of your own utopia, you are able once again to be in the world, imperfect though it is. You taught me to hold high standards, but not to expect perfection. I lift the teardrop shaped sapphire you gave me as your token, and I call you to me to fly once again with your brothers and sisters."

Jared was surprised at how beautiful Golubnaya looked. She had been so prim and proper before; now, she just seemed graceful and caring. "It is good to see you, children," she said with a dragonish smile.

"Lazyurov, Indigo Dragon of peace, you taught me how a simple misunderstanding can cause unbelievable suffering, and how sometimes all it takes to turn the tide of violence is a little kindness and empathy. I learned from you how important peace is for our world.

I lift your token, as well - the carved lapis dove - as I call on you now!"

Lazyurov did not speak as he arrived, but merely nodded his head.

"Bagranka," called Jared, more gently than he had called the others. "You shared your heart with me, and showed me how precious our earth is. I promise to always love the wildness and the beauty I see in nature, and I will always remember the beauty and wildness I see in you. Bagranka, will you come to me now?"

The Violet Dragon swooped into the midst of her brothers and sisters, and all seven of them started bumping into each other, and screeching and squawking and roaring in their own native tongue. It was noisy, and chaotic...although it was also lovely the way their different colors harmonized and danced in the sky.

"Okay," said Delia, "I think I can see why they need someone to lead them. Do you know the name yet, Jared?"

"I wonder ..." said Jared thoughtfully. Closing his eyes, he listened in his heart.

"She goes by many names, and he has no name, they take many shapes and sometimes no shape at all. All around, and inside every person, the spirit of the Rainbow Dragon dwells. Read the familiar name written in your heart, and speak it, and the Rainbow Dragon will come."

Unbidden, the image of the great turtle came to his mind. They had ridden on the turtle's back to Atlantis, but it was a strange silent creature. The only thing that had seemed familiar was its luminous eyes. Then he remembered the dragon they had glimpsed briefly in the midst of their leap of faith. It hadn't spoken, either, but it had seemed, somehow familiar.

Then, he suddenly was thinking about Les, and the way his body had changed shape to carry the little boy they had found in the forest, and the way his eyes were luminous, too. Could it be? Could the name for the Rainbow Dragon be the name of their funny, furry, fishy smelling little guide?

He decided to give it a try. "Les! Les! I need your help! I've got these crazy dragons flying around and I need you to show them the way!"

Suddenly, the music, the music that he had heard for the first time when he touched the Pearl of Wisdom, began ringing through the air, only richer, and wilder, and even more beautiful. A new dragon was approaching in the distance, a dragon who contained all of the colors, and whose eyes were luminous and filled with love. The Rainbow Dragon landed, and the other dragons landed in a circle around her.

"Mother!" said Krasnova. "It is so good to see you again!"

One by one, the colorful dragons received nuzzles and fond head bumps. Then the Rainbow Dragon turned to Jared and Delia.

"Um, Les?" asked Jared tentatively.

The Rainbow Dragon laughed. "Les - and so much more. Oh, Jared, I am so proud of you," she said. "You succeeded in every task, solved every riddle, and showed so much courage and faith! Truly, there are two names you could have called me. Les - because I am and will always be your guide - or one other. Can you guess what it would be?"

Understanding flowed through Jared like a rainstorm. "My own," he said.

"That's right," said the Rainbow Dragon. Kneeling down, she allowed Jared and Delia to climb onto her surprisingly soft and comfortable back, which came complete with safety straps.

Once they were settled, she called to the dragons, "Are you ready to fly?"

With bugles and trumpets of triumph, they launched themselves into the air, the magnificent Rainbow Dragon in the lead. Together, they flew over every inch of the land, raining their rainbow values on all of the people they could find. In some places, they had to call people out, and the Rainbow Dragon proved up to the task, singing her beautiful song and awakening in people's hearts the longing for peace and prosperity, giving them the courage to come outside and witness the glorious dragons flying overhead.

Everyone who saw the dragons felt the rain of those values settle into their hearts and take up permanent residence. Compassion, justice, learning, growth, conscience, peace, and a love for the whole amazing world took root and began to blossom. Some people were too afraid to come out, or, sticking their heads out, saw the dragons and decided to hide under the bed instead. Their hearts stayed dark and lonely, at least for the time being.

Eventually, the dragons had given their gifts to everyone they could reach. They circled home to the castle of Lord Sigismund, where every single person greeted them with cries of great joy.

Delia and Jared slid off the back of the Rainbow Dragon and accepted the hugs and congratulations of their friends. Then the Rainbow Dragon motioned for silence and said these words:

"My friends, we Rainbow Dragons have done as much as we can, and the time has come for us to leave this world and head away together for our next journey. But know this: every one of you who has these values in your heart also has the ability to pass them on, to your children and to everyone you meet. It is your job, now, to keep our rainbow principles alive and thriving and spreading in this world."

"How will we keep them alive without you all to show us the way?" asked Delia, anguished at the thought of these beautiful dragons leaving her forever.

"You have everything you need, now, *in you*. You have the strength, the courage, and the faith you need to do this work. That's the whole point! We gave them to you because we can't carry them alone anymore. It's your turn now."

"We can do it," said Jared. "We will do it, I promise."

With a loving smile, the Rainbow Dragon said, "I know you will. Goodbye, my dear ones!" Then she launched herself into the air, and her children followed her, flying away into the distance.

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Jared grew up to be a teacher, and he traveled from town to town sharing all he learned on his Dragon Quest, and all he had learned in his life after he returned. He never married or had children of his own.

Delia became a famous artist. She fell in love with a musician named Laura, and they each had several children and lived together in a happy and noisy household that Jared loved to visit.

After the flight of the Rainbow Dragons, Lord Sigismund was able to make peace with all of his neighbors, and the land did, in fact, prosper. The countries were cooperating now, instead of fighting all the time, and so people and money and seeds and things never went to waste, but went for helping more people have the food and shelter they needed.

Lady Marita, the beautiful sorceress, married Lord Sigismund, and helped remind him to be wise and patient. But with the departure of the dragons, the magic had gone out of the sorcerers and sorceresses. They lived out their lives as regular people. Lady Marita, at least, was very happy with hers.

The rainbow values that were in the hearts of the people of that time have been passed down from generation to generation. They live, now, in your hearts. We are the ones who have the Rainbow Dragons' magic.

So guess whose job it is to share that magic with the people in the world who are still to scared to come out from under their beds? *Ours*. It's important work, sharing our values of compassion, justice, learning, growth, conscience, peace, and love for the earth. But it's fun work as well, and we'll keep doing it, all together, now and always.

So may it be.

The end