

To New Heights:

The ear-torturing siren's drowned out the panicking screams on the elevated platform. Kobold's of varying shapes and sizes frantically dashed across the raised laboratory floor to the nearest exit. As for the lead scientist, his regret drove him to remain at his post. His eyes fixated on the building-high test tube, and the creature housed in its container.

Inside the chemical liquid, a dragon smothered in fur was dormant. A fluffy creature covered in cerulean fur from head to toe, whilst its maw and wrists were a shade of purple. As for that expansive tail, wrapping around the creature's monolithic form, adorned stripes of purple, white and blue. On the dragon's cranium, an expanse of snow-white locks between his ears.

Ruffle was the name. A word that the scientists around would never forget.

“S-SIR, SIR! THE CON-TAINMENT-” the Kobold projected into his headset, trying to drown out the intensifying klaxoon. Although his hazmat bodysuit concealed his visage, that trembling tone gave it away.

“S-SIR, ARE YOU M-MAD?! WE CAN'T, WE CAN'T-” his voice continued to succumb to those twitching nerves, whilst he reached for the controls before a crackle and a splash came from above.

With a prolonged gulp, he looked back to the building-high test tube. The scientists' innards froze. Blood ran cold as he stared at a single fissure on the tube's left-side, giving way for the chemical liquid to spurt out. Landing down with a splash to flood the floor.

“I GOTTA SHUT IT DOWN-OH GOD NO!” The lead scientists blurted out as he stared at the widening cracks, until it shattered.

Underneath the platform, the floor flooded with the container's liquid, but that did not catch their attention. Instead, a deep-throated mumble booming from above triggered the kobold to look skyward. His eyes hesitantly staring to see Ruffle's shifting facial features, and then it spoke.

“**Whaaaa-**” the dragon muttered, sliding a padded sole across the container's base to land on the flooded flooring with a boom and a splash.

Those fluffy hands extended, wrapping around the exposed edges, and hoisted Ruffle out to step forward with another thump and a splash. Ruffle's lips parted to make way for the dragon's tongue

that dragged across his upper lip. Then, those eyelids parted to reveal the creature's cyan eyes that met the last standing kobold.

“WHAAATS GOING ON-” Ruffle boomed, rumbling the platform and the kobold below.

The dragon paused as he noticed the miniscule citizens beneath his waist, and raised a palm to meet his eyes. **“It-it worked! It worked! YIPEEEEEE!!!”** he blurted out, sending another tremor to rock the lab.

In excitement, the dragon's expansive tail swished behind him and struck the left side wall. The kobold, expecting cracks from the impact, was instead caught off guard as Ruffles' tail sliced through the wall. Like a knife through butter, the titans fluffy tail carved open the laboratory to let the morning sun shine through.

“Whoops, sorry lil fella. Guess I don't know my own strength, huh?” He cooed down with a tender smile, leaning forward to meet the frozen kobold with a smile from cheek to cheek.

“Since there's already an opening, I'm just gonna sneak on through,” the dragon giggled.

“Say! You're a scientist right, what'd ya say we ex-peri-ment?” Ruffles' smile turned to a playful smirk, and turned to the exposed wall and the sight of the neighbouring forest.

“You wanna join? After all, I got a spot on my snoot near my horn,” the dragon insisted, blowing his warm breath down to the motionless kobold.

Ruffle raised a brow, and leaned back to show his new-found towering height. Placing both hands to firmly hold his waist, the dragon cast a beaming smile to the little scientists before walking through the exposed wall. Cables and panels gave way as the dragon's form pushed through, and landed his foot paws on the ground with a set of booms.

The kobold watched as Ruffle's tail slid through the wreckage, and disappeared.

The titanic dragon stood tall in the open, whilst those cyan iris took in the picturesque view of the nearby forest. Fields of oak wood trees that would tower over buildings, struggled to greet his knees. A crystal-clear river carved through the lush vegetation and through the snow-peak mountains in the distance.

“What a beautiful view, but let’s improve it shall we?”

With toodles and a thank you to the laboratory behind, Ruffle divorced his paw from the ground and swung it forward with a whoosh. Thrusting that might footpaw forward, it crashed down on the ground with a thump. A light chuckle rumbled from Ruffle’s maw as he felt the ground yield to his incalculable mass. The top soil erupted into the air, whilst the terrain moulded to perfectly match his pads.

“Alright woodland, I think it’s time to have some fun.” Ruffle insisted, shifting the other foot forward and made pace to the wilderness. As his footpaw divorced from the ground, it left behind a crater with a series of spherical dips that perfectly matched his pads.

The dragon’s fluffy thighs bulged, and fired forward to propel Ruffle across the landscape quake after quake. His soles made work in terraforming the unspoiled greenery into a trail of misplaced paw craters. Just as the giant approached the first field of Oak trees, he giggled down to them and lunged a leg to sail over them. Extending that pillar-like appendage, it landed in a small opening to leave at least fifteen oak wood trees between his legs.

“Bye-bye,” he cooed down, and dragged that colossal footpaw back with a series of crunches.

Carving through the landscape, entire trees were steam-rolled and compressed beneath Ruffles’ paw. What was once towering vegetation effortlessly disappeared with a crunch, leaving behind a deep escarpment. Just as he lifted it up to inspect the debris on his pad, an idea came to mind as he noticed the tree’s dart-like shape.

Without hesitation, Ruffle crouched down to overshadow the land, and extended two digits to uproot tree after tree. Plucking them up like daffodils, the dragon held logs big enough to construct a cabin in his palm. Taking a single tree, the dragon slid it between two fingers to carve away the branches, stripping it bare.

“Hmmm, perfect!” Ruffle smirked down at the tree-dart, and swept a footpaw bark to push through the forest to stand in a textbook pitcher’s pose.

Tree in hand, one eye closed, Ruffle fixated on the snow-peak mountains in the distance. Then, he launched the tree forward with a whoosh. The naked oak-wood tree broke the sound barrier, propelling through the air to shatter against the rocky mountains.

“Ummm, bullseye? Oh well,” he giggled with a shrug of his shoulders, until his ears picked up on the flow of water nearby.

An expansive grin decorated Ruffles' visage, whilst he tilted a palm to pour down the plucked trees to greet the ground. Letting them rain down to smash into the surviving vegetation, the dragon walked briskly through the forest. His enlarged thighs easily tilted trees aside with a crack, whilst his fluffy tail wagged with a whoosh to sweep away the surviving debris. The dragon's leather pads continued to compress the terrain beneath him, and his ears persisted to hone in on the trickling sounds of water.

Catching a glimpse of the crystalline stream, Ruffle paused a few metres away and lunged forward. Leaning closer to carelessly tip trees over underneath his belly, the dragon extended two digits to land in the ice-cold water.

“Hmmm, t-that feels goooooood!!!” Ruffle sighed with a lick of his lips, and took a step back with a thud. The trees behind his paws vanished underneath his steps, whilst those two fingers carved through the soil that soon filled with water.

“Perfect,” the dragon whispered proudly, and persisted to walk backwards as his digits carved through the forest. The newly formed stream followed Ruffle, triggering a booming chuckle from his chest.

His ears honed in on the satisfying crunches of dry-wood giving way underneath his weight, whilst those cyan eyes were fixated on his fingers. The sight of watching himself terraform the landscape fueled his ever-growing grin. That was until a metallic crumple struck his ears.

Ruffle stopped. Those eyelids parted and fingers stopped. Tilting a head down to peak underneath his arched form, the dragon's eyes noticed a tiny wooden cabin with steam flowing out of the chimney. Except, Ruffle was focused on his left footpaw as he peeled it off to reveal a flattened red sudan on his pad.

“Oh no! Oh no, no, no! Please don't be someone inside-” the dragon's joyful visage faded, replaced with concern as he peeled the pancaked metal from his paw to meet his eyes.

Empty.

“Phew-” Ruffle whispered in relief, until he looked behind the elevated vehicle to see a crimson furred fox drop his keys.

Before Ruffle could apologise, the tiny vulpine turned and dashed to shelter inside the cottage. With a slam of the wood, the fox disappeared inside. A realisation struck the dragon as he stared at the embodiment of fragility.

A little creature.

He was a titan living amongst beings that would struggle to compete against his pinky, let alone his whole body. Adjusting himself cautiously to face the cabin, the dragon leaned down.

“Oh no lil one, it’s alright. Don’t be scared. No one will harm you, I pwomise.” Ruffle cooed down tenderly, and shifted a palm to wrap around the cottage roof.

Holding the roof for support, the dragon crouched to peek a single eye inside the window, and glanced at the fox across the room. The dragon’s fingers slipped beneath the gutter, and peeled open the roof like a dollhouse to peak inside. Ruffles maw snuck through the gap to meet the fox huddling in the corner.

“Hey there lil one, you doing alright?” The dragon wooed down to the ankle-high fox below, whilst he reached a hand down to pluck him up as he stood.

“Wait-wait! Please, please don’t eat me-!”

“Oh my, no. No, I’d never. What’s your name, lil one?” He asked with a dexterity to his voice, standing back to his towering height with the fox in hand.

“My name’s Liam, it is Liam” the fox replied as he held onto Ruffles pinky like a pillow, until he was raised to hover over the dragon’s fluffy snout.

“Well Liam, I’m Ruffle. Say, sorry about your car. Did you, ummm, need it now?” The dragon queried, focusing those eyes on the fox’s breathing and facial features with compassion.

“I-I did, but it’s alright. I-I can walk-”

“Walk where?” Ruffle interrupted, unintentionally swishing that tail side-to-side to brush through the half-splintered trees behind.

“T-Town-WAIT!!!” the fox’s whisper turned to a yelp as Ruffle slid the tiny vulpine onto his snout, and near his horn.

Liam was quick to wrap his crimson furred hands around the dragon's horn, bracing himself before Ruffle turned on his heel.

“Then, let me carry you there lil guy. It is the least I can do” Ruffle insisted with a giggle that lightly rumbled beneath Liams posterior.

Putting down the cottage roof, Ruffle carefully patted the fox's home and soon set off. Unlike before, the dragons brisk walk was conducted with a prolonged slowness and grace. The titans' soles softly shifted forward, and manoeuvred through the wilderness with restraint.

“Oh g-gosh-” Liam muttered, squeezing tighter onto Ruffle's maw horn as he stared at the dazzling view. The newly formed river, paw craters, and carved open soil filled the fox's eyeline.

“You like it? My lil handiwork,” the dragon asked politely, speaking delicately to not rock the fox on his nose.

“Y-Yeah, no one was hurt right-?” The fox said.

“No one, not a soul. I paw-mise” the dragon replied with a raise of his padded palm, and tilted it down to brush down the fox's back. **“Now, let's get'cha to town, alright?”**

“Alright,” Liam agreed with a smile, and kept his grip on Ruffles horn,