

From Our Readers...

My name is Andrew McClure of Nespelem, Washingtonandcurrentvictimofthedevastatingwild fires that ripped across our normally evergreen state. My family and fellow neighbors were lucky for only losing timber ground, range land and a few live-stock while our houses and backyards remained safe; while others lost more than man can imag-ine. Upon witnessing the devastation it occurred to me to put to poetry words encompassing the annihilation in honor and remembrance of all that has been lost. The title of my poem is “Night of Dragons.” I offer this to those who lost in last sum-mer’s inferno.

Night of Dragons

(Come one, come all and lend me your ear.
I have a great tale for you to hear.
Fire and death,
And dragons breath
A story of carnage, courage and earth shattering fear.)

Was a night in August when the dragons came,
And set our little world to flame.
We tried to fight,
Their fiery might
But our lives and land they would maim.

Shrouded by a curtain of swirling smoke,
Hidden from sight in an desolate ash flaked cloak,

A legion of hells spawn descended upon us;
Sent by the devil to turn everything to dust.

Horns that glowed colors of yellow and red,
Sat as fiery crowns upon their heads.

They had fearsome teeth and fire lit breath.
Agents of Satan and bringers of death.

They devoured the mountain with furious haste.
Ravaging the valley and laying it to waste.

With an insatiable appetite for annihilation,
Absorbing life with efficient inhalation.

One particular beast set it’s sights to the south.
With the breath of ten thousand lions,
a gust of arid wind shot from it’s mouth.

I never thought from my home I could peer into
Satan’s domain, But here crept that dragon and an 80
foot wall of flame.

What we did to prepare seemed to be entirely futile,
In the proceeding wake of the fire breathing reptile.

The burning glow of its ember lit eyes rose like dawn.
As if the suns own power it had drawn.
Twas not from the east,

From North crawled this beast.
And if it did not deviate course all would soon be gone

Sliding it’s burning belly across the dry blistered
ground Reveling in the glorious feast he had just
found.
Crunching and crackling,
Snapping and cackling,
Causing a ruckus and an intimidating sound.

Ears swelled with the legends of ancient lore:
A thunderous, menacing monsters roar.
To say the least,
The forest it would feast,
And everything from here to there would be ashes
forever more.

All could feel the tide of fire rattling in their chest.
The slow rumble put even the strongest mettle to test.

That what stayed behind and could not flee,
Was pronounced dead by a fiery decree.

Even if the strongest warrior would have stayed
and fought Their efforts would have been all for not.

There was no stopping the monster
as soon as it took a foot.
What was once beautiful soon turned to ash and soot.

A fury of billowing, cascading smoke filled the air
causing all to choke.

The ashes of what we once all knew,
All that would be left if we were to wait it through.

At that moment I spared one last glance,
Hoping it would all survive by some small chance.

A subtle hope in a time of dread.
Praying it all would not soon be dead.

Just as I thought we were all doomed,
And over the horizon the dragon loomed,
God commanded “Burn no more!”
And silenced their raging roar.

By mercies grace they slithered away after eating their
fill; Munching to the borders upon our hill.

Ripping the earth, appearing artillery shelled.
Besieged our walls, but the fortress held.

Satisfied by building a throne made of ash and char,
A sea of black rolling waves stretching to the
distance far,

They turned ravenous gaze to east and west;
Looking for new ground to fire infest.
Though they tried to take away all they could,
Burning through our homey woods,

The one thing they could not even try to kill
A man wielding a soul of iron with determined skill.
For all their rage,
And the war they wage,
They could not destroy the stubbornness of a free
man’s will.

For days on end their foul thick breath fill the air;
Choking out all hope leaving only despair.

Weeks on end for rain we prayed.
Yet its coming was grievously delayed.

There are those who lost more than a balcony view;
From land, livestock and houses too.

Rest were spared by mere God’s grace.
Tears of angels spilled down my face.
The time had come,
Their pillaging done,
Those demon dragons the thunder gave chase.

Not much remains since the forest faded black from
green. Tall dark needles that stand silent witness to the
horrors once seen.

The trees still bear signs where their bark was seared,
And swaths of forest that just plain disappeared.

Clawed tracks stabbed into the blackened earth;
Marking the trail of death from the beasts berth.

The chipping skin of those left standing look that of
scales. Of the fire breathing dragon for whom I tell this
tale.

Oh will I ever, to whomever, a story I have to tell!
Of that late summer night when we were besieged by
the minions of hell.

Of dreams and memories is what they chose to devour.
A time of nightmares for this ungodly hour.

It’s different now that I never took a deep hard look, To
everything that has come to be singed and cooked.

The landscape forever forged by that fire.
Molded, conformed to it’s wicked desire.

If ever there was a doubt whether dragons are real,
Come to my valley where they enjoyed their last meal.

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