

Ripple and the Scavengers

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Wings of Fire

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Somewhere on a secluded island of the sea kingdom, a sea-green dragon lay tired on the hot beach. He had his eyes closed, looking very relaxed. Another dragon, this one purple, paced over and sat down next to him. They lay there, relaxing in the sun's heat.

"What are you doing, Fathom?" the purple one asked.

"Snoozing," the green one grumbled. He put his wing over his head.

"I can fix that."

"Indigo, please no," he whined.

She dropped a ball of blue scales on his back. It tackled him and started to gnaw on his tail. He lifted his head and swung his tail around to where it was right in front of his face. A pale blue dragonet was hanging from the end of his tail.

"Hi daddy!" the dragonet said gleefully through a mouthful of Fathom's tail.

Fathom smiled at his son and set him down on the sand in front of him. He looked at Indigo, "Seriously?" She smiled at him.

He looked back at his son, "Was this your evil idea, Ripple, making me wake up?" Ripple gave a cheeky smile, obviously pleased with himself. "Alright then," Fathom said sleepily, "Go torture you brother and sister now."

The little dragonet sprinted off, kicking up sand as he ran.

"They're adorable," Indigo said leaning into Fathom's side.

"They sure are," Fathom yawned.

Ripple tackled his brother Cowrie, knocking over his sand pile. The two brothers chased each other through the shallows` and accidentally splashed their sister, Clearpool, in the face.

“Really guys!?” she yelled. “Mom, they scared away da fish.”

“Kids, play nice,” Indigo called over, “And you two, appologize to your sister.”

“Sorry!” the brothers shouted over in unison, not stopping their game of chase.

Something glinted a little ways beyond the shore. Ripple looked over No, that wasn't just the sun's reflection, this was different.

He stopped running, leaving Cowrie to sprint on down the beach. He craned his neck and looked over his shoulder at his parents. Fathom had fallen back asleep, and Indigo was looking at a new scroll she had gotten from the mudwing peddler. He skidded over and dove in the water.

He was grateful for the swimming lessons he'd gotten from his father. He shot off from the shore, sturring up sand as he shot along. Within minutes he had reached what he thought was the source of the flash. It looked like what their parents had described as a boat.

He surfaced his head and looked over top of the small, wooden structure. There two little monkey-looking things sitting inside. One had long, blond hair, and the other had short, fuzzy hair and a lot of metal that kind of looked like armour; maybe that's what had caused the flicker of light.

The one with the longer hair screamed when It saw him. It started to row long sticks attached to the boat, and it started to move. Ripple followed it as made a bee line for what his parents called a scavenger den. So these ar scavengers, Ripple realized. The scavengers stopped at a large wooden plank and began to shout upward at the miniature palace. They seemed to be pointing at him.

Fires began to appear as even more scavengers rushed all over the place. Something sharp was being moved toward one of the edges. It looked like a giant arrow inside some type of machine. Of course, e had no

Idea what that was, but once it shot out of the machine straight for his heart, he had a pretty good idea what it was for.

It moved so fast that he had no time to react. The arrow stopped in mid air right in front of his face. It made a quick 180 and destroyed the machine. Terrified squeaks shot all around from the structure.

His father, Fathom, was hovering in the air behind him. He had a mixture of fear, anger, and confusion on his face. "Ripple," he commanded, "Come with me, NOW!"

Ripple said nothing to his father, and he said nothing back. When they got back to their island, he had a million questions. "What was that machine? Do scavengers really wear armour?" and one he wanted to ask most of all, "Dad, how did you do that with that arrow."

Fathom looked at Indigo, "Ripple, gather your siblings," he ordered, "We have a lot to tell you."