

# Time of the Dragons: Part II



by John Doucette

Farthington craned his neck this way and that, frantically searching the skies for the blue dragon that had been on radar only moments before. Patrick had had a secure lock-on with a heat-seeker when the dragon vanished. Eagle Flight was scattered all over the sky; the two new pilots had let their adrenaline get the better of them. "Eagle Flight this is Eagle One. Reform."

"Scott, form on me," Farthington ordered. "We'll fly cover until Two and Four get back to us."

"Right with ya, boss."

Farthington banked left and headed north after his two stray pilots. He picked them up visually within seconds, one aircraft coming from the northwest, the other from the east.

"Eagle Two, this is Eagle One. Jenkins, you screw up like that again and I'll kill you myself. This isn't a game."

"Major, it was runnin'," Jenkins protested.

"I don't give a—Jenkins! Break right! He's right above you!"

The huge blue had reappeared above and slightly to the left of Eagle Two. The dragon was gliding and that meant only one thing; the dragon was preparing to use its magic. Patrick willed Jenkins' aircraft to turn, to get away from the dragon. But Jenkins panicked and the dragon had him. A ball of flame burst inside Jenkins' cockpit, rapidly expanding, reducing both pilot and aircraft to flaming debris.

"Bastard!"

Farthington squeezed off a burst from his 20mm cannon as he sped past the monster. He brought his aircraft around, intending to finish the dragon before it could do more damage.

The dragon was centered on Farthington's Heads-Up Display. Patrick paused, savoring the dragon's death. His thumb pressed down on the firing stud and his aircraft was struck by a lightning bolt from below.

"Shit!" Sparks danced across Patrick's instruments, filling the cockpit with smoke. His HUD blanked out and his radar soon followed. The warning lights

were lit like a Christmas tree. Weapons systems were down and he had difficulty controlling the aircraft. The F-15 continued earthward.

The sudden increase in G forces had Patrick on the verge of blacking out. Somehow, he made his arm reach for the ejection mechanism. Slowly, ever so slowly, his hand inched towards it.

The ground was approaching rapidly now. Farthington knew the situation would soon be resolved, one way or the other. He was never fully aware when the canopy blew. He felt his shoulder impact with something, felt warm blood on his face. There was pain, intense pain, and then nothing but blackness.

\*\*\*

"Patrick," a voice said. No response. "Patrick," the voice again called, more insistently this time. One part of Patrick's mind wanted to respond, the other wanted to remain in the darkness where the pain was less. "Patrick! Awake!" Finally, he could ignore the voice no longer. He climbed up from the soothing darkness into the world of light and pain. And saw a figure standing over him.

There was something familiar about the man, but Patrick couldn't quite remember what it was. "Good," the man said. "Your wits seem unaddled." The man stood to his full height. That was when the voice in the back of Patrick's mind got through. The eyes, it screamed. Look at the eyes. Patrick studied his benefactor's eyes more closely. The man's irises were golden. Come to think of it, his eyes were wrong. They weren't human.

Patrick's face must have betrayed him, for the 'man' said, "Excellent. You recognize what, if not who, I am."

"You're—" Patrick croaked out.

"A dragon."

"Then why—"

"Are you still alive?" The man's—dragon's Patrick corrected himself—eyes narrowed. "You really don't remember me, do you?" The dragon sighed. "You mortals do have short memories.

Think back, Patrick. Think back four years ago."

"You?! That was you! It wasn't a dream?!"

"No, Patrick, it wasn't a dream."

"Why have you saved me?"

"Now or then?" the dragon replied. "I saved you because I am not like those of my kind that have invaded your world."

"You mean—"

"Yes. Not all dragonkind are of one piece. And no, those of us who are not like the blues and reds and whites and blacks and greens will not fight against them. At least not in this world."

"Why?"

"Because that would undo all this war has accomplished."

"All it's accomplished? All it's accomplished!? You sound like you had a hand in all of this!"

"I did. I aided the evil dragons to come to your world. I helped the human magists to open the Gates that allowed the dragons to travel from our world to yours." The dragon pulled up a chair and sat next to Patrick. "You see, your *scientists* were about to achieve things that could threaten both our worlds. No, let me finish. Magic is real in

my world. Of late, it had been on the decline and we couldn't stop the slide. We searched for years until finally we found the cause."

"Us."

"Yes. You. We knew something had to be done, or our world would die. And so would yours if your new *technology* were misused."

"And so the war."

"And so the war. We grieved for the innocents that would die, Patrick, but there was no other alternative. Your world's capability for *science* had to be reduced. The war was the only way to do it before time ran out."

"Why are you telling me this?"

"The time has come," the dragon said, "for the war to end. The war's goals have been achieved and the excesses of the evil ones must be curbed. The

balance must be restored in *both* worlds."

"How?"

"We must cause the Gates to close."

"Won't that trap the dragons here?"

"Yes and no. Yes, some of them will still be here. No, they will not be trapped permanently. The Gates could still be re-opened."

"What do you mean, 'we'?"

"I need your help."

"You? Need my help?"

"In order for the balance to be restored, a large portion of the evil ones must be driven back through the Gates. I alone cannot do this. But you can convince your people to mount an attack designed to do what I cannot."

"I don't know..."

"You are tired. Rest. Tomorrow morning, you will decide."

Congratulations go out to Jeffery Nelson, last week's winner of the Officer Bob contest. All weekly winners qualify to win a tape or album. Prizes for the top five quotes will be given.

## LOCKERS

A limited number of lockers are available for rent to non-resident students. The lockers are located in the entrance lobby to the Main Cafeteria in the Steele Building. The cost for locker rental is \$5.00/semester plus a \$5.00 key deposit which is refundable at the end of the term. Keys

MEN'S BASKETBALL			
Mon., Oct. 1	6:00 pm 7:00 pm 8:00 pm	AVC #1 HOPSTERS BUSINESS EXHIBITION	vs. BLANCHARD
Mon., Oct. 2	6:00 pm	BUSINESS	vs. WOLVERINES
Mon., Oct. 3	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	BLANCHARD HOPSTERS	vs. HOPSTERS vs. AVC #1
Mon., Oct. 4	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	AVC #1 HOPSTERS	vs. HOPSTERS vs. WOLVERINES
Mon., Oct. 5	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	BLANCHARD WOLVERINES	vs. BUSINESS vs. AVC #1
Mon., Oct. 6	12:00 noon 1:00 pm	HOPSTERS WOLVERINES	vs. BUSINESS vs. BLANCHARD
Mon., Nov. 13	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	AVC #1 HOPSTERS	vs. BLANCHARD vs. WOLVERINES
Mon., Nov. 19	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	BUSINESS AVC #1	vs. WOLVERINES vs. HOPSTERS
Mon., Nov. 20	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	BLANCHARD BUSINESS	vs. HOPSTERS vs. AVC #1
Mon., Nov. 26	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	WOLVERINES BLANCHARD	vs. AVC #1 vs. BUSINESS
Mon., Nov. 27	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	HOPSTERS WOLVERINES	vs. BUSINESS vs. BLANCHARD
Mon., Dec. 1	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	BLANCHARD WOLVERINES	vs. AVC #1 vs. HOPSTERS
Mon., Dec. 2	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	WOLVERINES HOPSTERS	vs. BUSINESS vs. AVC #1
Mon., Dec. 9	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	HOPSTERS AVC #1	vs. BLANCHARD vs. BUSINESS
Mon., Dec. 14	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	AVC #1 BUSINESS	vs. WOLVERINES vs. BLANCHARD
Mon., Dec. 15	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	BUSINESS BLANCHARD	vs. HOPSTERS vs. WOLVERINES
Mon., Dec. 17	6:00 pm	BLANCHARD	vs. HOPSTERS

