

# *Nambroth*

by

Vixxy Fox

Just a note, my good cousin; to assure you I am still with this world and have not yet become the anchor attached to the food chain.

Presently I reside with a Gryphon.

There, unlike 'the me' you so well know; I told the whole story in one small sentence.

No, this is not one of my lame pranks. If you were here you would have heard me sigh well enough. It's my own fault; I saw her first and could easily have escaped. I'm afraid I sprung the trap on my own neck; but the outcome could have been worse. Foxes, I've come to find out, are high up on the list of things a Gryphon likes most to eat. In retrospect that's fair I suppose. I've eaten my share of bird's eggs and never questioned the parenting. The thought of some great huge double yokers now have me smacking my lips. Now there's a fine treat by any Fox's standards and always an eye to the sky watching for the parents... snatch them too if able.

Oh my; I seem to have gotten a bit off the subject haven't I? How I ramble; all the way from possibly being eaten to eating. I will chuckle here and observe with humor; that truly is a Fox's life cut to the bare bones. And there we are again, aren't we... bare bones? And how did the bones become bare if not gnawed upon? If I were relating this event to you in person, dear cousin, and not writing it in a letter, you would note my toothy smile.

Yes, yes, I can hear your sigh... so back to the story.

I saw, I ran, I hid. I listened; expecting at any moment to hear the almost silent swish of her feathers above my head. I still shiver at the thought of her talons piercing my wonderful pelt; but that did not happen. I rejoiced, albeit as silently as her feathers are in flight. You remember when I yipped that one time and we had the hounds on our heels? Lesson hard learned and a piece of my tail missing as proof of the stupidity.

There... I just slapped my forehead for you. I shall not wander in thought further, but will recall the entire story.

The Gryphon, it turned out, had hatchlings. She could no more leave them than a vixen her kits... wasn't I the lucky one? Now, just thinking about being eaten and then regurgitated for the young ones shortens my life span. I returned to the very place where

she was. Yes, yes, the thoughts of eating hatchlings were in my mind... I am a Fox, dear cousin. May the forest never see it otherwise.

I hid in the deep grass downwind of her. Gryphon have a very keen sense of smell, and that little bit of information you will have to trust me on. I have learned a good deal in my time with her. Perhaps I will pass the multitude of details on the next time you feel the urge to invite me for dinner. I do remember that one time before you were married... and the goose... and oh what you did in the preparation of the feast...

Ignore that smudge on the paper, please. Yes it's a spot of drool. You are certainly too good a cook.

Well... I thought myself sufficiently hidden and took to watching the nest. Something, however, looked just a bit out of place. Mind you I am no Gryphon expert, but these hatchlings, whom I've since named Black Cut and Yorkshire for their tea like colorings, were not Gryphon at all; they were dragons.

You thought 'lizards' didn't you? I know you better than your miserly bone crunching fem fatale mate you old Fox. You think my imagination has run away with me again like the time I saw a Unicorn and all we found after was Horse poop. Now I ask you... what difference if the poop came from a Unicorn or a common Horse... it.. would.. be.. the.. same..

I just slapped myself again, thank you very much. I hope you're happy.

There I was; being as stealthy as I possibly could. I was so very curious... and no my mother was not a Cat as you have so very often insinuated. I moved about watching them; feeling safe, as all the while the Gryphon was watching them too. It was quite clear to me that she was very enamored and mother like. Originally I'd thought she'd stolen them for food. Better her than me trying to eat that pair. Their skin is like rock and they bite really hard when playing. If you ever see one, be sure to steer clear of the business end. Yes I lost some fur... unlike the tip of my tail; it will grow back.

"Hungry," she says in that sharply terse voice I've come to love.

I look up and she's staring right at me. By all rights, my fur should be totally white I was so frightened. I cursed strongly and stood up on my hind legs right then and there. I figured if it was my time, I would go heroically... all right I'm lying. I fell to my knees and begged for my life. I must surely have been good at it because the old girl smiled with her eyes. That's how they do it you see; bird beak and all of that.

"Not me," she says, and points one huge wing at the dragons. "Them. Just born they are, and hungry they be... fetch us mice."

I just looked at her. Dear cousin; my heart totally stopped. I had to beat myself on the chest just to speak again. "You're not going to eat me?" I managed to squeak.

“Do you wish me to?” she asked. I’m not sure if she was smiling then since her eyes had narrowed a bit. I learned later they do have ways of showing emotions... but if you’ve never met one of the beasts before, how are you to know?

“No... certainly not,” I assured her.

“Then fetch us mice,” she said softly, settling closer to the pair. Even in this, she made no move to help them break from their egg shells. She told me later that to do so would not teach them to survive. She is wise in her ways.

I did fetch mice then... lots of them, and never did I even eat... well... onetwothreefour... ahhhh... I ate ten, but they were small.

And so for now, I am a Dragon nanny, dear cousin.

When the little ones were finally free of their shells, Nambroth, for that is her name, instructed me to hold them securely in my arms. This I did, as I was still fearing for my life. She, in turn, hopped into the air and carefully clutched me within her talons. In the blink of an eye, we were far far above the forest. I now sit in her aerie seeing the entire world in a glance.

She feeds me sufficiently and I have no present wants other than a fat goose smothered in that luscious gravy you’re so good at preparing. Perhaps in six months or so I will be allowed a visit. For now, Nanny Fox is rather occupied. I will laugh here and tell you that Black Cut is a little too fond of me at times. When he tries to cuddle in my lap it about crushes the life out of me. Yorkshire, I found, was a female. The name still suits her well enough, and yes, she loves her nanny too.

I have need to go now... Nambroth has brought me half a Rabbit. I must prepare what’s left of it for the little ones. It took me quite a while to convince her to bring them whole foods. Like any bird, she was eating it first and then regurgitating when she got back... soup it is not.

I have pointed out the location of your den so she might drop this note. I shall be down around the time of the snows, so watch for me. If your mate wishes to squabble about this, tell her she can be dinner for my new friend easily enough. Between you and me... you were a lot more fun before she came around.

Ta for now... oh yes... if you wish to send me a note, hang a red rag in the tree next to the den, and tie the note to it. Best you stay hidden until she’s safely away... just in case.

Now here’s a thought... why not have your lovely vixen stand in the clearing and hold the note aloft for delivery... perhaps we could then eat that goose in peace, eh?

Yip and a Howl...

Tod

PS: Thinking about it; I still have no idea what Nambroth was doing with the hatchlings.