

“Say, has anyone seen my notebooks? They were here in my treasure chest a minute ago.”—Marcus Antigonus Dragon

Hold On a Minute!

Hi, Marcus A. Dragon here. Am I too late? (huff, huff). I got here as fast as I could—all the way from Deweydaire. I thought maybe you could help me. I just got word that someone named “Christie Waldman” has written a book based on my secret notebooks. Boy, am I mad at her! What I can’t understand is how she got hold of them. You didn’t give them to her, did you? No, I didn’t think so.

What, the book has already been published? You’re reading it right now! You’re kidding, right? You’re not kidding? Sigh!

You see, it’s not easy being a dragon. Most people don’t take us dragons seriously. Why, I’ve even had people say they could see right through me. Heh heh.

Say, you believe in me, don’t you? Good. Just checking.

Beep! Someone’s trying to reach me. It’s Christie! Just a second.

Christie Waldman, I am M-A-D mad at you! How did you get hold of my notebooks! ... No, I won’t listen! ... What’s that? You say I’m your favorite author? Why, thank you! Now, wait a minute! Don’t you try to flatter me! ... What’s that, Christie? You think we should tell the story together? You can’t be serious! ... Yes, I realize my options are limited You say you’ll make me a co-author and you promise to let me have the last word Hmm....

I may regret this ..., but ..., okay, Christie. Let’s tell the story together! But first, I’d like to say a few words to the readers, by way of introduction. You don’t mind, do you?

* * *

Hi, it’s me again, Marcus A. Dragon, co-author of *The Voice of the Wooden Dragon*. It’s a story near and dear to my heart. It’s about dragons and humans I once knew in Deweydaire. You’ve heard of Deweydaire, haven’t you? You haven’t? Come to think of it, why should you have? It’s a faraway land ruled by dragons—who just happen to be vegetarians. We are anthropomorphic. In other words, we behave quite a bit like people, though we look and act

like dragons. For the most part, we are civilized, though we've been known to revert to reptilian behavior, especially when stressed. Deweydaire is my home, though you will not find it on any map.

Almira Palace, in the land of Deweydaire, is a rustic stone castle built high up on a craggy cliff that overlooks a snarly sea, where waves crash upon rocks constantly. In the distance, if it's not too misty, one could just barely make out the foothills to the forbidding Deweydaire Mountains. On the border of Almira lay the neighboring kingdom of Guldavia. Unlike Guldavia, Almira was ruled by a queen (a dragon, of course). Which queen, you ask? Why, none other than that feisty old Queen Esmerelda—but you wouldn't want to hear about her, would you? You would? Hmm. Let me think about this You know, that's not a bad place to start!