



The Two-Headed Dragon of Dos Rios

By Liezl Coetzee



The city of Dos Rios was split in two by a wide, sparkling river. On one side was Solare, a city of sun-drenched colors and loud, joyful festivals. On the other was Lunara, a city of moonlit silver and quiet, whispered stories. Leo was a boy whose grandfather came from Solare and whose grandmother was from Lunara, so he loved both sides with his whole heart.



One day, Administrator Vale arrived in Dos Rios. She loved things that were neat and efficient. "Two sets of records for one city? Inefficient!" she declared, looking at her glowing tablet. "We will merge them into one master file. One city, one data set."



On her screen, Administrator Vale tapped a button labeled "MERGE." Deep in the city's data, a storm began to swirl. Solare's bright, chaotic records crashed into Lunara's neat, silver ones, and from that clash, a creature was born: a huge, two-headed dragon. One head was fiery orange and gold, the other was shimmering silver and blue.



The dragon escaped the digital world and flew over Dos Rios. A strange, shimmering fog followed in its wake. The bright yellow walls of Solare's houses began to get streaks of silver. The quiet silver bells of Lunara began to clang like loud festival gongs.



A great confusion spread through the people. The bakers of Solare, famous for their spicy sun-tamales, forgot their recipes and started making bland, pale moon-cakes. The weavers of Lunara, known for their intricate moon-thread silks, found their hands making rough, brightly colored sun-blankets instead.



The dragon's two heads were fighting. The golden Solare head roared, trying to turn everything bright and loud. The silver Lunara head hissed, trying to make everything silent and pale. Their battle made the fog thicker, and people began to forget their own names, only remembering their new, combined city ID numbers.



Leo saw his grandmother from Lunara looking sadly at her hands. She, the best storyteller in the city, could no longer remember the beginning of the story of the moon-turtle. Leo knew he had to do something. He ran to the great bridge where the dragon was now coiled, its heads locked in a furious struggle.



"Stop!" Leo shouted at the dragon. The heads paused their fight to look down at him. "You don't have to fight! You don't have to be just one thing!" He began to tell the story his Lunara grandmother had taught him, of how the quiet moon-turtle carries the dreams of the city on its back each night.



Then, Leo told the story his Solare grandfather loved, about the laughing sun-bird whose song wakes the festivals each morning. As he spoke, the golden head of the dragon tilted, listening. The fog began to thin, and the dragon's scales flickered, showing images from the stories.



"You see?" said Leo. "Solare needs Lunara's dreams to rest for the festival. And Lunara needs Solare's song to wake up!" The dragon's heads looked at each other, not with anger, but with understanding. They stopped fighting and roared together, a single, harmonious sound.



Their magic changed. Instead of mashing the cities together, the dragon wove a beautiful bridge of light between them, with threads of gold and silver dancing together but never losing their own color. Administrator Vale watched from her window, her tablet forgotten, as the people of Dos Rios began to cross, sharing their stories and their foods, celebrating being different, together.

MERGE DRAGON



The Merge Dragon became the guardian of Dos Rios. It didn't merge the cities, but it connected them, ensuring every story, from the brightest festival to the quietest whisper, had its own special place, forever part of the one beautiful city of Two Rivers.