

BRYAN DAVIS

**JAMES AND THE
GIANT SCREECH**

NOT SO FAMOUS DRAGON TALES - BOOK #8

Books by Bryan Davis

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James and the Giant Screech

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Published by Scrub Jay Journeys

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ISBN Print: 978-1-946253-53-8

Illustrations by Bryan Davis using MidJourney

Printed in the U.S.A.



CHAPTER I

Ship Shape

Just yesterday on the roof of a building, Jasper and I battled a giant Screech—a huge, octopus-like monster with long tendrils and spindly arms. Weird, right? And it can hover over the ground!

Jasper tried to roast it with his fiery breath, but the Screech sucked up the flames and grew to more than twice the size it was before. I bashed it with my skateboard, but it grabbed my board and skittered off the roof and out of sight.

Since my dad, Dr. John Jackman, made a video of the battle go viral on the Internet, lots of people called Jasper and me heroes, and our goal of getting dragons accepted in our world seemed close. But the giant Screech and other Screeches still lurked, and I knew that the fear Screeches put into people's minds could make those people decide to reject the dragons again.

That's why Jasper and I had to figure out how to find the giant Screech and somehow get rid of it. Since most people couldn't see the smaller Screeches, but everyone could see the giant one, Dad and his research friend, Dr. Higgins, scanned the Internet for reports of giant Screech sightings.

Now it was morning, and while Dad and Dr. Higgins searched, I tried out skateboards that a sports equipment company gave me because the giant Screech stole my board. Jasper watched, able to stay visible without any worry that someone would get scared by seeing him.

After testing more than twenty skateboards, I set two that I liked in front of Jasper—one with a rocket zooming through space and one with a flying dragon.

Jasper used a foreleg to point at the spaceship design and said, "Mace."

Squinting, I picked that one up. "Space?" I pointed at my mouth. "Watch how I say it. Space."

Jasper copied my mouth movements. "Space."

"Good! You said that perfectly." I nudged the dragon skateboard with my toe. "I thought you would like that one. It has a dragon on it with a cool lightning bolt on its chest."



Jasper spewed a narrow stream of fire at the board, making a black scorch mark on the dragon. He spoke slowly. "Bad dragon."

I drew my head back. "Why do you think it's a bad dragon?"

Jasper extended his wing and touched the dragon's blackened chest. "Mark."

"The lightning bolt?"

Jasper bobbed his head.

I whispered, "Wow. Are you saying that there are bad dragons, and they have a lightning bolt mark on their chest?"

Jasper bobbed his head again. "Mark bad."

I whistled. "I should tell Dad about this. Stay here for a minute." I rushed inside, hurried to Dad's office, and found him squinting at his computer screen, probably still searching for the Screech.

After I told him what happened, he nodded thoughtfully. "It shouldn't be surprising that dragons have villains among them. I wondered about that before, but I had no evidence either way. Now we do. It seems that a dragon, maybe Jasper's mother, talked to Jasper through his egg's shell and told him about bad dragons who had a lightning bolt mark."

I half-closed an eye. "Does that mean if we allow dragons to come to Earth, bad dragons will come with them?"

"It's possible, which means we might have to rethink what we're doing. We've been trying to get our fellow humans to agree to allow dragons to come here, but maybe we should pause until we know more."

"Maybe, but we have lots of human villains here. The dragons who come to Earth are risking the same danger we are."

Dad pointed at me. "Excellent thought."

I spread my arms. "So, what do we do?"

"I have a possible solution. Where is Jasper?"

I nodded toward the front yard. "Outside."

"Since the president asked for a meeting ..."
Dad rose from his chair. "I think it's time to call the dragons."

"How can we do that?"

"Come with me." He strode toward his office door while tapping on his cell phone. "I'll show you."

I followed him down the hallway. "Who are you texting?"

"Your mother. If this works the way I expect it to, she should be here to witness it."

We walked out the front door where we found Jasper on the porch with a small pile of smoking ashes in front of him. Skateboard wheels sat in the midst of the ashes.

"Jasper!" I said with a scolding tone. "Did you burn the dragon skateboard?"

He bobbed his head. "Bad dragon."

"I know, but that doesn't mean you can just ..."
When I saw tears glistening in his eyes, I shook my head. "Never mind. I keep forgetting how young you are."

Dad patted Jasper on his head. "But he's not too young to do what we need him to do."

"What's that?"

"Contact the other dragons so they can send a representative to meet with the president."

I blinked hard. "How can Jasper do that?"

"When I failed with Jubilee, she was a bit older than Jasper and able to speak. She told me that she could contact the other dragons with her mind."

"Telepathically," I said.

"Right. I'm assuming Jasper can do the same. Otherwise, they wouldn't have left him here."
Dad spoke directly into Jasper's ear. "We know that someone talked to you while you were in your egg, right?"

Jasper bobbed his head once more. "Mama."

Dad raised his brow. "Okay. That makes sense. Did she tell you how to contact her or the other dragons when you finished what you were supposed to do here?"

Jasper spoke a hissing, "Yesss."

"Good. I think it's time. The humans of Earth are asking for the dragons to send a leader from your group. Would you please use your mind to make contact?"

Without another word, Jasper shuffled off the porch and onto the driveway. He looked into the sky and started humming. At first, the hum included long notes that ranged from a deep growl to a high-pitched squeal. Then it changed into shorter notes, like a melody from a song.

After a few minutes, Jasper breathed a smoky sigh and looked at us as he spoke slowly. "Mama come soon."

At that moment, a shining egg-shaped craft broke out of a cloud and zoomed toward us. Dad stepped in front of me, probably hoping to protect me, and I was okay with that.

The spaceship drew closer, emitting a hum of its own. As the purplish egg hovered a few feet above our yard, the hum lessened. I studied the



glowing ship carefully. It was definitely the same one that left Jasper's egg with me.

As the egg-like ship settled onto the lawn, fully blossomed flowers burst around it instantly, as though the yard itself brimmed with excitement about dragons coming to our planet. Glowing lavender petals sprouted and ran upward on the eggshell, as if making a nest, which seemed right for an egg-shaped ship.

The hum quieted. I held my breath. In a few seconds, we would probably see an adult dragon from Jasper's world.