

## **Declan the dragon – Flash Fiction – 500 Words**

### **... An experiment in creating a story with sentences of 6 words or fewer:**

Declan plodded. He was small as dragons went. His Weyr had left without him. The Weyr had been family. A collection of northern dragons. He hadn't meant to cause trouble. His flaming could be quite random. He was sorry about the house. He was sorry about the barn. He was sorry about the corn.

He could have flown after them. But they had left early. He did not know where. He wandered cold and lonely. He'd folded his wings back. He kept to the path. The woods were dark this winter. The leaves and bark were damp. Yet his flaming remained a risk. Trees, not so much. But bushes and fences beware. A village came into view. Lights twinkled in windows like stars. He thought he should stay away. The villagers may chase him. He'd burned lots of things before.

On the whole, it was quiet. Except for the bakers. There was a commotion in flight. The baker was holding his head. His wife wailed, requesting help. Their son sat sullenly in front. Approaching, Declan beckoned to the boy.

"What's all the fuss?" He asked.

"The oven fire," came the reply. "We have no way of baking."

"Maybe I can help," he said.

He walked through the door. Past the baker. Past the baker's wife. Followed by the boy. The baker's oven lay dark. The bulbous grate door sat open. Declan peered inside.

"You have coal," he said.

"Yes, but we have no fire."

"I'm certain I can help."

Declan climbed inside. He heaped the coal into a pile. He walked around, thinking hard.

"Just there," he said, and blew.

A jet of flame flew forward. It went under the pile edge. The heat grew and grew. The boiler began to expand. The pipes began to glow. The steam and smoke billowed out.

"No, No," shouted the baker. "It must not be too hot."

Declan slowed his flame. Slow and steady, that's the trick. The boiler began to recede. The pipes began to dim. The steam and smoke mellowed.

"Yes, Yes, Yes," shouted the baker. He clapped his hands with glee. "We shall make bread for all. We shall have a feast."

Declan sat down on the pile. It was nice and warm here. He had warmth and friends. He pulled the door closed.

The townspeople awoke. They heard of the great dragon. The hero of the town.

They came from all corners. They needed to see this marvel. Each time they came in. The baker would clap excitedly. He would open the door. Declan sat atop a coal pile. Each piece would glow with heat. He would juggle three pieces. They would glow in flight. Like little shooting stars. Small flames on the edges. Declan sprayed each as they passed. Keeping each one toastie. Declan grinned from ear to ear.

Plumes of smoke drifted around him.

The baker made a plaque. It read "Declan's Central Heating System."

No one would be without bread. Best of all, Declan was home.

500 Words (Not including title)

© Trevor Flanagan