

# DRAGON CHILI

## JUNETA KEY



**DRAGON CHILI**

**Starlight Galaxy Series**

**Space Opera Flash Fiction Story**

**BY JUNETA KEY**

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Katherina Gerlach.\*



### Dragon Chili

"Soren, what are you doing?"

The large golden dragon startled with a jerk bumping his head on the ceiling 9 feet above Darius Jack's head. His tail snaked around and through the door and out another, as he curled in to fit in the large space by human standards, if not by his. "Don't sneak up on me like that. I could have flamed you."

Darius chuckled. "Sorry, but you were staring in that pot as if you were counting beans or something."

"I'm making Fire Chili for the Christmas party. It has been 300 years since anyone has tasted my cooking."

Darius looked around at the mess. "That is more worrisome than reassuring. Why don't you just do your god thing?"

"I like the hands-on approach; besides it is easier for folks to accept me if I do things more like them."

"You'd fit in better if you stayed in human form."

"I want them to accept my true self first, not fear me. They can only do that if they see the real me." Soren slurped as he tasted his concoction.

"They are a little intimidated by the real you."

The dragon sighed. "I know, but these are the people who have cared for you all these years. I want them to like me. The real me."

Darius leaned over the pot and sniffed. "What kind of meat did you use?" He started to dip a finger into the pot, but Soren popped him with the kitchen towel. "Ouch!"

"Stay out of it!" Soren positioned himself between the pot and Darius, and added more seasoning. "Sheep. They are abundant on this rock. I caught two of them myself. One for each pot."

"You raided old man Tate's herd? Again? That is not how you win friends."

"It's free range isn't it?"

"I told you. YOU CAN'T DO that here. It's NOT free range. It's FREE trade. You can buy or barter for anything you need including food. That old man is partial to those sheep."

Soren withdrew the ladle offering Darius a real bite. "Shake the vacuum out of your space pants, kin. Taste." He shrugged bumping a cabinet door. "I left the grouchy cloven-foot old man a trinket from my treasures."

"His species is Saytr. He lives for the barter, not the credits. It is the reason he owns most of the industry and township. His people were some of the first settlers on this planet."

"He doesn't own your adoptive uncle's junkyard."

"Space salvage yard, with space parts, not junk."

"You're haggling words. Looks like junk."

"That's great... just great. I thought you were trying to win friends." Darius shook his head. His stomach grumbled. He leaned in to take the bite offered.

"I am. Watch it... that's hot." Soren pulled the ladle back.

One eyebrow raised Darius said, "We're related, remember?"

Resistant, practically immune to fire and heat."

Darius caught the ladle before Soren could retract it again taking his bite and choked.

Soren snorted. "I meant the seasoning."

Darius ran to the cooler-unit grabbing a jug of milk and downed the whole thing. He continued to hack and cough for a few seconds before he could speak. "No joke."

He poured a glass of water from the counter pitcher, and drank it. "You might want to go a little lighter on the seasoning if you want others to..." pointing at the pot of chili, he sputtered, "...eat that."

"I did tone THIS pot down for our kind with human genes and shifters. How do I do that for other humans?"

"Not enough. Add a little honey or sugar. Better yet, let me do it." Darius grabbed the ingredients he needed from the cabinets.

"Fine." Soren snatched the second pot simmering on the stove, moving it to the upper cabinet. He latched the door. "Good thing I made two pots. I like my chili flaming."



\*Connected Short Story with these characters: To Wake a God. Same password used when you signed up for this

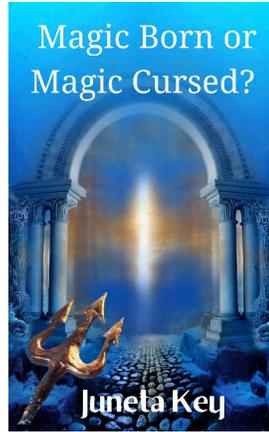
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#### About Juneta Key

Juneta is a Texan now living in Florida.  
She has always wanted to live someplace tropical.

Juneta writes SPECULATIVE FICTION. She loves writing about Grumpy Old Gods, Space Opera, Paranormal & Sci-Fi Fantasy adventure, mysteries, and romance with all the complexity of human nature mixed in, whether human or non-human, mage, mystic or pilot. Stories that involve the mythology born of living and the shadows that make us all heroes, anti-heroes, villains, and poets. Website, Facebook



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