**Traitor**

Rats scuttle, maggots crawl as my wrinkled hands tremble as I hold my sword. Hair and furrowed eyebrows blend into one in the strong gusts of wind. Fighting and roaring overhead fills my ears, as I sit hidden from sight, full of sorrow and despair. Guilt and fear rush through my veins as I contemplate the appalling crime I have committed. What will be the consequence of my unforgivable actions?

I think back to that moment. Traitor– the word echoed in my head. The word makes my hairs stand on end, and throat dry with anxiety. It was a bleak, cloudy night, broken only by the screeching of the beasts in the distance. I could remember the smell of burning flesh, which was heavy in the air, as if I was reliving that night again. Trembling, I had begun my duty of protecting the little food we had (the dragons had starved us of food for days) and my empty stomach was a monster as it growled painfully. Before I could help myself, I ate and ate until I could consume nothing else! As I gulped, the taste slid over my tongue and a cold night breeze brushed my cheeks. It was the piercing gaze I felt first. Then the hot, putrid breath licked the back of my neck. It was then I spun around to find myself reflected in golden, glassy, cat-like eyes, just inches from my own. My pale lips dry, crinkled, slowly lost the last of their colour as I was petrified and rooted to the spot; (inside however I felt an odd sense of understanding). I reached for the largest leg of ham from our supplies and slowly, gingerly offered it to the sleek, inky black creature. Its scales, which looked slick and wet, shimmered in the light of the fire torch as the beast devoured the ham with a hunger I knew only too well. It was over before it began, I let the enemy go without so much as a scratch. Although it went against everything my clan believed in, deep down I felt a peace that was not there before that night. Coming back to the present, the now eerie silence of dawn allowed those guilty memories to wash over me, creating a fear far greater than that of being burned alive.

What started off as a hungry mistake, now leaves me with feelings of confusion and betrayal. How could I have done this to my clan’s people? What would my Dad think if he found out I let the creature go? How could I explain to others that my feelings about dragons have changed?