

I remember the day the dragons came, their vivid purple and green scales glinting against the sun. Yellow and orange tales streaking behind them like fire, leathery wings casting shadows over our village. Be it stupidity or fear, I was incapable of fleeing from the mesmerizing sight. As they land, a layer of gritty dust coats my lips. Air thick with the scent of campfire, the voice is a throaty purr.

"It's time, Chusi."

Unafraid, I offer myself in exchange for my village's safety. Their golden insignia now branded on my shoulder, I vow to always protect the sacred dragons.



This week's story took quite a few twists and turns before we got to the final product. I have many versions of this story with one or two words changed, sentences arranged in a different order, and even a couple where I exceeded my self-imposed limit of 100 words. In one ending, Chusi is simply told it's time, and in another the dragon said they were collecting a debt.

Why is Chusi unafraid and so willing to offer herself? I don't know, perhaps because her name references dragons. Perhaps the story was passed down through generations that one day, the dragons would return and seek someone. You'll have to let your own imagination run wild and decide for yourself.

Perhaps Chusi was aware of dragons and belonged to a secretive group that knew, eventually, payment would be necessary. Or, perhaps Chusi just wants to escape her village, and regardless of what might happen to her, she figures it's better than hauling water from a well, and feeding a fire all day. Maybe your theory is that Chusi is a selfless person, and her single act allowed her to live and forever protect the village.

One of the best parts of writing a story is that you, along with your characters, get to choose the ending. Sometimes it works, and other times your characters give you a smart slap on the cheek and demand a different ending.

The Reluctant Author 