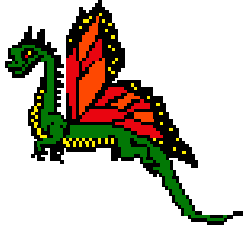


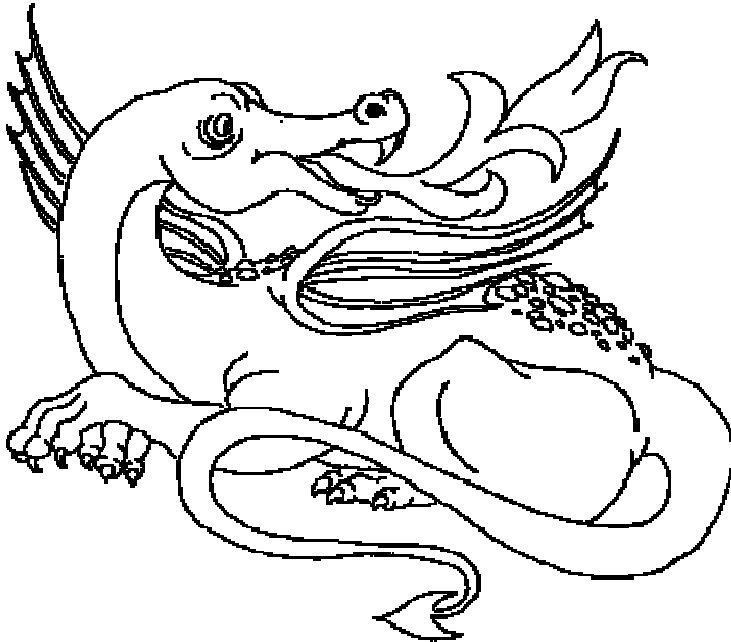


*Treasures & Trees,
Dragons & Dreams*



Treasures & Trees, Dragons & Dreams

Drimlin was a dragon. Not a little bitty, ordinary, everyday lizard, mind you...but a real live honest-to-goodness fire-breathing, smoke-snorting, wing-flapping dragon who lived all alone in a huge cave set in the loftiest peak of the highest mountain in all the land.



Drimlin was rather a nice sort of dragon -- as far as dragons go. He hardly ever went around scaring people, and he very seldom stampeded their cattle. But then Drimlin wasn't exactly perfect either. You see, Drimlin liked treasures. And unfortunately...what Drimlin liked, Drimlin took. Yes. Drimlin was a bit of a thief. Drimlin slept all the day, and flew 'round all night looking for treasures to steal.



Lucy was a leprechaun, born to laugh and dance, play pranks and sing. Lucy, however, was not quite perfect herself. Lucy, you see, was a bit of a dandy. She loved fine clothes, and she wore them with just a shade too much pride. She loved nothing better than to prance around wearing nothing but emerald green and a big bright smile.

Lucy lived in the hollow trunk of a huge old oak tree in the middle of a quiet valley. She stood barely taller than a unicorn's knee, and like all leprechauns, Lucy had her very own pot of gold hidden at the end of her very own rainbow.

Now once upon a brightly moonlit night, as Drimlon soared high over Lucy's valley, he caught the scent of leprechaun gold. The dragon became excited and he began to swoop over and around the valley in huge circles. As he swooped, his circles grew smaller and he flew lower and lower, but still without a rainbow to guide him, he couldn't find Lucy's cleverly hidden pot of gold. Finally he gave up his search and off he flew toward his cave near the top of the Emerald Mountain, high above the clouds.



The next morning Lucy awoke to find the world alight with a beautiful bright blue cloudless day. Dragon's sleep by day, and rainbows come only after a rain and so Lucy dressed up in a fine emerald green outfit trimmed with a great showy froth of a green feather and proudly went to visit a friend who lived by the sea. Thus Lucy was far from home when the harsh northern winds began to blow up a storm and the clouds gathered over her valley and the rains came pouring down.



Dragon's fly only at night, or so Lucy believed, but she believed wrong, for sometimes dragons fly in the sunlit skies and thus it was on this fateful day. Lucy wasn't home to see Drimlin swoop down and ride the rainbow path to its glorious end in her valley. And neither did she see Drimlin dig up the pot of buried gold at the rainbow's end and fly away with it.

But Leprechauns can read trouble on the air and Lucy sensed that something was wrong -- ever so terribly wrong. She cut short her visit and hurried home. She wasn't really certain why she was worried, but worried she was.

When Lucy arrived at her valley, she stopped short and stared at the glorious rainbow that pointed the way to the empty hole where her gold had been hidden.

"Faith and Begorroa," she yelled. 'Twas that nasty old dragon. For sure and he's followed the rainbow and stolen me very own pot of gold!"



She felt like sitting down and having a nice long cry, but cry she didn't. Leprechauns as a rule are quite a clever lot, and Lucy was no different. She immediately began to plot and plan --- determined to get back her pot of gold and teach that nasty old dragon a lesson in the bargain."

She knew she couldn't fight the dragon. She wasn't a coward, mind you. No true leprechaun is. But then dragons are terribly huge, and leprechauns are rather small. Besides which fighting isn't very nice. Now leprechauns (as I said before) are clever, but dragons aren't very

smart. So Lucy knew that her best hope of rescuing her pot of gold lay in outwitting the dragon who'd stolen it.

That very day, she gathered her weapons -- a brand new iron pot and her second-best bag of gold coins. Then going to see the weather witch, she explained her delimita and her chosen solution. The witch (having lost a treasure or two to the dragon herself) laughed outloud and agreed to help.

The rain clouds gathered quickly. Lucy barely had time to hurry home and grab her new pot and her second-best treasure before the rain began to fall. The first drop fell just as Lucy finished hiding and settled back to wait.

The witch provided a grand show of a storm with enough lightning flash and thunder claps to awaken any dragon around.



And when the dragon was surely awake the sun came out and with the sun came a radiant rainbow that pointed the way to Lucy's brand new very own pot of gold.

Drimlin spotted the rainbow and rode it to its end. He found the pot of gold and he stole it quick as a wink.

The dragon flew high, soaring above the clouds until he reached the loftiest peak of the highest mountain in all the land. He landed and waddled into dark mouth of a huge cave, where lo and behold treasure of every kind and description glimmered and glittered in every nook, cranny and corner -- silver, gold, gems, jewels, crowns, septers, more treasure than the world has even seen or will ever again all piled and

strewn about to make a dragon's bed.... 'Twas there the dragon lay his weary head and slept peacefilled rest of a blatant thief.

But when Drimlin's breathing turned to the noisy snorting snores of a restless dragon an odd thing happened. His newest treasure began to quiver and shiver and shake. Golden coins began to spill over the pot's sides and like a volcanic spew of green fire, Lucy popped from her hiding place beneath the gold.

She looked around at all the dragonly hoarde and she tsk tsked a bit at the dragon's great greed. She smiled and placed a finger to the side of her nose, put one hand on top of her head, lifted one foot in the air and began to recite a magic spell.

- Treasures you are
- and treasures you'll be,
- but treasures heed well,
- and listen to me.
- Here you now are,
- but there you'll soon be
- for when the thief steals
- twice what is stolen
- will turn into trees.
- Ash and elm, cedar and oak
- filling the valleys
- forests and glades
- giving life to the land
- and death to the haze.
- Treasures you are
- and treasures you'll be.
- but treasures heed well
- and listen to me.

Then, at just about the same time that Lucy finished reciting her spell, the dragon awoke from his nap. It didn't take him more than a second to realize that something was wrong. The smell of magic hung heavy in the air, and Drimlin was quick to see the cause sitting just as brave and cocky as could be atop a pot of gold.

HO HO!" he said in his rumbly, roary voice. "WHAT HAVE WE HERE -- AN ITSY, BITSY TINY LITTLE SPROUT OF A LEPRECHAUN?"

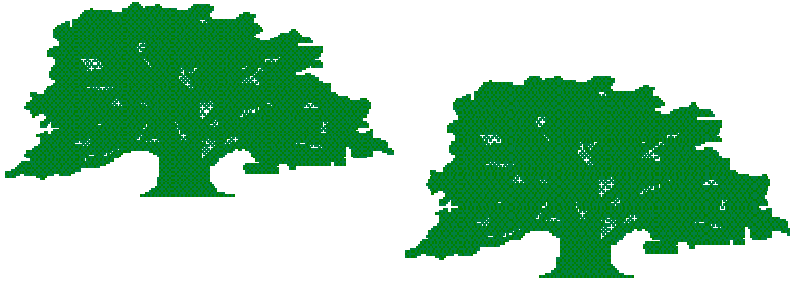
T*iny, I may well be, but never-the-less I've come to rescue my very own pot of gold, and for all your great dragonly size, you'll not be stopping me" said Lucy, patting the pot of gold upon which she sat, "for the deed is already done."*

Drimlor laughed, "ALREADY DONE, LITTLE SPROUT. I THINK NOT, FOR YOU'RE STILL HERE AND YOUR TREASURE IS HERE, AND I'VE NO MIND TO SEE EITHER OF YOU GO."

T*hen I'd not be watching, if I were you," said Lucy, as she magically winked her left eye and then her right, and then both together as she blinked herself home to her valley taking both her pots of gold with her and leaving behind only a wispy puff of bright green smoke, and one very angry dragon.*

Drimlin gave out with a dragonly roar that shook the mountain, and he hit the air running and spread his great wings as he leapt from the mouth of the cave. "I'LL STEAL IT RIGHT BACK AGAIN!" he roared as

he swooped down through the clouds and over the valley where Lucy waited. She didn't even bother to hide the pots of gold, they were sitting out in the open waiting for him...and Dragon's being rather stupid, Drimlin didn't even stop to wonder why. He just swept up the pots and kept on going straight back to his cave.



Lucy cried for sheer joy when the beautiful trees began to appear, and she laughed outloud when Drimlin's mighty roar of pure rage swept down from the mountain. *"I wonder how long it will take him to catch on,"* she said with a smile as she gazed at the beautiful trees *"maybe, just maybe, we'll be lucky and he never will."* she said with a good-natured smile as she blinked first one eye and then the other, and then both together.

The End?

Teresa Thomas Bohannon, © 1974

T'lerin & Grimlor is another version of this tale, slanted toward the tastes of a slightly older audience.