

---

# What Happens When It Rains

by Stephanie Hensley  
2859.04.22

Printed in FTA #22 (2005)

This story is printed by Kadanzer Weyr ([www.kadanzer.org](http://www.kadanzer.org)), a fan club approved by Anne McCaffrey in 1995. Kadanzer Weyr is a non-profit group -- all materials pertaining to Ms. McCaffrey's works displayed on this website may only be accessed for personal, non-commercial purposes. Please do not reproduce without permission. All references to worlds and characters based on Anne McCaffrey's fiction are copyright© Anne McCaffrey 1967, 2005, all rights reserved, and used by permission of the author. The Dragonriders of Pern® is registered U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, by Anne McCaffrey, used here with permission. Use or reproduction without a license is strictly prohibited.

---

A loud crash awoke N'dren from a dead sleep. Unwilling to respond to whatever was making the racket, he turned over and tried to bury his head in the blankets. To his chagrin, a sharp, imperious squawk echoed only moments later, accompanied by a set of thorn-sharp claws into his shoulder.

N'dren sat up quickly, glaring at the offending gold firelizard. Flicker looked at him, squawking as she fought to maintain a grip on his shoulder, challenge whirling in her tiny eyes. His other firelizard, little green Sarla, hovered nearby. Both appeared highly agitated.

"What is it?" he asked wearily, yawning. It had been a hard 'Fall, and he had been looking forward to a few good hours of sleep.

A sharp crack of thunder startled the young bronzerider. He turned toward the window, but the movement unsettled Flicker.

"Shards!" N'dren cursed, for the little gold's scrambling claws had torn through his shirt. "Flicker, enough of that!" He pushed the firelizard away and examined the holes with a tired sigh. There were scratches on the skin underneath, but Flicker had not drawn blood. "What's going on?"

Thunder rumbled again, and for the first time N'dren noticed the sound of rain pounding the roof of his weycot. In the darkness, two pairs of firelizard eyes glittered up at him. He glared at them for a long moment, then glanced around as lightning illuminated the room. In that moment, the question of his abrupt awakening was answered. All of his things that had been settled on a shelf were scattered on the floor.

"Fighting again?" he said sourly, rubbing his eyes. His firelizards had never been very close companions, and this was only one of their many arguments.

Simultaneously, both Sarla and Flicker sent him images of a ball of wrestling gold and green whirling about the weycot, smashing into the shelf, and falling onto his bed.

**They are sorry.** Jeth, his bronze, sounded very amused. **I enjoy listening to them.**

*And why are you so happy?* N'dren asked, annoyed at his dragon's good humor.

**It is raining. I like it. It feels good on my back.**

N'dren sighed, wanting nothing more than to fall back on his cot and fall asleep again. Flicker chirped and crawled back onto his shoulder, and Sarla settled onto his knees. Thunder cracked, loud enough to shake the walls of the weycot, and the bronzerider rolled his eyes, knowing he was going to get little sleep on this night.

*Are you starting to feel better?* N'dren asked Jeth, sighing again as he gathered Sarla in his arms and swung his legs free of the blanket. Flicker hissed in jealousy.

**The rain feels good.** Jeth grumbled softly, the sound almost lost in an equally low roll of thunder. **Come out here. You will like it, too.**

Flicker hissed again, tightening her grip on his shoulder. Sarla chortled and nuzzled his chest. N'dren chuckled despite himself and pulled the little green's head out of his shirt pocket.

**Come, my rider. The rain is nice on my wings.**

Both Sarla and Flicker clung to him as N'dren stepped outside, immediately feeling the dampness of the rain-saturated air against his skin. Sarla renewed her efforts to burrow underneath his clothing. Flicker squealed hotly, broadcasting annoyance and anger to him. N'dren ignored them, instead focusing on Jeth. Although his dragon's wallow was just beyond his weycot door, he could barely make out the bronze's bulk through the darkness and rain. After a moment, the shadowy mass that was Jeth shifted, and a pair of shining eyes appeared.

**They are not happy.** Jeth sounded highly amused. **They do not want to be outside.**

*I know, but this does feel nice.* N'dren stretched out his arms, causing both firelizards to issue squeaks of protest. *But I think I will like it more after I have slept.*

**Yes, you are tired.** Jeth moved his head closer, and N'dren could make out the shape of his large bronze muzzle. **I am tired, too. So I think I will go back to sleep.**

N'dren reached out into the rain and patted Jeth, and Sarla tried to burrow underneath the collar of his shirt. However, before N'dren could pull Sarla out again, Flicker seemed to decide she wanted to be where the green was struggling to get to. The little gold hissed in protest and swatted her tail at the green. Sarla squealed in surprise and took flight, fluttering out into the rain.

"Flicker, stop that," N'dren said, sighing tiredly. His shirt was becoming dotted with claw-torn holes now, and he knew he would have to pull a few favors to get it patched up again. He pushed the gold back onto his shoulder, and turned to Sarla. "Come on, girl."

Sarla squabbled angrily as she fought to stay airborne, but N'dren could see that she was rapidly faltering under the tumult of rain. With a loud cry that he was sure the entire Complex heard, Sarla fell to the ground, landing with a wet splat in the mud. Green turned to murky brown as the unfortunate firelizard struggled to turn herself upright. Jeth grumbled again, and N'dren knew the bronze was enjoying every moment of the firelizard squabble.

“Hang on, Sarla,” N’dren said, stepping out into the rain and approaching the struggling firelizard. Even though he was tired and irritated, he could not help but laugh at his little pet’s troubles.

Flicker had protested loudly when the first sheets of rain fell upon them, and kept up the vocals of annoyance and what could only be firelizard versions of curses. N’dren looked through the darkness to see if the commotion had disturbed anyone. The weycots of his wingmates were lost in the darkness.

*Jeth, have we been overheard?*

**No. Laymeth is closest to us, and she sleeps soundly.**

Wiping rainwater from his eyes, N’dren knelt down and grasped his muddy firelizard, lifting her free. Sarla squalled loudly, her tiny eyes turning red as she stared up at Flicker. The mud made her slippery, so the bronzerider could not prevent the green from pushing herself free and pouncing upon the gold perched haughtily upon his shoulder. Mud splattered upon his face and chest, and the ball of brown, green, and gold tumbled away. N’dren turned sharply to see his firelizards rolling around on the rain-soaked ground, making a racket not even the thunder could drown out.

“Stop that, the both of you!” he shouted. “You’ll wake up the whole Weyr!”

N’dren tried to grab hold of his pets, but his quick turn had already overbalanced him. His feet slipped, and he sprawled unceremoniously into the mud. Sarla and Flicker immediately became still, turning and staring at him as he lay on his back, momentarily stunned.

**Are you hurt?** Jeth asked worriedly, his great head appearing above him. The dragon looked at the firelizards. **Go away! You have done enough.**

Sarla and Flicker squeaked in surprise and fear, disappearing *between* in a wink. N’dren sat up, wiping mud from his eyes.

*I am fine, Jeth.* N’dren sat still for a moment longer, wondering what his wingmates would have to say if any of them found him like this. *Only my pride is hurt.*

Jeth said nothing in reply, but offered his muzzle for support as N’dren struggled to his feet. He had just regained his balance when he noticed a figure rapidly approaching, waving a glowbasket. He groaned when he realized it was Y’su.

“N’dren?” Y’su called. “Jeth told Jareth that you needed help. Are you. . .?” The brownrider stopped, now in plain view, and bit back a laugh. “Do you need help?”

“I think I can manage,” N’dren replied moodily, glaring at Jeth. *Why did you speak to Jareth?*

**Because Jareth’s rider is our friend, and they were still awake.**

Y’su lowered the basket, chuckling as he settled a hand on N’dren’s shoulder.

“Come on,” he said, still laughing. “To the showers.”

N’dren scowled, but moved to follow his friend. To his further annoyance, the storm seemed to be ending. The rain was finally letting up. He could, at last, see Laymeth’s form in her wallow. The green was gazing at them, eyes glittering in the darkness.

**Laymeth thinks you look funny.** Jeth reported. **She is wakening her rider to look at you.**

N’dren groaned. Sure enough, Auriala had appeared at her open weycot window, and although he could not hear it, he knew she was laughing. Y’su chuckled.

“Cheer up, my friend!” he said. “This sight will make many of our wingmates happy tonight.”

N’dren was quick to respond to Y’su with a fistful of mud scraped from his mud-splattered, claw-tattered shirt. Caught off-guard, the brownrider could not avoid it.

“Now the both of us will make our wingmates happy,” N’dren said with a boyish grin.

Y’su laughed and quickly returned fire. They continued their muddy battle all along the way to the showers, startling many of their wingmates as they passed. Few, however, seemed annoyed at having to be awoken to witness the sight.

“What happened to you, anyway?” Y’su asked as they reached their destination.

“What happens when it rains!” N’dren responded, throwing one last handful of mud before running for cover.



# Kadanzer Weyr

Alternate Tenth Pass *Dragonriders of Pern*® Fanclub

[www.kadanzer.org](http://www.kadanzer.org)