

## Lodaism: The Seven Dragons

*It is said, in the south, that when it was young, the world was ruled by dragons. Seven great old ones, to care for the land, the sea and the air.*

*San, the great green dragon of growth.*

*Cas, the white dragon of the skies.*

*Kem, the blue dragon of the seas.*

*Imo, the red dragon of fire.*

*Lon, the golden dragon of storms.*

*Tal, the amber dragon of the earth.*

*Wen, youngest of the dragons, black observer of the world.*

*For an age, the dragons ruled in peace and made their homes around the great lodestones of Hevna, from there to rule their separate domains. A time of peace and prosperity governed the world, as the dragons filled it with life. Great San grew the forests, the plains and the jungles and filled them with animals. Cas filled the air with birds and song. Kem populated the seas with shoals of fish and glittering oysters, Imo raised volcanoes to light the night and warm the air. Lon watered the ground and filled the rivers and Tal raised mountains and dug canyons.*

*Young Wen watched. At first, the youngest dragon recorded all that his siblings made with wonder and joy, but in time a darkness came to trouble his heart. When Tal dug out his canyons, only Wen saw the suffering of the beasts, now unable to cross to green land to eat. When Lon filled a river, only Wen saw the nests of Cas' birds swept away in the torrent. When Imo's fire met Lon's winds, only Wen saw the forests and rivers suffer, choking on ash.*

*Only Wen saw his brothers chasing each other around the world, recreating what had been destroyed, while unwittingly damaging each others work.*

*In time, the world grew loud and anguished. More and more life was created to replace what was accidentally lost, and given the ability to reproduce by themselves to fill the voids, until chaos reigned on the world. Exhausted from their labors, the dragons retired to their lodestones to try and sleep amid the cacophony.*

*Eventually, exhausted, even Great San fell into a deep sleep, until the dragons left only the youngest to observe the world, and the chaos it had become. Where once there had*

*been wonder, now, Wen found only sadness in the creations of his brothers. Finally, Wen had found his own purpose, and began to work while his brothers slept.*

*In the forests, Wen ate the bison and buffalo, until they lived only on the plains. On the plains, he ate the monkeys and the fowl until they lived only in the jungle. In the jungle, he ate the seals and the walrus until they lived only on the coast. In the seas, he ate the otters and the crocodiles, until they lived only in the rivers.*

*To the fire, he gave more heat, and weakened the trees that they may burn. To the wind he gave more power, that it may drive the rain, and to the rain he gave the power quench fire and to carve even stone. While his brothers slept, Wen culled the world until it was in balance and quiet once more, and accepted the realm of death and endings as his own.*

*In time, Great San and the other dragons awoke from their sleep. The world was no longer loud. Yet this was no peace to the great old ones. In a panic, San rose into the air, unable to hear his animals. Cas called for his many birds, Kem for his sea animals, Imo sought his fire, Lon his storms and Tal his canyons.*

*When they saw what had become of their world, they were furious. In anger, they turned on each other. Cas accused Kem of letting his creatures consume his birds. Kem accused Cas of letting his birds hunt his fish from the air. Soon, the two fell to fighting, their massive power shattering mountains.*

*Tal arrived to see his ranges crumble, and joined the fray, assuming his brothers had destroyed his great works. Soon enough Imo and Lon too had joined the fight, filling the world with noise once again.*

*Only Great San and young Wen remained apart. Wen calmly recorded what he saw, as was his duty, while San begged of his brothers to cease their quarrel. It is said that war was born that day, from five dragons battling.*

*One by one they fell, and with them, the world changed. As Cas died, his body became the birds of prey, the bats and biting insects. When Kem's body fell into the ocean, he became the sharks, dolphins, whales and sea snakes. Red Imo became ash, smoke and the Crawlers, while Lon's death brought thunder and pain to the storm, his dying roar still echoing around the world. Finally, Tal crashed to the earth, his bones became the greatest mountains and shook the very ground, which still rumbles to this day.*

*When only San and Wen were left, the great green dragon begged his brother to know what had happened, why he had driven his brothers to this.*

*“I have observed many things, oldest of brothers, and wondered at the things you have created. Yet wisdom was not among them.*

*What each made, the next unmade, and no parlance was given to compromise or sharing. The world became too full. While you were merely tired, the creations suffered, and so I gave to them something my brothers could not. Death.”*

*When San looked around, he saw that Wen was right. While the dragons had fought, the world had continued without them. In the seas, the sharks of Kem's death fed upon the fish of his life, yet the fish bred and continued, never too many, never too few.*

*In the skies, birds preyed upon the animals of the land, yet there were never too many, nor too few. In the jungles, cats caught deer, and so too on the plains, and in the canyons.*

*“How will we govern this world of balance, you have created, wisest and youngest brother? How can we two do what was designed for seven?” beseeched Great San of Wise Wen.*

*“We shall create, together, the races of balance, Great San. They shall have the power to think, and to decide. They shall destroy, but also create, and this world shall be theirs. We shall sleep, and these new creations will know our souls at the lodestones, that seven may guide the world, without destroying it.”*

*And so it was that the Nagu and Mankind was created, the only products of two dragons, made of two ideals. Great San and Wise Wen returned to sleep, ever to rest where the sky meets the earth.*

*It is said, in the south, that when the world is old, the dragons will all rise once again before the end, to take their creations to a new world. They will be led by those who bear the last gifts left by the dragons – the Emerald eye of San, and the Jet eye of Wen. The greatest treasures known to man.*