

# Beta

## Backstory

**Species:** Western dragon

**Sex:** ♂

**Orientation:** Bisexual

**Age:** 20 years

**Height:** Not specified

**Weight:** Not specified

**Siblings:** One sister named Terra (8 years older)

and two brothers (both 14 years younger).

**Physical orientation:** Feral

**Elements:** Electricity and energy. Only 5% of his society have this as their element. The vast majority of the others are of the earth element, with a few being of fire or ice. Beta's energy power is a little more complex; it is not a standard power and protects him from taking mortal damage from attacks from fire and ice dragons. Beta only discovers that he has this power later in life. His element is at its strongest when he is angry, although Beta does not like to admit this.

### Worldbuilding Notes

The community that Beta lived in valued dragons trained in battle above all else, and by contrast, farmers were considered 'lesser' in many ways. As a result of this, farmers faced a level of exclusion from the overall community. Dragons in higher social classes recognised and valued the contributions of farmers to the stable running of the economy but this attitude did not tend to filter down to those in lower classes.

While a certain amount of upward mobility was possible, there was a clear caste system in place and farmers were on a fairly low rung of that system.

Immediately after hatching a dragon hatchling can walk, and the better-developed ones can even fast-walk, however they are prone to stumbling. They are truly naive to the workings of the world and this unnerves most hatchlings so they are generally prone to hiding. They cannot find their own food and their wings are useless for flying.

Beta is a fan character from the *Spyro Trilogy* universe, however he has enough of his own lore to be able to exist independently. **[I usually put a summary of your character here. I normally finalise it after everything below is completed, checked, and confirmed to be correct by you.]**

## **Trust & Confidence**

*(newborn)*

Beta was born to a set of parents who lived in the outskirts of a city as farmers. Beta's family were resigned to their lowly caste and felt satisfied enough with their place in society, although they were not a happy family.

Beta's parents had been too busy to be present for the hatching of their first dragonlet, Terra (Beta's sister), and she had become aggressive by nature, so they had decided to make sure that one of them would be around for when Beta hatched. Terra had developed a great deal of independence along with her aggression, and this made her a poor fit within the farming community. Beta's parents were eager to avoid letting this happen with their second hatchling.

His mother's decision to make sure she was around for Beta's hatching came from a sense of guilt over her daughter's development, so she made up for this by being especially attentive to Beta himself in infancy to make sure he never felt abandoned.

Terra was also present when he hatched. For her part, she was surprised by how jealous she felt when Beta came along. Although she was proud of her independence, as an 8 year old she was not truly independent and needed to feel supported by, and important to, her parents. Seeing them parent Beta differently to how they had parented her left her feeling resentful.

Beta's mother was the one to name him, and she chose the name 'Beta' as a literal acknowledgement of the fact that he was her second child. She was not a very creative dragon.

## **Freedom & Self-Determination**

*(toddlerhood)*

Beta's mother continued to dote on him, to ensure that he would never feel abandoned. She certainly achieved her objective, however it had the opposite effect to that of his sister: he was rather over-cared for, to the point that he felt that he couldn't leave her to explore their home.

Despite this, Beta had an unpleasant experience during his toddlerhood. He was a very active toddler and sometimes sought out Terra as a playmate. Being older than him she didn't always want to play and although she loved him, she was unused to dealing with a tiny hatchling and sometimes underestimated her own strength. On one occasion she was trying to sleep and Beta snuggled up to her uninvited. She pushed him away but used her claws. While Beta was not

seriously hurt it was quite a shock for him to be rejected so harshly, and the sense that he should be wary of others stuck with him for many years after.

This left Beta with a potent sense of self-doubt. He didn't yet have all of the life experience or psychological capability to assess Terra's moods; all he did have was the choice to either approach, or not approach, without knowing why he would be welcomed, snuggled up to, or played with at some times and rebuffed angrily at others. It seemed too risky to try and work it out so he became cautious and remained distant - and confused by the puzzle that felt too dangerous to solve.

As a side effect of being so full of self-doubt he also didn't like to be the centre of attention.

Beta's father was unable to be particularly present during these youngest few years of Beta's life, as the farm still needed to be tended and Beta's mother insisted on being as present as she could, to make sure that he didn't feel the need to become independent quite so early and in quite the extreme way that Terra had.

As a family they didn't have much, so anything that belonged to Beta, or that he found and assumed to be there for the taking, he would claim for himself. Having material possessions of his own felt like a big deal, and if he was asked to give it up he would make a fuss but would ultimately relent.

## **Ambition**

*(young childhood)*

Beta got many conflicting messages from his family and wider society that made this stage of his psychological development difficult. Ordinarily, a dragon in this life stage would begin to think about what he wanted from (and to be in) the world, to begin to act it out in play or to ask questions about it, and to begin to learn what kind of potential was possible for a dragon like him.

Being a farmer's son meant that his family saw him (as part of their family) as lowly. They were used to their place in society and discouraged him from being too hopeful of being anything more. Beta found himself inclined to accept this line of thinking.

Dragons as an overall species however, were prone to pride, and liked to see heroes arise from within their ranks. The cultural story of dragons was that a dragon could achieve anything if he or she set their mind to it and had the will and determination (and that small size or lowly provenance were nothing to worry about. It was all about the will to achieve). This was a seductive message to Beta, especially because the powerful message of 'believe in thyself, for we believe in you!' felt like a much-needed antidote to the self-doubt he had learned as a toddler.

As a result Beta liked to try new things, but his doubts would often overwhelm him and he would seek reassurance before committing to anything. Overall, he was a pretty submissive individual and happily did as he was told, when he was given instructions.

With all resources (whether it was food, time, or anything else) so finite, there was little space for anybody in the family to be emotionally needy. As a result, Beta learned that he would have to keep his emotions to himself. This was as true for happy emotions as it was for unhappy ones.

## **Productivity**

*(older childhood)*

As Beta got big and strong enough to help out on the farm he began to do just that. He was still naturally very active and farming work certainly offered him many opportunities to be active. However, he felt stifled and restless to achieve something more substantial with his life than the simple sowing, growing, and harvesting of food. He wanted to escape the situation, but at the same time he found the outside world overwhelming.

As a result, he helped out on the farm but disliked the work itself. He found the completion of various tasks satisfying - they gave him a much-needed sense of accomplishment - but for as long as he stayed at the farm, those accomplishments felt somewhat hollow and only marked to further entrench his place as a lowly farmer. He found that deeply frustrating.

With his sense of self-doubt, which by now was deeply entrenched, he also disliked the idea of being a leader, and preferred instead to be a team-player.

With everyone expected to pitch in at the farm, everything was everyone's responsibility, and this in itself proved uncomfortable for Beta. Although tasks were often allocated to one or two particular dragons in the family, the family culture was that if one dragon saw that a task needed to be done, he or she should do it. Sometimes this led to a situation where Beta would become aware that a task needed to be done, but felt unwilling to do it himself as he hadn't specifically been asked to do it. Later, if the undone task came to light (especially if it came to light too late to solve it, or to solve it quickly and easily) he could get into trouble for not seeing to it on his own initiative. He did not develop greater initiative as a result of this, only became more withdrawn.

Whenever he looked outwards at higher-caste or more socially mobile dragons, he saw that they had a choice. The prospect of choice stuck with him and he thought about that a lot, especially during those times when he felt the most stuck. And yet, he continued to experience the same conundrum: stay in the safety of his family and community, or take the risk and strike out into the unknown? Of course, he was still only a child so striking out was still not a practical choice, but that didn't stop him daydreaming about the possibilities.

In addition to helping out on the farm, Beta also started attending school. By this point he had developed a deeply introverted personality and found the demands of being around so many other dragons stressful. On the other hand, listening to his educators talk was far more pleasant to him. He was not in the spotlight during these times, and getting an education helped him to feel as if he could become more than just a farmer. He also enjoyed solitary work.

While Beta didn't particularly enjoy teamwork, he was happy to contribute so long as he was left to his own devices. One of the difficulties he experienced with teamwork was that he believed that his contributions weren't as good as those of the rest of the team; that was his self-doubt at play again. He also secretly believed that the other dragons were treated better than he was.

His home life worsened as he learned more at school. School broadened his horizons and made his farm life, even his family, seem all the more restrictive. He began to feel as if his family actively wanted to hold him back, so he started to close off his mind to what they wanted from him, or what they thought about various subjects.

### **Child to Adult Transition**

*(adolescence)*

Beta became an adolescent and as he did, he felt more and more frustrated by the lack of opportunities offered to him by a farming life. His family noticed this frustration in him and did their best to talk him into accepting his place as a farmer. After all, they always needed more help with the farm and having him around helped. There was nothing malevolent or spiteful in this; they simply saw him as one of their clan and needed him to pull his weight.

Similarly, his attitude at school turned his fears of being underappreciated and ignored into a self-fulfilling prophecy: the more talented of his co-students did indeed begin to avoid him as they intuited (or indeed, heard him state outright) that he felt disadvantaged. It should be said however, that his tutors treated him as well as they did any good student. His parents didn't pay much attention to his progress in school and continued to assume that he would grow up to be a farmer.

However, one day something happened to change Beta's stalemate. During his adolescent years Beta made a high-caste friend. He had become very prone to isolating himself by this point, unwilling to risk the derision of higher-class dragons, so this may not have happened if the dragon, whose name was Copper, hadn't noticed Beta's element.

They met like this: one day Beta was struggling with a particular set of homework that he had been set at school. He became more and more frustrated that eventually he got angry and involuntarily caused a small bolt of lightning to come down from the sky and strike the ground close to him. It created a very loud crack of thunder. This was the first time he had ever done such a thing.

Copper did not go to the same school as Beta, but he happened to be close by, by chance. He saw that it was Beta who had summoned the lightning and remarked on how cool and unique Beta's element was.

Nobody had ever commented to Beta on his uniqueness before and he felt flattered (although he didn't like to admit it). However, Copper followed this up by inviting him to visit his home to get to know him better and this was such an 'out of the blue' invitation that Beta accepted. For his own part, the first thing Beta noticed about Copper was a high quality gold necklace around

his neck, and that clued Beta in to the fact that Copper was a high-caste dragon. Usually Beta expected to be looked down upon by such dragons, especially if they saw him as different (and he had just shown to Copper that he was different by demonstrating his unusual power), but Copper's inviting attitude gave Beta a reason to begin to re-think his place in society.

When Beta was 14 he attended a field trip to an area prone to earthquakes. One occurred during the trip and he used it to separate himself from the rest of the party. He neglected to leave any kind of message in his hurry to make use of this unique opportunity for a fresh start. Beta had alluded to Copper and a couple of close friends that he had thought about running away. However none of them had thought that he would actually do it, so when Beta disappeared after the earthquake they assumed that he had died. No body or blood was found and this was enough for Beta to be presumed dead.

Like many younger teenagers he was going through a stage of neurological development that made him less cautious, more willing to take risks, and this was a large factor in his deciding to leave in such a wholesale, hasty fashion.

Beta's parents were devastated by the news. For Terra's part, when she heard the news of her younger brother's disappearance (or very possible death) she denied it vehemently. Although her relationship with him hadn't been warm, she had felt a sense of connection to him in the way that many siblings do, and had known that he had looked up to her as a role model.

As stated before, his mother was devastated and felt that she had failed both of her children. Very soon after this she laid two more eggs and nurtured them to ensure that they hatched. When they did, she decided to give them more freedom than she had with Terra and Beta, to allow them to grow and develop in their own way. This was her way of trying to ensure that they would be happy and not have the same problems that her first two children had had.

Beta travelled to the north. The first part of his journey was through volcanic, rocky land. He began to hallucinate sights and voices, and this prompted him to try to turn back and return to civilization. However, whenever he tried to do this he would find himself facing north again, so in the end, unsure of what else to do, he gave up trying to return and kept heading north.

He travelled deep into a place that most other dragons avoided. Although he sensed that this was true, he didn't know why. With dragons being generally xenophobic no dragon who had the vision to travel far had told him of this places' dangers. Eventually the force that had been forever turning him north revealed itself as Malefor, a disembodied dragon.

Malefor had noticed Beta and recognised his potential for being manipulated and for becoming Malefor's ally. When he introduced himself to Beta, he requested of him that he continue to venture through the volcanic dead zone and further north. Beta did so. Beyond the volcanos the climate became cold very fast.

Within this harsh, cold land he found a small city. At Malefor's request he passed that too, to the edge of the ocean. There, he found a cave, which he entered. The cave led to a stronghold long-forgotten by dragons, and that is where Beta stopped travelling.

He remained there for 6 years, until he reached the age of 19 or 20.

Beta spent this time in service to Malefor. Malefor gave him tasks, which kept Beta active (which he had always liked), and either reward him, give him the opportunity to collect a physical item, or allow him to improve himself. For a long time Beta was satisfied with this and didn't pay attention to the greater scheme of what Malefor was directing him to do.

### **Closeness in Relationships**

*(young adulthood)*

He wouldn't return home until after an incident occurred with him and Malefor, I can explain in detail if you want, it's kinda long lol **[Yes please!]**

As for copper, I'm not 100% sure if they will ever meet again but I would be open to it.

### **Passing on Responsibilities**

*(older adulthood)*

**[Will come to this when I know more about his earlier life.]**

### **End of Life**

*(old age)*

**[Will come to this when I know more about his earlier life.]**

### **Credits**

Based on theory by:

Erikson, E., (1951) 'Childhood and Society', W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. chapter 7.

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~Hayley, The Character Consultancy