

Darcy the Dragonslayer
by Jules de Jongh
Season 2 Episode 23

[opening theme music and strapline]

Nanny Bea: Hello your timing is impeccable, the kettle has only just boiled and my neighbour Jules will be bringing us a story any...

[knock sfx]

Nanny Bea: minute now.

Nanny Bea: Who ever could that be? Hello?

Jules: Hello Nanny Bea, it's your neighbour Jules with a story.

Nanny Bea: Oh, come in, come in. Please tell me you've taken the inspiration from our faithful listener Darcy and grown that Story Seed into a full sized tale tree?

Jules: That is exactly what I've done. Darcy has inspired this story and I want to invite all our listening friends to get in touch with their story seeds, ideas and inspiration, that we can grow into a full sized tale. Just go to NannyBea.com. But I can't another minute. Are you ready for a story?

Nanny Bea: Oh, yes please.

Jules: Okay then, Darcy the Dragonslayer, adapted for radio

Darcy looked like an ordinary boy but looks can be deceiving. Darcy's class was full of boys; boys who never got themselves in trouble but often got others, boys who had the best grades and the worst friends, boys who played football, basketball, any ball at all, boys of every style but no boys like Darcy. He was one of a kind, extra-ordinary in fact but even Darcy himself didn't realise that until the middle of one dark night...

But I'm racing ahead, let me roll back to Darcy's 9th birthday, the beginning of it all. It was a colder, wetter day than expected, Darcy and his friends ended up playing games inside. They built a pillow fort and had a pillow fight. They made their own pizzas and Sundays, ice cream Sundays with every topping mother could think of. They had mini marshmallows, chocolate drops, rainbow sprinkles, they had crumbled oreo cookies and toffee pieces. She'd even bought one can of whipped cream for each child, the kind where it sprays out from the tip a flufftastic ribbon of cream. Mother made this purchase thinking they'd be outside and suffered as a result of them not being. It was actually quite revealing to see who would over top and leave half their portion, who would hold back and go for seconds of a

modest proportion and those who would over top and over eat making themselves sick. I shouldn't name, names so we'll just call him Shack, Shack Shonson to protect his identity (but you know who you are 'Shack').

After all that pizza, after all that ice cream there was still a cake to be had, one in the shape of massive dragon. It was supposed to be a dragon themed party but the theme only seemed to extend to the cake and invitations it seemed.

They finished the usual song, 'Happy Birthday to you'. Darcy blew out the candles, 'Whoo'. They ate the dragon cake, 'mmm, mmm, mmm'. And the unwrapping began, [insert unwrapping]. There was a lego set, a butterfly net, a transforming bot and Clone Wars clock. Darcy thought the fun would never end even when the party did. Each of his friends left one by one, or two by two for those organized enough to carpool. When all that was left was his best friend Ted who lived just down the lane so could walk home whenever he'd come to the end of his playing time or mother'd come to the end of her patience. But today they didn't mind if Ted stayed an extra long time. Gramps interrupted their play, declaring, 'It seems a good time this young lad open our gift?' Everyone got very excited, more excited than they'd been about any of his other gifts. Darcy was confused but just followed Gramps out to the garage. For a split second Darcy thought, 'Did they buy me a car?' Darcy has a very active imagination.

But better than that was Darcy's real gift from his family, they'd all chipped in together to buy him his very own... 'ta da!' Gramps said as he revealed... 'A bearded dragon!'

Now I know what you're thinking, a bearded dragon for a dragon slayer? But you may rest easy, a bearded dragon is actually a lizard and he doesn't even have a beard, just little spikes of skin that could, if you squint, in the dark, after a bad night's sleep, look like a beard.

Darcy had no idea all the running around behind the scenes that took place to sneak into the garage a bearded dragon, a bearded dragon's tank and a bearded dragon's tank stand. It was a major production. With all the uncles and aunts, and grans and gramps they pulled it off. Darcy had no idea that his much wished for wish was actually going to come true.

For the rest of the day Darcy forgot all about the lego set, the butterfly net, the transforming bot, and Clone Wars clock. All he could think about was Elwood, the invincible. Darcy and Ted made up all sorts of stories about Elwood ruling playground, Elwood eating their homework, Elwood sticky licking their enemies sandwiches. They played so long that Ted's mother came to look for him, in case he'd gotten stuck in a bush on the way home. Not as unusual as you think, there were a lot of prickly bushes between their houses.

Ted reluctantly left, as did Gran and Gramps, the uncles and the aunts after they shifted all that dragon gear into Darcy's bedroom, on his insistence. Darcy did not want to spend one night away from Elwood. That very night, Darcy was dreaming of dragons and knights. He watched them battle as he sat on the side of the lane playing a lute or the like. These dragons weren't as kind as Elwood and definitely weren't as small. They towered over Darcy and singed his hair with their breath. 'Rise up young man,' a galloping knight shouted to Darcy but Darcy just sat there playing his lute and hoping the dragon wouldn't notice or would really like his tune. Neither was the case. This dragon, Jeraceram was fierce, he was

massive and he was set on bbq Darcy for dinner. Darcy woke in a sweat, panting and quivering. He laid there in the dark, too afraid to fall back to sleep. He thought he was awake for several hours when he heard a whistle, '(whistle) hey Darcy, over here!' Darcy sat up and squinted as he looked around his room in the dark after a bad night's sleep. Then he saw it, or him actually, Elwood standing up on his legs with his big black beard, waving to Darcy. 'It's me Darcy, Elwood,' he said. Darcy slipped out of bed and went straight to the tank. 'Elwood, you do have a beard,' Darcy said. 'And I'm a dragon,' Elwood added. Darcy didn't even question that fact that Elwood was talking, I mean that would probably have been my first comment but I digress. 'As a fellow dragon, I can give you a few tricks of the trade, words for the wise, food for thought.' Darcy didn't have to reply, his eyes were eagerly listening. 'Jeraceram was once as small as me, every dragon was and inside each massive, bbq breathing dragon is still a little dragon with the same fears and uncertainty we all have. Don't let big talk from a big mouth scare you, you Darcy have a big brain, use it.'

That was a lot to take on board, every dragon is a little dragon deep inside. Darcy went back to bed and before he knew it was back to sleep where Jeraceram was waiting... 'So you've returned little man with a little, what is that?' 'It's a lute,' Darcy replied.

'I'd call it a fat ukele kind of mandolin but either way, what good is that against a massive, bbqing dragon like moi!'

Darcy had to agree but then again...did he. 'This fat ukele kind of mandolin would be an excellent vessel for scooping up...' Darcy said as he dipped his whatever you want to call it in the moat and scooped up a lute full of liquid or to Jeraceram, 'a lute full of lethal'. He wasn't very good at terminology this Jeraceram but you get his drift. Jeraceram quickly backed down, 'Woah, woah settled down buddy, no reason to get nasty now.'

'Unless you give me one,' Darcy snarled. Jeraceram shrunk back. Without all that fighting fury puffing him up, he was no bigger than Darcy. Darcy looked him in the eye. Jeraceram looked him in the lute. The tables had turned and Darcy knew he could take that dragon down, and so did the dragon. With that settled Darcy let his gaze drift and saw his lego set, his butterfly net, his transforming bot, and his Clone Wars clock. It was only just midnight, plenty of sleeping hours ahead of them. 'Fancy building a lego castle Jeraceram?' Darcy asked. 'Actually, it's Jerry. I just go for that whole Jeraceram thing to sound tougher. Any chance you could show me how to transform that bot, I can never work those things out,' Jerry said. Darcy pulled out the bot, whipped it into a truck, then into a plane then a bot again. Jerry looked confused so Darcy the whenever- he- needed- to- be- dragonslayer spent the rest of the night teaching Jerry the- actually- little- dragon- inside how to work it out.

The End

Nanny Bea: Oh, thank you Jules. That Elwood sounds so familiar, I'm certain I've met him before.

Jules: Well Elwood is beige with..

Nanny Bea: ...with orange zig zags of course, of course. He once arrived when my usual plumber Terrance was on holiday and I must say, he did such a splendid job with my plumbing I wish Terrance would go on holiday more often.

Jules: Plumbing, wow, a lizard of many skills.

Nanny Bea: Yes indeed. And I understand he is also a very gifted lute player.

Jules: Always good to know.

Nanny Bea: Will you be bringing us another story soon?

Jules: Of course, I'll be back next week for more Tales and Tea.

Thomas: Go to NannyBea.com

Jules: Go there to find out about all our episodes. You can like or follow us on iTunes or Spotify to get a reminder. And get in touch if you've got a story seed to inspire another tale like Darcy's.

[Be on the Show jingle]

Mr Announcer: This has been a Toad in the Hole production for NannyBea.com.