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## *Dragonkiss*

Dolores O'Brien Espinosa

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## Mythcon 51: A VIRTUAL “HALFLING” MYTHCON

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## Mythcon 52: The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien

Albuquerque, New Mexico; July 29 - August 1, 2022

<http://www.mythsoc.org/mythcon/mythcon-52.htm>

### Abstract

The chamber was a turmoil of ripping, snarling, and tearing as Quesa struggled and swore. She fought back hot tears of pain and rage while the fur flew fast and shrill cries rent the air.

### Keywords

Mythellany; Mythopoeic; Fiction; Dragonkiss; Dolores O'Brien Espinosa

# DRAGONKISS

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**DOLORES O'BRIEN ESPINOSA**

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Winner of Almost Every Nebulous Award

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if a body meet a body  
flyin' through the air,  
if a body catch a body,  
will they fly, and where?  
Ilka impact has its measure.  
N'ane, they say, hae I.  
Yet all the lads they measure me,  
or, at least - they try.

if a body meet a body  
altogether free,  
how they travel afterwards  
we do not always see.  
Each tradition has its jingle,  
In balladetics high.  
For me, I ken not ane o' them;  
and what the worse am I?

The chamber was a turmoil of ripping, snarling, and tearing as Quesa struggled and swore. She fought back hot tears of pain and rage while the fur flew fast and shrill cries rent the air. Finally, defeated, she ceased struggling. It was no use. You can't untangle hair that hasn't been combed in ten years. If you don't believe me, try it. Quesa faced the most awesome decision of her life: either to cut it all off as short as possible and wait for it to grow out new, or to keep on looking like something the watch-were dragged in. Well, you know our Quesa: never take the easy way out. With firm though trembling hand, Quesa raised the shears and clipped the matted, evil-smelling, cheesy clumps close to her head. When she finished, she surveyed herself grimly in the glass. "By the egg," she whispered...



Kain' he'p lubin'  
dat man o' mine.

Quesa maintained her cool demeanor as M'luv kicked her playfully down the stairs. ("Tee hee! She'll never know I really love her!")

"You're a fool, dearie," thought Rotunda. "If Mumble tried that on with me, he wouldn't be bunking on my doorstep right now."

"Shut up, you ignorant slut," thought Quesa.



who's between?  
Who's between.  
That's what I asked you:  
who's between?  
That's what I said:  
Who's between.

"Hey! I've got a great idea," said K'chu, "why don't we just all go between back in time, then we don't have to worry about the Noodledreads at all!

"Dummy!" said P'lar, "that won't work. The Noodledreads will fall anyway; only without us here to stop them, they'll eat up the whole planet. And then, when we get to now again, there'll be no Garn. Poof?"

"So what?" said E'gad. "We'll all just go between to back time again?"

"You mean," asked S'poz, "doing that forever?"

"Sure!"

"Sounds crazy, but it just - might - work!"

"Hold on!" sounded the authoritative, incisive voice of M'luv. "It won't work! We know now wearing between back is. If all us Garnese keep betweening backward every time we get to now, inevitably we'll become nervous wrecks and future generations will be imbeciles and neurotics."

"But," countered P'lar, "they'll be past generations, really."

"That's it!" cried B'lip. "I think I'm beginning to understand this now! We've been betweening backwards for thousands of years. We are past generations. We've got to between back because ...we already have!"

Quesa fainted and M'luv tossed some dregs of cold blah in her face. Quesa wakened, murmuring, "when am I?"



...it's such an imposition  
for a girl who's got ambition  
to be an in-between ...

Quesa stumbled proudly down the corridor to her sleeping-room where Mummy, the crusty old house-keeper with a heart of gold was making up the sleeping-furniture.

"If it don't look like an ex-convict and a couple o' fat old lollies been here a week," she grumbled. Then, on hearing Quesa enter, she turned and started.

"Bless us, child alive, you look all in. What you need is a nice cup of steamin' hot blah."

"Yuk," thought Quesa.

"Let's go out for a spin, dearie," thought Rotunda.

"Ah, it's good to get away," thought Quesa.

The cool wind and warm sunshine streamed refreshingly over her head as Rotunda's powerful wingstrokes carried them higher into the sweet, free air.

"If only we could get really away," yearned Quesa, "to someplace where there isn't any trouble. D'you s'pose there is such a place, Rotunda? It's not a place you can get to by a boat or a train. It's far, far away, behind the moon, beyond the rain ... somewhere, behind the beyond --"

Suddenly, without warning, Quesa found herself spinning in a void. After what seemed an endless no-time of churning nausea, and coincidentally just when she thought she couldn't stand another moment of it ...



off we go  
into the wild blue yonder  
Flying high  
Into the sun  
Down we dive  
Spouting our flames from under

Quesa flew breathlessly into the council chamber where matters had deteriorated since she left. K'mart and B'bop were squabbling childishly.

"You stink!"

"Do not!"

S'nor and B'gad were slumped in stupor. X'lx and P'yew were huddled in grim, desperate conference. P'tui and P'sha wrung their hands and sobbed helplessly. M'luv, however, sat erect and soldierly, every inch the Weyrleader, getting quietly stinking on his tenth cup of blah.

"Attention!" trumpeted Quesa; her ringing tones instantly marshalled the men to alertness. "I think I've found the answer to our problems. We'll go -- Behind the Beyond. I've just been there and--"

"Fool!" screamed M'luv as he hurled his tankard at her head. "You might've been hurt! Not that I'd care," he added hastily, and limitless love and longing lay behind his white face and glaring eyes. Quesa met his gaze, her eyes dark with triumph and defiance. Then, with a peculiar sliding motion that he would remember all his life, she was at his side. Her voice, low and pleading, persuasive, thrilled him.

"You're right," he said at last. "This explains everything. All the auld ballads make sense now!"

"It's about time!" sang P'lar.

"Ha ha, ha ha," said all the guys.

"It all hangs together," resumed M'luv. "Behind the Beyond is the B'all! Quesa I ... I don't think I hate you anymore!"

"Darling!"



Answers to Crossword Puzzles Page 20, Page 29

