



**GINGERSNAPS**  
Changeling Press

# **Gingersnaps: Pole Serpent**

## **Reneé George**

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**Mire Darkly just wants to be left alone. Why else would an ice dragon isolate himself in a little town in Mexico during the hottest Christmas ever? Add in a mysterious local guy, a closing bar, and a game of pool -- Mire discovers it's a combination guaranteed to double the heat.**

## Gingersnaps: Pole Serpent

"This is totally whack," Mire Darkly murmured as he wiped the sweat weeping over his brow.

As a cold-natured beast, he was hard pressed to find any good reason for being in Itzen, Mexico (a village so small it didn't make the map) during the hottest winter on record. Other than it was the last place in the world the hunters would look for him. Damn, it was hard being an endangered species, especially when the World Conservation Union had no idea he even existed. Of course if they did, he'd be wearing a tracking collar or some such nonsense, and Mire was a free man, well, ice dragon.

Problem was, he didn't have enough money to stay anywhere but a low-budget inn, and the place didn't have air conditioning. The ceiling fan only served to circulate the hot, hot moist air around, and made the small room feel like a convection oven. He'd tried blowing frost into the fan a couple of times, but the cold hitting the heated air produced a mini rain cloud which soaked his bed with warm water.

It was Mire's first night in town, and he was finding the climate, and the locals, less than hospitable or pleasant. Even with it being Christmas (a favorite of the humans), the heat made everyone miserable.

What was it the humans always said? *I'm dreaming of a white Christmas.*

Unless he flew way up north, that wasn't going to happen. Besides, his transformation would be tracked. *Fucking hunters.*

Carelessly, he threw on a pair of cotton shorts, a tank top, and his flip-flops and headed down the stone steps to the lobby bar. Earlier when he'd checked in, there had been a few people milling at the bar, or playing pool on an old slate table, and nearly all of them regarded him with suspicion.

There had been a cool breeze from the window air conditioning unit, a saving grace if the bar was still open at two in the morning.

A young man, maybe late twenties, solid build, and thick dark hair, stood behind the bar cleaning a glass with a wet rag Mire suspected was less than fresh. The man unplugged a pitiful sprig strung with colored lights. A poor man's Christmas tree.

Even with the oscillating fans and the one window unit spewing loudly in the corner window, perspiration beaded his tan skin. On first glance, the bartender's narrow face and high cheekbones would have made Mire think the man was of Spanish descent, but when the guy looked up his crystal blue eyes framed with black eyelashes changed Mire's mind.

Whether it was the delirium of the heat or the handsome physique of the man behind the bar, the dragon found him desirable, worthy of possessing, if only for a short while. Mire, like most dragons, was attracted to beautiful objects whether they were inanimate or animate. His emerald ring, six-carat weight and marquis-cut set in platinum, was proof positive. Here Mire was, dead-broke. The ring would have brought him plenty of money to live on, especially down in Mexico, but he couldn't bear to part with the flawless jewel. Besides, the ring was special to him. It had been a gift from a former lover who said it matched the color of his eyes.

"*Cerrado*," the man said, rolling his R's in a way that made Mire's flesh dance.

"Uhm, do you speak English? *Habla usted inglés?*" Mire spoke a little Spanish, not much though, but enough to understand that the man had just told him the bar was "closed." If he was going to convince him to stay open for a little while, it would help if they were speaking the same language.

The bartender rubbed another glass from the inside out, his intense stare betraying nothing more than boredom. "We're closed," he said in response.

"It's really hot in my room. I was hoping to soak up some air so I could get some sleep."

"Closed," the man repeated.

Mire walked over to the pool table. The cool breeze of the air conditioner hit his back, delightfully chilling. His core temperature had to have hit a hundred and twenty degrees easily, and the small unit felt like an arctic blast. "*La brisa esta rica,*" he said, trying to charm the man with a phrase he knew.

"Look, mister. I don't know how many ways you need to be told the bar is closed. *Cerrado. Fermé. Chiuso. Geschlossen.* Closed."

Well, he was definitely putting a new spin on how Mire viewed the locals. The man had spoken Spanish, French, Italian, German, and English. A dichotomy. An educated guy in an impoverished village, working as a bartender. Getting cool was becoming secondary to his fascination with the local flavor.

"Shouldn't you be at home with your wife and children? Christmas morning and all that ho-ho stuff." Mire wasn't above pursuing a married man, but it was good to know as much about your prey as possible.

"Closed," the man repeated, giving nothing away.

Mire rolled a ball across the pool table. "I'm Mire Darkly. What's your name?"

"*Nadie.*" He put a glass on the pyramid stack behind the bar. "I'm afraid I must ask you to return to your room, or go elsewhere."

*Nobody, huh?* If the man wanted to be known as nobody, Mire would oblige. "Well, *Nadie.* This is a one-horse town, and I'm afraid this bar is the only watering hole." Mire took off his tank top and rubbed his hand across his chest. "How about we play a game of eight-ball to decide if the place stays open for a while longer or not?"

Nadie put the wet towel over his shoulder. He came out from behind the bar, and Mire noticed his white T-shirt was stained with dust from the red clay that permeated the region. His faded jeans fit him snugly at the hips. His eyes narrowed as he drew closer to his unwelcome customer. "There is nothing in it for me. You win, you win. I win, you've succeeded in keeping the bar open for a while longer, you win."

Up close, Nadie's eyes were like the crystal clear *cenote* Mire had dipped in on his way to Itzen. They also had the same refreshing appeal. Mire blinked, then silently

cursed at the change of expression on Nadie's face. He must have blinked with his internal lids, something that would freak out even the heartiest of humans.

"What would you like as a prize?" he asked the bartender.

Nadie tilted his head and chewed the inside of his cheek for a moment before answering. "The ring."

Being a dragon didn't give Mire any special powers with a game of pool, but he'd spent his share of time hustling for money over his three hundred years. The ring as a prize though?

Turning the jewel on his finger, Mire sized up his competition. Nadie looked more than capable, but the dragon liked a challenge, and the hot Latino with the ice cold eyes might prove to be the most interesting puzzle he'd found since he went on the run. Besides, there were no rules saying he couldn't take the ring back if he happened to lose it in the first place.

Plus, he was confident he'd win, and maybe more than just the game. He nodded to the dark-haired man. "Rack 'em up."

Mire picked a stick from behind the table, an eighteen ounce. Perfect weight for a break. He rolled it across the worn felt top -- slightly crooked, but he didn't think he'd get one in cherry condition. The test of a real player was the ability to use any bar cue.

Nadie tightened the balls in the triangle, and Mire could think of a couple of other balls he wouldn't mind the bartender racking up.

Once he finished, the dark-haired mystery man rolled the cue ball across the table toward Mire. "Break."

\* \* \*

Jacob eyed Mire Darkly. When the silver-haired man with deep green eyes had blinked with his nictitating membranes, he'd confirmed himself as dragon. Jacob had himself only come to the village this week, after whispered rumors of a strange man making his way through small towns along the Yucatan area. He came from a long line of hunters, his father having killed the last dragon sighted three years ago in Arizona.



The problem with hunting dragons was they only had one vulnerability, the soft skin of the inner upper thigh. The sharpest of metals couldn't penetrate most of their hide, even in human form.

Jacob's only real advantage would be surprise over the powerful beast. But since the dragon refused to sleep, he might be able to use the game of pool to his advantage. If he could get Mire to let his guard down, Jacob would go in for the kill. He'd hidden a dagger in the ball catch at the front of the pool table. It was now just a matter of getting the drop on the dragon.

Unfortunately, the dragon's charm hadn't escaped the hunter. Mire was beautiful in a nearly hypnotic way. When he'd taken off his shirt -- his pale muscular chest moist with perspiration -- it had taken Jacob everything not to lick his lips with approval. As it was, his cock hadn't behaved at all, growing thick in his tight jeans.

*Shame such a handsome form is wasted on a dragon.*

He watched Mire slide his hand seductively down the shaft of the cue stick before lining up on the white ball. His arm hinged at the elbow, thrust forward, scattering the colored balls into all directions. He sank three solids -- the one, the four, and the five -- and one stripe -- the eleven.

"Nice break," Jacob said in concession.

The dragon licked the tip of his cue, blue dust clinging to his tongue before he chalked his stick. Hungry lust dipped inside Jacob as he watched, imagining what Mire's tongue would feel like against the tip of his own stick.

Dragons had been around since the beginning of time, wreaking havoc, stealing treasures, and causing all around general strife. Even the Bible mentioned dragons in the form of pole serpents.

Jacob, having problems with his own pole serpent, resisted rubbing his hand over the front of his jeans.

Mire smiled. "I'll take the little ones, I think. Six ball, corner pocket." Looping the end of the stick with his left index finger, the dragon gently tipped the cue ball toward the green six. It rolled up the felt and sank into the corner.

"Nice shot."

The dragon raised one eyebrow. "I've always had an affinity for balls... big or small."

"I bet," Jacob mumbled, shifting uncomfortably as the words traveled like silk fingers down his skin.

Mire walked around the edge of the table, his body sideways to the hunter. "Two in the side."

The position made it hard to miss the dragon's erection tenting his shorts. Jacob wasn't the only one turned on. He decided to try for an advantage.

Stepping to the opposite side of the table, he stripped his own shirt, wiping the sweat from his face before casually dropping it to the floor just as the dragon slid his stick.

It was enough to make Mire miscue. "Hmm." The silver-haired man pursed his lips. "Your shot."

"*Gracias.*" Jacob chose a stick. He wasn't an expert at pool, or even much of a novice. His life had been about training for one purpose -- hunt down the last of the dragons and kill them. Mire would be his first. In accepting the game though, he'd put himself in a quandary.

He wasn't sure what to do next. He stared at the table, chewing his lower lip.

Mire let out a stuttering breath. Cool wisps of frost clung to the air for a second then evaporated. "Trouble deciding?"

"Yes. I'll admit, I'm not very good at this game."

The dragon dipped his fingertip below the band of his shorts. "Then why'd you take the bet, Nadie?"

"Nothing to lose." He gestured around the bar, then glanced meaningfully at the ring. "And everything to gain." Let the dragon think he was only interested in the jewel. Keep him distracted.

"Would you like some instruction?"

The dragon's offer of help surprised the hunter, but it was also an opportunity. An avenue of getting closer to Mire, and closer to his goal. "I think I would," Jacob finally said.

The young man looked even better shirtless. He wanted the bartender more and more, wanted to possess him in every way. The dragon hadn't felt this kind of pull toward another being in a very long time. Sure, he'd taken lovers, but none of them made his whole body vibrate like the man standing across from him. There was something dangerous and mysterious in all his dark beauty. This self-proclaimed nobody turned and regarded Mire with cold blue eyes, smoldering just below the surface.

Mire strolled around the table, slipping behind the young man. "What's your name?" he breathed against his ear.

"Jacob." The bartender flinched. "Shit."

"Ah." Mire smiled. Dragon's breath was like truth serum without the deadly side effects. "Jacob."

Mire placed his hands on Jacob's shoulders. "Where are you from?"

The dark-haired man stiffened. "Around."

*Resistant?* Even more interesting. Jacob wasn't a man easily manipulated, Mire thought. He pressed his chest against the human's back, their skin melding in sweat and heat.

"What are you doing?" Jacob's voice sounded shaky, uncertain.

"Just giving you instruction," Mire answered. "As promised." He positioned Jacob's arms and lined up a shot on the broadly striped orange lying against the upper rail. "Thirteen's in good position. Just stroke gently and barely give it a kiss."

He slipped his hand around Jacob's waist, and when the young man didn't pull away, he slid his fingers beneath the loose waistband. Hair curled around Mire's fingertips as he brushed over the tip of Jacob's hard cock. He flicked his tongue over the young man's sweat-salted earlobe. "Would you like me to demonstrate?"

The human turned to face him. The pained and passionate look in his eyes served as fuel for Mire's desire. Would Jacob punch him or kiss him? The question was answered quickly. Jacob's hand flew to Mire's white hair, grasping a handful; the young man pulled him down to his mouth, devouring the dragon's lips with hungry lust.

His tongue thrust against Mire's, their lips frantically dancing together with the desperation of the lonely. "Is that a yes?" Mire asked breathlessly when Jacob eased back.

Jacob's calloused hands moved roughly along Mire's sides. "Shut up." He shifted forward with a swiftness that caught Mire unaware, capturing the dragon's lips with his own, devouring and feeding hungrily, as if Mire was his last meal. The kiss started frantically, and ended just the same. Jacob bit down on Mire's lower lip, then pushed him back against the wall. Breathing heavily like he'd finished a ten-mile run, Jacob slid his hand onto the table to hold himself up. His fingers knocked his pool stick over, sending the cue ball spinning away.

Mire raised an eyebrow. "That's called a miscue." He grabbed his stick and moved back to the table. "My shot."

Jacob's gaze met Mire's. "You talk too much."

His expression was a combination of lust and anger. Mire understood the lust, he felt it thickly in the air around the two of them, but the anger part confused him.

He cocked his head to the side when he stopped in front of Jacob, only a few inches parting them. "Let me demonstrate how to handle a stick and ball."

Dropping to his knees in front of Jacob, Mire's teeth bit through the thick jean fabric, nibbling Jacob's hard length with his teeth. Every caress brought a different sound from the bartender -- moans and whimpers of pleasure. He leaned back to watch Jacob's face as he tugged the faded jeans over his hips.

Taking Jacob's cock into his hand, he admired the firm, smooth shaft, straight, large, and the skin tautly drawn. He lifted the shaft away from the young man's abdomen. "First, you moisten the tip."

Deftly, he flicked his tongue over the pearl of pre-come nesting on the bulbous head, savoring the taste over his sensitive palate. "This is to help the chalk stick, for better traction on the cue."

Jacob's body shivered, goose bumps rising on his exposed skin, but he didn't move away or resist the dragon's ministrations.

Palming Jacob's testicles with his right hand, while his left thumb and forefinger circled the base of the shaft, the dragon placed a kiss below his navel. "Getting your hands positioned right is half the battle. You must be familiar with all the equipment in order to master their use."

Mire kissed and licked his way along the indentation between Jacob's abdomen and thigh. The hunter fought to keep his legs from buckling beneath him.

The dragon rested his lips briefly over the pounding artery before he took one of Jacob's balls into his mouth, tugging and sucking until Jacob's knees finally gave way and the hunter had to use both his hands to brace himself against the table.

Giving Jacob's testicles one last suck, he released them, his teeth grazing along the loose sac. "Ball handling can be for competition or just pleasure." He nuzzled his cheek against Jacob's turgid shaft. "I prefer pleasure. Don't you?"

"Suck me," Jacob whispered harshly, his eyes rolling to a close. "Please." The dragon's mouth felt cool on his hot flesh and he wanted to sink his cock deep inside the ice.

"An eager learner." Mire chuckled, then took Jacob's shaft between his lips. He drew the length deeper into his mouth, rolling his tongue across the distended veins. He yanked Jacob's jeans down to his feet, maneuvering them as Jacob stepped out. He stroked the shaft firmly with his lips and tongue.

Jacob's legs stabilized. He grasped Mire's hair and yanked his head back. "I want to watch."

Mire reacted physically to the voice, swallowing Jacob's cock to the back of his throat until he could stick his tongue down and lick the line between his balls. Game or no game, Mire meant to have Jacob. Have him completely.

"Oh, shit," Jacob rasped. He held Mire's lips against the base, amazed at how good it felt, amazed at how much he'd rather be fucking the dragon than killing him. With earnest, he began thrusting into Mire's mouth, his cock bottoming against the soft give of the dragon's throat. The swallowing motions Mire enacted set all the nerves in Jacob's cock on fire.

Jacob's blood rushed from his brain, making him feel light-headed and euphoric as the pressure built, his cock stiffening to impossibly hard. He slammed his hips forward over and over, Mire taking each joust of his shaft like no human could possibly manage.

"Oh fuck! Ah!" Jacob bellowed as the first wave of the orgasm hit. His body bowed forward, shuddering from his shoulders to the base of his spine.

Mire latched on tighter, sucking more vigorously as he milked every drop of come from Jacob. The hunter had never felt so fully spent. He dropped to his knees when Mire released him and leaned his head against the rail of the table. "Damn, you're incredible."

Wiping the corner of his mouth, Mire leaned in, taking Jacob's lower lip into his mouth. The combination of saliva and his own secretions heated Jacob's appetite, arousing his cock more suddenly than he expected. Nips and bites flitted along his throat, chest, abdomen, and he felt Mire's shaft slide along his thigh.

*When had the dragon lost his shorts?* And did it matter? The dragon's skin was pale perfection, and surprisingly, his body was completely hairless, including the area around his magnificent cock.

"I'm so going to fuck you."

The menacing way the dragon said the words sent an aching desire through Jacob. Suddenly, Mire wrapped his arms under Jacob's legs and lifted him to the edge of the pool table. "You will never forget me, Jacob."

Jacob thought the same of the dragon, since his face was the last the beast would ever see.

Balanced precariously on the rail, Jacob watched, nearly enthralled as Mire wet his fingers with saliva and rubbed the tips against Jacob's ass. The hunter moaned as one digit, then two slipped inside him, stretching the tight ring of his anus in preparation.

Mire's index finger slipped past the first muscular ring and Jacob's mouth formed an "O" as the dragon breathed cool air along his chest. The different sensations flooded him as Mire worked his finger around slowly, while his tongue flicked and curled around the hunter's hardened nipples. He wanted the dragon inside him; he wanted to be taken and possessed, even if it would only last for this moment. This unblemished moment.

His fingers grasped the ball slot at the front of the table, and the knife he'd hidden there scraped his skin. There was no way to escape duty, but it could wait until the moment of orgasm, when the dragon would least suspect an attack. At least that was the lie Jacob told himself.

This had started as a simple game, a means to cooling down on a hot night. Leaning forward, Mire pushed Jacob's legs higher and guided his cock to the silky hot channel.

"Oh, that's it. Yes," he mumbled as he pushed deeper, just past the pleasure spot within Jacob's canal, and withdrew, kissing Jacob's chest, teasing his nipples, with the same languid rhythm. The dragon growled with passion as he began pumping his lower body in smooth strokes.

"You feel so goddamn tight. So hot, so good. Tell me you want me."

"Yes," the young man murmured through his groans. "I want you."

Mire could feel the shift in his body; his dragon, the natural state of being, was threatening to turn from human form to one that would freak out this young human who so willingly took his thrusts. "Shit," he grunted. "Fuck."

"Yes, fuck me. Fuck me," Jacob mumbled.

Jacob's eyes met Mire's and shock fell over his face. The dragon knew his eyes had changed from circular pupils to slits. He couldn't help it. It'd been so long since he'd felt this much passion for another being, and he was losing control.

"I'm sorry, Jacob. Sorry," he said through gritted teeth as the first of his scales popped like flipping dominoes across his skin. His shoulders pushed against the insides of Jacob's knees, as his now clawed hands grasped the table felt and dug in.

*"Madre de Dios,"* the human whispered in awe.

Jacob didn't try to run, didn't try to stop the sex, both actions surprising Mire beyond comprehension. Instead the young man closed his eyes and settled back against the table, his hips rocking upward to meet each thrust from Mire.

"Faster!" he cried out. "Harder."

While Mire couldn't control his transformation, he could control his hips, and what the young man asked for could damage him in a way Jacob wouldn't be able to recover from. But he increased the pace, sliding in and out. The human's canal grasped his cock, milking it, sending the rest of his body over the edge as wings sprouted from his back and his tail whipped around.

"Ah!" Jacob groaned when Mire's cock increased in size, nearly double the thickness of his human form.

He paused, allowing Jacob time to adjust. "Is it too much?"

"No, no. It's good. So good. Don't stop. Oh, hell. Oh!" Jacob bellowed as his cock unleashed come onto the silvery scales of Mire's stomach.

An intense rush ran through Mire's body as his own orgasm tore through him and a roar ripped past his lips. Straightening his back and pulling Jacob's lower body against him, he let his wings flap a warm breeze as he finished in pulsing thrusts. He gasped and his body convulsed as he drove himself deeper into Jacob, shuddering with ecstasy.

As his cock softened, he withdrew from the human. Jacob's legs slid down when Mire stood up straight, staring into the wondrous blue eyes. His body shifted to semi-



human. He leaned forward to embrace the human, but felt the distinct sharpness of a blade against his femoral artery.

"So, a hunter?" he asked, surprised at his own stupidity.

"I'm afraid so," Jacob replied. Keeping the blade in place, the hunter looked behind him at the felt table.

"What are you waiting for, Jacob?" Mire held his hands out. "Claim your prize."

Jacob chewed his lower lip. "You scratched the eight ball. You lose the pool game."

"It looks like I'm just losing all over tonight."

Raising an eyebrow, the hunter stared at the dragon. They were natural predators, both, and the instinct to kill or defend was a tightly bound coil between them, but for the third time this night, Jacob surprised Mire. "Best two out of three?" He tilted his head to one side. "Call it a Christmas gift."

"I thought hunters were atheists?"

"You want to discuss my religion or do we continue?"

Mire smiled. "I can live with that."

"For now." Jacob smiled for the first time, his face alight with pleasure. He dropped his blade on the table and claimed the dragon in a kiss. "For now."

## **Reneé George**

The consummate lady-of-all-trades, award-winning author Reneé George has been a medic, a nurse, a web site designer, and a small press editor. She can make candles, build a deck, and redo a bathroom, but writing is her true passion.

Reneé loves to cook, which is a good thing with a growing boy and hungry husband around. The men in Reneé's life are very understanding (which really means they ignore her when she grumbles at the computer), making sure she has plenty of coffee on hand. She and her family live in a small, mid-western town, sharing their home with two dogs and a very independent cat.

Readers who visit her web site at [www.romance-the-night.com](http://www.romance-the-night.com) will find information on upcoming works as well as a fantastic gallery of Reneé's graphic art. Fans may write her at [rgeorge@romance-the-night.com](mailto:rgeorge@romance-the-night.com) or join the news group at [www.groups.yahoo.com/group/renee\\_george\\_news](http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/renee_george_news).