**Blurring the Lines**

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**Blurring the Lines**

by **HouseofTheBear**

**Summary**

AU Modern. Jorah Mormont, high-powered CEO of a major company, is in need of a new secretary. Enter Daenerys Targaryen. The line between professional and personal is about to blur.

**Notes**

Time for something a bit different. I decided to put Jorah & Daenerys in a AU modern
setting. I hope it works out to everyone's liking.

The mention of "football" in this story references soccer (not American Football). Just wanted to clear up any confusion :)

The sex scene was inspired by a gif from Poirot's "Elephants Can Remember". I think we all know the one I mean ;)

There is one curse word in this story...just a head's up.

And, for some reason, I heard "Justify My Love" by Madonna when I wrote the sex scene. I'm not sure why as the words don't really fit with the story. I think its more about the beat of the music. And that might be where the chapter titles come from too.

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Wanting

He hadn’t hired her just for her looks, although they were a considerable bonus to the skill set that she brought to the job. He had been deeply impressed by her resume and then by the poise and eloquence she showed during the interview, so much so that he didn’t even bother to interview the other candidates for the position of his secretary. He called her the very next day to inform her that she was hired and would be starting that following Monday.

She was punctual and ever attentive to the needs of his fast-paced office, almost anticipating his requests before he voiced them. She seemed to thrive under pressure and he could count on her to get done what he needed when he needed it with time to spare. While she had all of the qualities he wanted in a secretary, it was other aspects of her personality that appealed to him as well. She had a quick wit, was well-educated and had an air of confidence not born of arrogance. He couldn’t help but marvel at her physical attributes too. She was exotically beautiful, with her violet eyes and her long light, almost white, blond hair, which she always wore in an elaborate set of braids. The curves of her body were just enough to suit him, and while she may have been petite, her shapely legs were very attractive. Especially when she wore her high heels, which accentuated the curves of her bottom even more, on perfect display in those black skin-tight pencil skirts she always seemed to wear. Her blouses were always tasteful, showing only the barest hint of the swell of her full but perky breasts. Weeks of seeing her around his office, looking so tantalizing beautiful, had him thinking about her in ways that were very unprofessional.

Daenerys had always found confident men attractive, and her boss Jorah, was no exception. He commanded every room he was in and exuded a magnetism that had everyone drawn to him. But there was no egotism to his self-confidence. It was simply born of the knowledge that he knew what he wanted and that he knew how to get it. He was well-spoken and very intelligent, with a dry yet sometimes sarcastic wit. But it was the combination of those, along with his physical qualities, that had her well and truly infatuated within weeks of being hired. He may have been an older man, she guessed in his late 40s, but he had a body guys her own age would have been envious of. She knew he played football and had done so most of his life, which had built a lean strength one could not get in a gym. His legs were toned, and on the rare occasions that he had taken off his suit jacket, she found herself gawking at his backside. “Impressive” was the only word that seemed to fit, and even then it still wasn’t good enough. His shoulder to waist ratio was considerable and his expertly tailored suit jacket clung to the broadness of his shoulders. She often found herself wondering how soft the ginger curls at the nape of his neck might be and what his short beard might feel like against her skin, or as she thought when she was alone, how it might feel between her legs. And then it was his hands, his large masculine hands that she watched as he signed documents or as they moved over the keys of his computer’s keyboard. She thought about them too, what pleasure they might draw from her body as he touched her.

But, with all of these sexy qualities that he possessed, it came down to two that made her heart start to race: his voice and his eyes. She listened as he spoke to clients or led a meeting. The deep, smooth richness of his voice had her often imagining how he might sound whispering naughty things against her ear as he held her back against his chest, his arms encircling her. She had found him looking at her on numerous occasions. Well, “looking” wasn’t the right word either, because the gaze of his blue eyes was so intense, so penetrating, that it was as if he were reading her private thoughts, that he knew what they did together in her mind.

It went on for a few more months like this, her desire for him steadily building until it reached a boiling point one afternoon. They had just wrapped a long and important meeting, her arms full of papers as she tried unsuccessfully to maneuver the large glass doors of the conference room open.
“Here, let me help you”, the sound of a deep voice came from over her right side. She glanced over her shoulder to find those eyes staring at her as his hand came up to the door by her head and pushed it open. She stepped into the hallway without looking and walked right into another employee who was rushing by. He jostled her; she dropped the papers from her arms as she felt herself falling backward. Wait, she thought, no I’m not, as two strong hands reached out to keep her from falling, one on her arm and the other, oh heavens above, at her waist. His grip was strong, but not painful, as he steadied her. Their eyes met, the sound of the room falling away as the senses of her entire body shifted their focus to the touch of his hands and the feel of his body against her, her backside nestled squarely against his crotch. Oh my.

She found her voice finally after what seemed like an age, breathy and flustered, “I’m sorry.”

“It’s no problem. Are you all right?”, his voice sounded even deeper to her now and it was laced with concern.

She nodded furiously, not trusting her voice just then. She reluctantly eased from his hold and crouched to gather her papers before standing and smiling nervously, her fingers tucking a non-existent hair behind her ear, murmuring a soft “thank you” before she rushed off down the corridor to her desk. She hadn’t seen the deep breath he took, his jaw clenched as he ran his hand over his beard and stared at her retreating form.

She had dumped the papers on her desk before rushing off to the bathroom, into a stall and slamming the door shut, leaning back against it as she tried to calm her raging desire. She still felt the ghost of his touch at her waist; it had felt like an electric spark had skittered across every nerve in her body, all coalescing to throb at her clit. She could tell that she was tremendously wet, far wetter than she had ever been after such a simple touch. He didn’t even touch me anywhere sexual and I’m just about ready to come, she thought. She closed her eyes and tried to calm her heart, thinking of scrubbing toilets to cleanse her mind of all the naughty thoughts that raced through it. Once she felt more under control, she went to the sink and splashed a bit of cool water on her face for good measure as her cheeks were flushed. She patted her face dry and glanced at herself in the mirror, before taking one last deep breath and leaving to face him again.

He sat at his desk as he watched her return to hers, as she busied herself with organizing her files. He noticed something different about her, a slight tremble to her hands and a fading flush at her cheeks. He remembered he returned to his office and shut the door, closing his eyes and trying not to think of how perfectly her bottom had felt as it settled intimately against his groin. He looked down and found himself semi-hard at the thought, somewhat surprised that, fully clothed and lasting only a few moments, she had elicited that intense of a reaction from him. He shook his head and ran his hands through his hair, thinking of estimated profit projections to calm his desire, before taking a deep breath and opening the door again.

She went home that night, poured a glass of wine and undressed for a long hot bath. As she lay in the warm water, she thought back to what happened earlier, replaying it over in her mind. Her desire flared anew and she reached down between her legs to find herself slick, knowing there was only one way to take the edge off. Her fingers moved over her clit slowly, building the pleasure, the fantasy in her mind of him kneeling before her as she sat on his desk, his mouth between her legs, her panties pushed to the side in his haste to taste her. His words from before echoed in her head: let me help you. Her orgasm rose quickly and she came hard, the waves so intense she could make no sound as they crashed over her. It took her a while to come down from her high, and once she had, she found herself still incredibly aroused. She groaned as she sunk down in the cooling water, what the hell have I got myself into, her only thought.

The rest of the week was agony for her, being around him and trying so hard not to think of him in a
sexual way was wearing her thin. She was short with people and that shocked her. She was never that way at work. She went to take a document from him to be faxed, but his hand didn’t let it go. “Is everything all right?” He seemed genuinely concerned for her; she could see it in his eyes.

She sighed, “I know, I’m sorry. I just- “ She cleared her throat before she continued, “have a lot on my mind.”

He watched her, his gaze intense as he seemed to be gauging her thoughts and emotions. “If you ever need anything, I’m here, all right?” She nodded simply, before he continued, “Take a long lunch today. You deserve it.” He gave her a small smile, the one she noticed he only reserved for her.

She held his eyes far longer than she felt she should have before she took the paper from his hand, saying a quiet “Thank you” before she left.

He worked late that evening because a big deadline loomed next week. He looked up from his computer to find her still hard at work, typing a memo he had given her. He glanced at his watch, 7:30pm, and he could not believe the time had gone by so fast. He rolled his neck, hearing a satisfying pop as the tension released. He watched as she stood to take the document from the printer and, paper clipping it to another sheet of paper, walked into his office. Something about her the last few days concerned him; she was easily distracted and very flustered around him, very much out of character for her.

She held out the papers to him. “Here’s the memo regarding the acquisition. Will there be anything else before I go?”

He took them from her. “No, thank you. I’ve kept you much too late as it is.”

Perhaps it was the lateness of the hour, but the way she stood there, almost in expectation of something, gave him pause and he felt a shift in his thinking.

She gave him a small smile. “It’s no trouble. Good night,“ She paused as she saw something change in his eyes, before she finished softly, “Jorah.”

He had decided after she had been there a short while that it would be easier to just refer to one another by their first names, something she found odd as no boss had ever suggested that to her. But, when he had said her name once in that voice of his, she didn’t mind one damn bit. In fact, she looked forward to it every day.

Something inside Jorah snapped at the sound of his name, so breathy, coming from her lips. “Wait,” he said.

She stopped at the door and turned at his word, his tone raw; the air was charged with electricity. “Yes?”

He hesitated, his logical mind telling him to stop, but he would not listen. “Close the door, please, and lock it.” His voice was rough with want as he stood from his chair and rounded the desk to stand in front of it.

She shut the door and flipped the lock slowly closed before she turned and leaned back against it. She watched as his dark vest stretched so tight over chest with each breath he took, the thread holding the buttons threatened to give. Her heart raced as she approached him and grabbed his tie in her hand, unwilling to wait for him to make a move. Their eyes met an instant before their mouths did; she still had to rise up slightly, despite her heels, to meet his lips. His arms wrapped around her,
pulling her tight to his body. He turned them and walked her back until she met the edge of his desk, taking her hips in his hands and lifting her onto it, her hands behind her sending papers and other items scattering to the floor so she could lie back. Her hand gripped the back of his head, his mouth never leaving hers as he leaned over her. Their kiss was rough and passionate, the rasp of his beard against her face deliciously sensual. He bit at her bottom lip before he drew his tongue over it before diving back into her mouth for another taste. He left her lips to kiss the arched column of her throat, his tongue darting out to taste the slight saltiness of her skin. Her fingers threaded through the hair at the back of his head, gripping it as he licked at her pulse, her body arching against his, breathy sighs and whimpers leaving her lips at his ministrations. He opened her blouse just enough to pull the fabric of her lace bra aside, taking her hard nipple into his mouth, circling the turgid flesh before biting it lightly between his teeth. He did the same to her other breast before he stood and ran his hands over the outside of her legs, up under her skirt, over the lace tops of her thigh high stockings to the band of her panties where he gripped it in his hands. She lifted herself from the desk a bit so he could pull them off. He held the sheerest suggestion of underwear he had ever seen in his hand for a moment, they were soaked with her arousal and his cock throbbed. She watched as he slipped them into his pants pocket, a thrill running through her at the idea that he wanted to keep them for later, an erotic souvenir of their imminent coupling.

He watched as she pulled her skirt up to bunch around her hips, so eager in her desire for him. He saw her shimmering wetness clinging to her pale soft curls, the rosy-red lips of her sex peeking through. He ran two of his fingers over her and her breath caught, her slickness coating the digits before he brought them to his mouth, groaning loudly around them at her delicious musky flavor. His eyes were full of lust as he said, “You’re as sweet as I thought you would taste. Next time, I’ll kneel and worship you with my mouth.”

She whimpered at his erotic promise, exhilarated to find out that this wouldn’t be the only time she would have him. But right now she could not wait another second. She leaned up one arm and grabbed his tie again, her voice needy, “Take me, Jorah.”

His eyes held hers as he reached down and unzipped his pants, not bothering to unfasten his belt, before he reached in and freed himself. He saw her eyes flick to his cock, a sharp inhalation of breath as her tongue darted out to wet her lips. He saw lust burning in her eyes as he thrust into her hard, filling her completely. She fell back against the desk, her back arching at the delicious way he stretched her, mewling at how thick he felt inside her. “Ohh, yes,” Daenerys moaned, her hand cupping her breast, pinching her nipple between her fingers, her other hand gripping at the edge of the desk above her head as he took her. His thrusts were not fast, but they were deep and hard, so much so that she slid back with each plunge. He grabbed her hips to keep her from sliding any further, pulling her body onto him, the sound of their flesh meeting echoing through the room, intermingled with her fervent cries.

His voice was deep as he said, “I love the sound of your voice like this, but someone will hear us.” He leaned down; his rhythm never faltered as he kissed her passionately.

He held her gaze, his words full of sin and promise, “When I take you in my bed, you can be as loud as you want.”

She moaned at this whole new side of him she was experiencing, his usually quiet demeanor hid a fiercely sexual beast, something she had not expected, but relished in having over her now. He grasped at the hollows of her knees and hefted her legs high on his body, almost near his ribs, as she wrapped them around him and dug her heels into the small of his back, urging him silently to go faster.

This new angle and the faster pace made her want to cry out, but she remembered his
words and bit her lip hard to keep as quiet as she could. He slid over a place inside her that made her blood feel like fire, something she had only read about but had never found. Her eyes widened before they slid shut as she heard him groan deep in his chest.

“Right there, isn’t it?” as his hand pressed low on her abdomen, pushing whatever in heavens name felt so good tighter against his thrusting cock.

Her mouth opened in a silent scream and she nodded fiercely, her breathing so rapid she thought she might pass out, her eyes watching as he looked down at where he disappeared inside her, his jaw clenched and his chest heaving. His eyes met hers then, his look of primal lust for her made her breath catch.

“Faster, please,” she whimpered softly, her legs trembling against his sides, so close to falling over the edge, the coiling heat in her belly needing just a little something more.

He sped up his thrusts as he continued the pressure of his hand on her. He could tell by her stifled cries and panting breaths that she was so very close. He held her gaze and whispered, “I want to feel you come around me, Daenerys.”

She gasped and whimpered at the way he said her name, as his thumb slid down and over her clit, so achingly hard and slippery wet, that it didn’t take more than a few rapid flicks before the tightness in her belly gave way and warmth flooded her body. She whimpered his name once as she arched her back from the desk, her orgasm stealing any further sound from her, her body shuddering and her legs trembling at his sides. All of her senses were heightened, every sensation acute as her sex pulsed around his cock, the sight of the man giving her the most intense, toe-curling pleasure of her life was about to reach his own.

He was grunting softly now with each hard fast thrust. He had no rhythm as he felt her throbbing around him, the sight of this gorgeous woman in ecstasy before him bringing him to the edge. “Fuck,” he swore roughly, “I“

“Let me feel you.” Her whisper made him spill himself deep inside her in long hot pulses, triggering aftershocks from her as she throbbed in response. Then she heard it, her name, so soft and tender, “Daenerys”, that it rocked her to her core.

He locked eyes with her as their urgency subsided, his gaze warm with affection as he traced his fingers over her cheek, his thumb ghosting over her lips. They both sighed as he slipped from her body. “I’ve wanted you for weeks.” He smiled at her, his voice becoming concerned as he asked, “I hope I wasn’t too rough with you?”

She laughed softly, touched by his concern. “Far from it, it was exactly what I needed.” She looked a bit shy as she admitted, “I’ve wanted you for a while now too.”

He smiled broadly at her, reaching out his hand to help her up before supporting her as she giggled at her weak legs. Only when she had regained her stability did he go about arranging himself and rezipping his pants.

Realization hit him as he noticed what made her brow crinkle together before she gazed down at her exposed legs, the evidence of their release slipping down her inner thigh.

“How inconsiderate of me.” He took a tissue from his pocket and dropped to one knee in front of her, using it to gently clean her inner thigh before tossing it in the wastebasket. The look she gave him was full of shocked tenderness and it made him wonder if no man had ever done that for her before.
He stood and took her panties from his pocket, handing them to her with a smirk. “I think you might need these.”

She placed her hand over his and whispered, “Keep them. I’ll get them from you next time.”

His only response was a pleasured groan.
Needing

Chapter Summary

Jorah and Daenerys crossed the line from professional to personal late one night in his office. But, as they are about to discover, one time is never enough.

Chapter Notes

Remember Jorah's promise of "next time"? Well, it's next time.

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Daenerys arrived at work Monday morning, her stomach a mess of nervous knots. *Would sleeping with him make things awkward between us*, she thought, as she took her seat at her desk. The door to the office was closed, the lights off. She glanced at her watch, 8am, before she looked over Jorah’s schedule for the day and saw that he had a meeting downtown with a company until 11am. She decided to busy herself with the work piled on her desk, trying to push the worry from her mind. It wasn’t until the mail clerk came around at 12 noon that she realized her morning had flown by and that it was time for lunch.

She returned a half hour later to find his office door open, noticing he was deeply engrossed in a phone conversation. She surreptitiously watched him pace the floor, his hands gesturing as he talked. She shook her head once, trying desperately not to remember last Friday night. Or the dreams that followed. She knew she wanted him again, but she vowed she would not allow her needs to get in the way of her job performance.

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She could not have been happier that it was Friday. The week had been very hectic, between the new acquisition and the other merger deal in the works; she had not had time to think about much else. And, in a way, she was grateful; at least it meant that she got some peace from her thoughts. Her dreams, well, they were another matter entirely. Every night, Jorah was in them and apparently her mind was *very* creative.

“Can I speak with you a moment, Daenerys?” She turned to find him standing in the doorway of his office, a small smile on his face.

“Of course,” she said, pushing aside the rising anxiousness, as she grabbed a notepad and pen from the desk and followed him into his office.

He leaned against his desk, his palms resting on the edge. His eyes held her gaze for a moment before he said, “I’m sure you’ve heard about the small gathering tomorrow night to celebrate
the new acquisition.” She nodded before he continued, “I wanted to know if you would like to attend.”

Her brows knit together in confusion, “I thought that was only for the members of the acquisition team and the owners of the other company.”

Jorah chuckled. “Well, yes, it is.” His eyes took on an expectant look before he continued, “But I would like you to attend as my date.”

She blinked at him, surprised by his offer. She hadn’t expected this at all. Her eyes lit up as she replied, “Yes, I’ll go with you.”

He smiled, “I’d hoped you would say yes.” He gestured to the notepad in her hand, “Give me your address and I’ll pick you up at, say, 8 o’clock?”

She scribbled down her information and tore the note from the pad, handing it to him, as she said, “I’ll see you then.”

***

He rang her doorbell promptly at 8pm. She smoothed her hands over her little black and red dress before she answered the door. *God, he looks so handsome*, she thought as Jorah stood there outside her door, the blue of his dress shirt nearly matching the color of his eyes, his dark suit expertly tailored. Daenerys did not notice his eyes take in the gentle curves of her body as she reached over to grab her shawl and clutch off the small table by the door. He stepped back as she exited her apartment, locking the door behind her. He held the door for her as they exited her complex, only then did he notice that her dress left her back completely bare. His jaw clenched and he swallowed hard at the sight of her smooth pale skin. As they walked along the street to his car, he saw her rub her hand over upper arm. He removed his suit jacket and draped it over her shoulders. Daenerys turned to look at him, smiling at his sweet gesture, using the lapels to pull the jacket tighter around her. He pressed a button on his key fob and the lights of sleek black BMW coupe flashed once as the doors unlocked. He opened the passenger side for her, waiting until she was safely inside before he closed the door and came around to get in on his side. He pressed the push button ignition and the car roared to life before he pulled into traffic.

As they drove, she secretly pulled his jacket closer to her nose, taking a deep breath of the scent that lingered there, purely *him* with a faint hint of Old Spice. *Mmm, he smells good*, she thought, noticing too late out of the corner of her eye that Jorah was watching her as they had stopped at a red light. She felt heat rise on her cheeks, but he just smiled at her before directing his attention back to the road. They made small talk at first, but then he began to ask her more pointed questions about her life, trying to get to know more about her. They had each other laughing at times, a sound she discovered she loved hearing from him, deep and rumbly in his chest.

They arrived at the hotel, the valet opening the door for her before he handed a ticket to him for later. She held out his jacket to him, a soft ‘thank you’ as Jorah took it from her.

He put his jacket back on, fastening the top button as he said, “Of course.”

They walked through the lobby to the elevator, where he pressed the ‘up’ button and they waited for it to arrive. He placed his hand against the small of her back as they got inside, she was thankful for the noise around them, that way he didn’t hear her soft gasp at the touch of his warm hand against her skin. He pressed ‘R’ for the roof and the doors slid shut, his hand not moving from where it rested, every nerve sparking where his fingers touched her skin.
He leaned down slightly, his voice soft against her ear, “You look stunning tonight.”

Daenerys turned to look at him and saw a flicker of desire in Jorah’s eyes, their lips so close she could feel the warmth of his breath against hers. His eyes glanced at her gently parted lips as he leaned in to kiss her. The elevator dinged, their lips a hair’s breadth from touching. They pulled back, their gaze heated as his hand guided her out of the elevator and down the hallway to the rooftop bar.

She was glad she had brought her shawl, since the evening had taken on a slight chill, so she wrapped it around her shoulders. His company had reserved the rooftop for the night and it was simply decorated, tall tables with high bar chairs under a canopy of tiny white string lights. At the railing overlooking the city was the open bar and people milled around, drinks in hand chatting in small groups. They walked toward it and she ordered a ginger ale, wanting a clear head in the unlikely event that something might happen, as he ordered a scotch. They took their drinks and began to make the rounds. Throughout the night, Jorah would find opportunities to brush his fingers against the small of her back or over her hand as it rested at her side. At one point, she excused herself and went to stand in the empty hallway near the bathroom, trying to calm her rapid pulse, her inner thigh muscles clenching against the aching throb of her clit. She returned to the party, but try as she might, she could not find him in the crowd. She decided to chat with a woman she knew, but their conversation was soon joined by a man from the office, one she had hoped she would not have to encounter this evening. Realizing she had become the third wheel, the lady excused herself, and Daenerys wished she had not left her alone with him.

Derek was a lecherous self-absorbed jerk, all of the women in the office thought so, and she avoided him at all costs. The way he brazenly looked over her body now made her skin crawl and she tried her best to be civil, when all she really wanted to do was kick him in the balls. He made some smarmy comment about them being at a hotel together and she could barely stop herself from rolling her eyes. But that’s when she saw Jorah, over Derek’s right shoulder, chatting with some guy.

This man is a bore, he thought, half-listening as he droned on and on about his yacht on the coast of France. Jorah was trying to be polite, but his eyes would wander occasionally. The man was far too absorbed in his own story to notice. He saw Daenerys by the bar, cornered by Derek, that slimy prick, and the grip on his glass tightened. Her eyes met his then and he felt something stir in him, a desire to protect her from bastards like Derek. He excused himself as politely as he could and made his way over to her.

“You know, you and I would make-“ Derek said, his eyes looking over her body for the second time before she interrupted him, unable to take any more of his blather.

“If you’ll excuse me, there’s something I need to attend to.” She gave him a tight lipped smile and started to walk away.

“Sure, of course.” He called after her, “I’ll catch you later.”

She shivered inwardly at his parting words, but regained her composure, watching as Jorah made his way through the crowd toward her, unable to take their eyes off of one another. Daenerys wasn’t sure, but she could have sworn she saw a flash of fierce protectiveness in his gaze.

“I’m terribly sorry we got separated.” Then she saw it, the smile he reserved only for her. “I see you were able to escape Mr. Hands-On untouched. Bravo.”

She smiled as he chuckled, “Let’s just say if he’d kept talking, he would have been on the floor in the fetal position.”
He laughed at her comment, “I think you’ll find you aren’t the only one in the office that thinks that way. Men like him,” he sighed, shaking his head as he continued; “they have no game, absolutely no clue how to talk to a woman.”

She raised her eyebrow at him, “Game?”

He took one step closer to her, but did not invade her personal space. His voice deep as he held her gaze, “A bit of humor, a facility of language, and a genuine interest in getting to know the woman you are talking to.”

She exhaled softly as she looked away briefly before meeting his eyes again, the intensity in them too much. “I see what you mean.”

They stood and talked for a long while before the party came to a close, the hotel staff coming out to clear the tables. Talking and laughing with him, coupled with the occasional heated glance, and the gentle touch of his fingers over the back of her hand where it rested on the table made all of the sensations from earlier in the night come back with a vengeance. As they walked to the elevator, all Daenerys could think about was grabbing Jorah by his tie and pulling him against her body for a kiss. He pressed the button to go down, and when the doors opened, paused so she could enter first. She walked to the back of the elevator and leaned against the low metal railing of the mirrored paneling, watching as he pressed ‘G’ for the ground floor. He stood next to her, so close she could feel the heat from his body against her bare arm. She watched the numbers tick down and out of the corner of her eye, she could see the muscles of his jaw clenching under the skin. She glanced up at him and he turned his head to look at her, she saw the same desire as before in his intense gaze, before he muttered under his breath, “Ah, hell with it.”

He leaned forward and pressed the ‘stop’ button before he turned and faced her. One breath was all it took before she reached out and snatched his tie in her hand, pulling his body against her, their lips meeting halfway, her clutch falling out of her grasp to the floor. The kiss was passionate; her tongue slipping into his mouth, the taste of expensive scotch lingered there. His arm reached around her so his hand could caress over her bare back, before pressing against the small of it and drawing her lower body against his, his touch so hot her skin felt on fire. Their mingled groans broke the silence as he used his tall strong body to press her back against the wall, the heat of him seeping through her dress as she felt him semi-hard against her hip. Daenerys broke the kiss and placed his hand on her inner thigh, just under her dress. His smile was absolutely wicked as he caressed the smoothness of her skin upward to the edge of her lace panties. He slipped two fingers under the hem, groaning against her mouth as he found her soaking wet for him. “Have you been like this all night, love?”

“Most of it.”

Jorah exhaled a shaky breath, his voice deep as he said, “I wish I had known. I would have found a secluded place, slipped my fingers into your panties like this and given you what your body needed.”

Just as he was finishing his sentence, he slipped two of his thick fingers into her, his thumb pressing just right against her clit. She gripped his jacket and arched against his touch, her moan echoing through the elevator as her head fell back against the mirrored paneling. Just as soon as he had done it, his fingers were gone and all Daenerys could do was whimper, “No…please.” Jorah’s hand rested against her inner thigh, her wetness on his fingers warm against her skin. “Do you remember what I told you that night?” His voice was rough with desire.
“Yes,” her simple breathy reply.

His other hand cupped her jaw, his eyes full of passion, “Come back to my place tonight. Let me keep my promise.”

She bit her lip; all she could do was nod. Jorah left her long enough to press ‘stop’ button again before he crouched at her side and picked up her clutch, standing again and handing it to her with a smile. She watched as he put the fingers that had been between her legs into his mouth, licking them clean before he put his hands in his pockets, looking as innocent as you please. Daenerys gulped and thought, oh boy I’m in for it now.

Once the elevator stopped and the doors opened, Jorah took her hand in his and walked to the valet area, handing the attendant his ticket. As they waited for his car, she looked down at their clasped hands, their fingers intertwined. She did not want to read too much into it, but she couldn’t help the thoughts that ran through her mind. When his car arrived, he opened the door for her and closed it after she got in. He went around, tipped the attendant and got in on his side.

As they drove, Daenerys watched his hand on the gear shift, all sorts of naughty images running through her mind. She had been in stick-shift cars before and the ride had always been jerky and uncomfortable. This ride was so smooth; she only knew Jorah was shifting when his hand moved. At stoplights, his hand would reach over and caress her thigh, his rough fingers stroking higher with each successive stop. By the time he pulled into the underground parking garage of the high rise where his loft was, she was nearly out of her mind with desire, more than ready to climb over into his seat and have her way with him right there.

He parked, got out and came around to open the door, stepping to the side so she could get out. Jorah engaged the locks and alarm with a press of the key fob and took her hand in his as they walked through the lobby doors and to the elevator. He pressed ‘10’ and waited until the doors shut before he was all over her again. They did not have time for more than a long urgent kiss and a few fervent touches before the elevator doors opened again.

There were only two doors on the floor and he walked toward the one on the right. He opened it and stepped inside, holding it open for her. Daenerys stepped into his place and her eyes went wide as he turned on the lights. Wow, this place is HUGE, at least 5 times as big as my tiny apartment, she thought as she looked around his loft. It was all dark hardwood and glass, modern but with a rustic, old world feel. Jorah closed and locked the door, coming to stand behind her, his hand gently moving her hair so he could kiss the back of her neck. Daenerys arched back against him, her bottom pressing intimately against his groin. He groaned against her neck and wrapped his arm around her waist, holding her against him. Jorah placed open-mouthed kisses along the prominent bones of her neck, the rasp of his beard and the warmth of his breath made her grind herself against his hardening cock, soft sighs leaving her lips as her hand reached behind her and threaded through his hair. He rested his lips against her ear, “Since that night, I haven’t been able to stop thinking about you.”

She sighed at his words and felt his hand at her lower back as he eased the zipper down over the curve of her bottom before he reached inside and cupped the swell of one cheek in his large warm hand, his other undoing the hook and eye closure at her neck. He caressed his hands over her bare back to her shoulder blades and under the fabric of the dress, the path of his touch over her shoulders and down her arms taking the top half of the dress with him. Resting his hands on her hips, he pushed the dress down her legs, where it pooled on the floor. Jorah looked up at her from where he crouched at her feet, his hands on her bare legs, a gentle push letting her know he wanted her to turn around. She did and looked down at him, watching as he removed her heels, rubbing his hand soothingly over each foot. He stood slowly, his eyes following his hands as they moved over her
almost naked body. Her bottom lip was between her teeth and he saw a hint of shyness in her eyes at his open appraisal of her.

Jorah smiled. "You have no idea how gorgeous you are." His voice husky with desire.

She met his eyes; all she saw in their clear blue depths was heat and honesty.

He kissed her slowly, savoring the feel of her lips as his hands ran down the sides of her body, before he leaned down slightly and grasped the backs of her thighs, lifting her against his body as if she weighed nothing, her legs wrapping around his hips. The feel of his hard cock with nothing between it and her center save for her panties and his dress slacks made Daenerys moan into the kiss, grinding herself against him. He groaned in response, his hips thrusting instinctively against her.

He carried her to the bedroom area of his loft, pausing only once along the way to press her against a wall, his mouth at her breasts, her hands clutching at his shoulders. He laid her down on the dark soft sheets of his king sized bed, her legs dangling over the edge. Jorah stood between them and hooked his fingers into the top of her panties. His eyes met hers as he hesitated; it almost seemed like he was asking for her permission. Daenerys placed her hands over his and pushed as he pulled, taking them off.

She looked over him, her eyes stopping at the obvious bulge in his pants. She sat up and cupped him through the fabric, so hard and thick under her touch. She started to move her hand over him, but Jorah rested his hand over hers, stopping her.

"Later, I promise." He knelt before her and she rested her feet on the bed, her legs spread wide for him. "This is about you and your pleasure now."

Daenerys lay back and looked down her body at him, all she could see were his eyes and she could tell he was smiling. He parted her folds with his thumbs and traced her entrance and lips softly with the tip of his tongue. Her breath caught at his deep groan of satisfaction as Jorah licked a hard stripe over her entrance, covering his tongue with her abundant wetness. He continued to lick over her, avoiding precisely where she wanted him. Her hand gripped his hair and her hips moved against his mouth, trying to direct him, but it was in vain. She lifted her head and looked down at him; a small whine of frustration had him chuckling against her, "I promised I would worship you with my mouth. And I am a man of my word."

She let her head fall back to the bed with long shaky sigh, taking pleasure from his leisurely exploration of her. No man had ever taken his time like this before, as if he was mapping out all of the destinations that made her sigh, whimper and moan, making his own roadmap of her gratification. It was that last sound she made, low and long, when he finally wrapped his lips around her clit and licked over her. Jorah was slow in his pace there too, the alternating feel of the smooth underside of his tongue followed by the soft rasp of the top of it added a new spark to the fire that threatened to consume her.

Daenerys felt his thumbs move and press against her higher and she propped herself on one elbow to watch as he gently pulled back the hood that covered her clit, revealing her red and swollen to his gaze. He groaned low in his throat at the sight before he put his mouth back over her. Jorah licked her gently from base to tip, but it felt much harder to her, the sensitive bundle now fully exposed to his questing tongue.

Her eyes went wide and she clutched his hair tightly in her hand, moaning loudly, "Oh god, do that again."

He smiled against her and a thrill went through him at how vocal Daenerys was about how she
needed his intimate kiss. He did do it again and kept doing it, her whimpers of ‘please’ shot straight to his throbbing cock. Oh, how he wanted her. But Jorah was a patient man and she was well worth waiting for.

He increased the pressure and speed slightly, his tongue circling her sporadically in addition to licking her. Daenerys’ body writhed and arched against the bed, the hand that wasn’t in his hair seized the sheets at her side in a white-knuckle grip. The sensations in her body were so acute; she had never felt an orgasm build so quickly before. The heat spreading through her belly, a feeling like lightning in her veins, the muscles in her body twitching.

The room filled with her repeated pleading cries of ‘don’t stop’, her eyes tightly shut, her brow furrowed. It only took a few more deft circles and licks of his tongue before she moaned, “Jorah, I’m…”

Daenerys’ unfinished sentence told him she was close and he continued, just as he had been, desperate to not only see her orgasm again, but to feel and taste it this time as well. And Jorah did, the rush of her pulse under his tongue and then the first throb of her climax, her body arching from the bed as she cried out his name, nearly sobbing as the pleasure took over. Her legs tensed against the sides of his head, her hips shuddering against his mouth. He saw the flush rise on the skin of her upper body, her nipples tight hard points on her heaving chest. Her legs went limp as he slowed the movements of his tongue. She whimpered and moved back slightly on the bed, his mouth too much for her now.

Her eyes were half-open as she looked at him, trying to catch her breath, her arousal glistening on his lips and in the beard at his chin. Daenerys had thought that what Jorah had given her last time had been the most intense pleasure of her life. Well, she couldn’t have been more wrong. This orgasm blew that other one right out of the water and Jorah accomplished it while still completely dressed. If the next one continued the trend, she worried she might pass out. Pleasurable little throbs still pulsed through her center as she sat up and reached for his belt, beginning to unfasten it.

She looked up at him, their shared gaze full of yearning, as she said, “Take off your shirt and tie. I want you now.”

Jorah smiled at her eagerness and set to work taking off his jacket, undoing his tie and unbuttoning his shirt, before he took it off. She bit her lip at the sight of his bare chest, pushing his pants and boxer briefs down his legs before she knelt on the bed. Daenerys had imagined his chest and seen it in her dreams, but this was infinitely better. He had lean muscle and she had experienced first-hand just how strong he was when he had lifted her effortlessly earlier. Her touch traced over the slight definition in his biceps, shoulders and, finally, his pectorals. Daenerys ran her fingers through the soft light hair of his chest and down over his flat stomach. The look in her eyes told him all he needed to know; she liked what she saw and most certainly desired his body.

Jorah bent to take off his shoes and socks and then stepped out of his pants, watching her move back on the bed and lay down, waiting for him to join her. He wasted no time in crawling over her body, settling himself between her legs before he kissed her. The press of her breasts and belly against his torso was exquisitely warm and soft. He propped himself on his elbows, taking some of his weight off of her as he tilted his hips and slipped easily inside her. Their groans mingled, Daenerys relished in the glorious stretch of his thickness filling her. He had nearly forgotten just how magnificent the wet heat of her felt around him, encircling him, almost as if it was trying to hold on to him as he withdrew. Their pace was slow; this time he wanted to see, feel and hear everything he had missed the first time.

She wrapped her legs high around his torso, her hands gripping the flexing muscles of his back. His
strokes were long and deep, nearly withdrawing completely with each one. The way he rolled his hips down into each thrust meant she felt every delicious inch of him sliding agonizingly slow over that sensitive place inside her, soft little gasps interrupting their kisses. She matched his movements, her hips rising to meet his. Jorah grunted softly against her lips, the change in sensation made his pleasure spike, his hips snapping forward hard and fast. She bit at his lip and gave a short cry at the suddenness of it before he returned to their previous pace.

Soon it was not enough for her, the pleasure now merely simmering within her. Daenerys wanted more and she pressed her hands against his chest, and for an instant, Jorah thought she wanted him to stop. He looked at her as she whispered, “I want to ride you.”

He smirked as he wrapped his arm underneath her and rolled onto his back, his cock still firmly inside her. She pushed him down into the bed as she sat up, her head falling back, a soft moan in her throat as she felt him slip even deeper inside her.

His breath caught, she looked like something right out of his erotic dreams, silhouetted by the soft light, her hair and skin nearly glowing. She rose and fell over him slowly, clenching her inner muscles around him with each rise and tilting her hips forward on each downward stroke. His hands gripped her hips, his breathing erratic, the look on her face told him she knew just what she was doing to him.

Daenerys continued like this for some time, a pleasurable torture for the both of them. She leaned back, her hands resting on his thighs, just above his knees. She rolled her hips faster over him, her head falling back, her breath coming in quick pants punctuated by the occasional moan. Everything about the vision above him: the sinuous movement of her body, the fullness of her breasts topped with rosy hard nipples, the sight of the dark red lips of her sex sliding over his cock, slick with her arousal, and her beautiful face etched with pleasure made him unable to decide where to look. It wasn’t just the sight of her, it was the sounds she made too, so vocal about how good he made her feel.

It was those sounds that became more urgent now, the rhythm of her hips faltering slightly. It told him that she was very close and the way she met his eyes, the desperate look he saw in them as she whimpered, “Touch me, Jorah, make me come.”

He placed his thumb over her clit, so slippery from her, and stroked it fast. Her brow knit together, the combination of his touch and the rapid rolling of her hips gave her just what she needed. Her body tensed and her head fell back as she moaned her pleasure, before her eyes met his, her hips moving again, much slower this time. She panted his name with each pulse of her sex around his cock, his thumb moving in slow gentle circles over her now, holding back on his own orgasm.

She fell against him and he rolled her onto her back, gathering her leg in the crook of his elbow as he braced his arms on either side of shoulders, not allowing her to recover completely from her orgasm before he started thrusting into her hard with fast, deep strokes. Jorah felt the familiar tightening of his impending climax, but if her high cries of pleasure were any indication, Daenerys was close to another orgasm too. He watched her hand slip between her legs, touching herself in tight, fast circles. The sight, sound and feel of her brought him to the edge.

“Daenerys,” he groaned and her eyes met his, “I need to feel you come for me.”

She whimpered as her eyes shut tightly, her mouth open but no sound came out as she pulsed around his cock. Jorah gripped the thigh of her leg wrapped around him; one last thrust was all he needed before he spilled his release deep inside her, moaning her name against her neck. He eased her leg back down before he rolled to her side, slipping from her body, gathering her to him, his arms unable to support himself any longer. As they both tried to bring themselves down from their highs, her
hand rested on his chest as he stroked his hand softly over her sweat-dampened back.

They stayed entwined for some time before Daenerys sat up and made her way to the edge of the bed, reaching over the side to grab her panties from the floor.

Confused, Jorah asked, “What are you doing, love?”

She turned to look at him, her eyes shy as she worried her bottom lip between her teeth, “I thought you would-“

“-want you to leave?” he interrupted, finishing her sentence. He sighed as she looked everywhere but at his face. He moved to sit near the head of the bed, his voice soft, “Come here.”

Daenerys looked at him and hesitated for a moment before she made her way over to sit near him. She met his eyes and his gaze was tender as he took her hand gently in his own and said, “If you want to go, I’ll take you home. But only if it’s what you want, not because you think it’s what I want.”

Her voice was nearly a whisper as she asked, “What do you want?”

The corners of Jorah’s eyes crinkled, “I want you to stay and fall asleep in my arms. Just between you and me, I’m a serial cuddler.” His thumb stroked over the back of her hand, “Not to mention, you would miss out on my fantastic omelet in the morning.”

She giggled as she went to his side, his arm wrapping around her as he pulled the sheet over them. Her head rested against his chest and her arm wrapped around his torso, her leg resting over his hips. It had been a while since Daenerys last shared a bed with a man and she had to admit she liked the way Jorah held her, there was just something about the warmth of his body and the feel of his hand as it rested on her upper thigh. His steady, strong heartbeat calmed her and she found herself getting sleepy.

He could tell when she had fallen asleep, as her body relaxed completely against his own, her breathing even. Jorah had not been with a woman in some time, the demands of work had always gotten in the way. But he found that while the sex between them was spectacular, he was beginning to see that there could be more between them than just this. He tried not to dwell on it, deciding that whatever was meant to happen would happen. His eyelids felt heavy and before he knew it, he joined Daenerys in sleep.

Chapter End Notes

I want to thank all of you who have read/commented/left kudos. You all are awesome!

I have more written for them in this AU setting if you all are interested.
A Bump in The Road

Chapter Summary

Jorah misreads a situation and confusion, followed by hurt feelings, ensues. Will all be set to rights?

Chapter Notes

The sexy times will return. But there needs to be a bit of relationship building first.

Just who the fuck does he think he is, Jorah thought, as he watched a young man from the company they had just acquired out right flirting with his girlfriend. Daenerys smiled at the man and laughed at something he said, her head tilted to one side. Jorah didn’t want to believe what he was seeing; could she be flirting with him too? He studied her, as she was nearby enough so he could see the minute details of her body language. Some of the things she did gave every indication that she was interested: the tilt of her head, the pitch of her voice, the way her body turned toward him. Yet still others said the opposite: she held her drink in front of her chest, there was a professional distance between them, and the subtle downward turn of the corner of her mouth. They had only been dating three months, but Jorah was a very observant man when it came to her mannerisms, and what he saw made jealousy rise in him. He didn’t like the way it felt, the possessiveness that seeped through him and burned in his chest.

When the man reached out and laid his hand on her bare upper arm, something in Jorah snapped and he felt equal parts jealous and hurt. Fine, he thought, if she wants the boy, she can have him. He excused himself from the conversation and walked toward the bar, where he ordered another drink, swallowing it in one large gulp. The fire of it stung his throat and he thought it would make him feel nothing. It had the opposite effect, unfortunately, it made him bitter. But Jorah had missed one important detail as he had made his way across the room: Daenerys drew her arm away from the man’s touch and took a step back; apologizing for any mixed signals she may have given him before walking away.

She looked for Jorah in the crowd and found him at the bar, leaning against it, drink in hand. She walked over to him and said, “I’ve been looking all over for you.”

He turned his head to look at her, but said nothing. The smile left her face as she saw the look in his eyes, one she had never seen before, and she couldn’t help but feel confused. A waiter approached them and asked if they would like a hors d’oeuvre as he presented a tray of bacon-wrapped grilled scallops. Jorah shook his head once and turned back to the bar. Daenerys politely declined as well before she turned to him and said, “But, Sweetheart, those are your favorites.”

He turned completely toward her then, his elbow resting on the bar, his tone abrupt, “I suppose one can become sated on even the rarest of delicacies, don’t you think?”

Now she was outright dumbfounded. Between his tone, the set of his jaw and the look in his eyes, she didn’t know how to read him right now. She had never seen him like this. He glanced
down at his watch before he set his glass on the bar, “It’s time to go.”

He exited the establishment, with Daenerys following behind him, walking the short distance to his car at the end of the empty parking lot. She had to walk quickly to keep up with his long strides and it was hard to do in heels. He paced beside his car, his hands in his pockets, waiting as she finally caught up to him. She was slightly out of breath as she asked, “Jorah, what’s wrong?”

“You tell me.” His gaze was hard, his voice tense. In fact, Daenerys noticed everything about him was tense. From the set of his jaw to his posture, it had all the hallmarks of a domineering male. And that was not Jorah at all. He was a confident man, yes, but he was never forceful about it. It was a quiet confidence.

She wracked her brain, trying to figure out what had caused this shift in his behavior. Then, it was like a light bulb went off and she sighed. “Is this about me speaking with Richard?”

“Speaking?” He huffed a laugh and shook his head. “Flirting is the more apt term for what the two of you were doing.”

She played the conversation back in fast-forward in her mind. She could see how he might think that, but he obviously hadn’t seen her withdraw her arm or step back when Richard had touched her.

Daenerys approached him slowly. She could see it now, it was jealousy coiling in his eyes, but there was also a bit of insecurity there too. His possessiveness was not born out of his desire to control her; it was his fear of losing her. It dawned on her then that he thought she was interested in that other man.

“The way he spoke to you, the way he looked at you. I…” His brows knit together before his jaw clenched and he nearly growled through gritted teeth, “The way he touched you.” He closed his eyes and sighed. “I can’t bear to see another man look at you like that,” he paused “touch you that way.”

She looked taken aback, “Wait, you didn’t see me pull away from him, telling him I wasn’t interested before I excused myself to find you, did you?”

He stopped pacing and his eyes met hers quickly. He blinked at her before he responded, “No, I didn’t see that.”

He closed his eyes and ran a hand through his hair. The jealousy had left his eyes when they met hers again, only to be replaced by a look of profound remorse. His brow furrowed, his tone penitent as he stepped toward her, “I’m so sorry, love, I-“

“You thought I was interested in that other guy.”

It was a statement as much as it was a question. Jorah looked at her and she watched his shoulders sag. And, for the first time in their short relationship, she saw a crack in his confidence as he replied quietly, “Yes.”

She couldn’t help the surprise she felt at his answer. “Why would you think that?”

Jorah sighed. “Because…he’s handsome and young.”

She was speechless. “So, after all of the dates we’ve been on these last three months, all of the nights I’ve spent over at your house and all of the sex we’ve had, you would think that I’d be interested in some guy just because he’s handsome and young.” She paused, “Wow, I don’t know what to say to that.”
She crossed her arms and stared at him. He didn’t trust her and it stung like a splinter in her heart. She shook her head before she took her phone out of her purse. “I think I’ll catch a cab.”

His eyes widened at her statement and he reached out to touch her shoulder. She stepped back from him and his hand fell limply to his side. “Daenerys, you don’t need to do that. Let me drive you home.”

“Jorah, I just…I can’t be around you right now.” She glanced at him one last time, hurt evident in the tears that had started to well in her eyes, before she turned and left him standing there alone.

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Monday rolled around and she couldn’t avoid work even if she wanted to. She knew she would have to face Jorah sometime. She had gone home that Friday night and cried, she couldn’t believe that he didn’t trust her, that he was questioning her fidelity somehow. Her phone rang four times that night and had as many voicemails, all from Jorah. After the fourth one, she had turned off her phone and gone to bed. But, now as she sat at her desk, she had to push those feelings aside and get her work done. There was a merger in the works and it was the first big acquisition of her new job as part of the team. She didn’t want to screw it up because her stupid feelings got in the way. Now she realized why you shouldn’t date a coworker.

Jorah was all business around his colleagues, but it was those moments when he passed her in the hallway alone or when they were the last two in the conference room that his eyes met hers and she could see the regret there. It was after that meeting that she found a cup on her desk from her favorite coffee shop. Written on the side, in Jorah’s neat script, were two words: I’m sorry. She noticed the voicemail notification light on her cell phone was blinking too. She picked it up and dialed her mailbox number to listen to her message. It was him, asking her if he could stop by her place that night to apologize. It was the last word of the voicemail, please, said in such a broken voice that made her heart soften just a bit. She texted him back a one word response: yes.

That night there was a soft knock at her door. She looked through the peephole to see Jorah standing there, looking defeated. She opened the door and leaned against it. As much as she was still hurt by what had happened, she couldn’t deny how handsome he looked in his dark wash jeans and cobalt sweater. She could see the pang of guilt in his soft blue eyes as he gave her a small smile and asked, “Can I come in please?”

Daenerys simply stepped to the side to allow him inside. She shut the door and turned toward him, the air heavy with tension. She opened her mouth to say something, but he held his hand up, his eyes pleading with her, “Please hear me out first.”

“I know you must think I don’t trust you. And, after what I said last Friday, I can understand perfectly why you would think that way. When I saw you talking to him, I thought that there was something between the two of you. I completely misread that situation. I made an assumption about you and it was entirely wrong. I should have known better than to think that of you. And, for that, I am so sorry.”

He paused, his hand rubbing the back of his neck, “I may be a confident man, but when I look at you, sometimes it falls apart. I can’t help the insecurity I feel.” Sighing, he continued, “I’m not a young man anymore. You are so beautiful and full of youth, I don’t want you to be disappointed in the choice that you made to start a relationship with me.”

The silence hung heavy between them before she smiled softly and walked toward him. “How could I be disappointed in our relationship? You act like you’re ancient or something. You’re middle-
aged, with a body of a man half your age, and still full of life. But there is so much more to you than your handsome face, so many other things about you that I like very much. There is no way on this Earth that I would trade you for some other younger guy.”

He asked her once she had stopped in front of him, “Can you find it in your heart to forgive me?”

She saw the anxiousness in his eyes before she rested her hands on his chest and said, “I forgive you.”

Relief washed over his features and he drew her into his arms, simply holding her against him. He whispered against the top of her head, “Thank you. I will never question your commitment again.”

Her arms wound around his torso as she hugged him back, happy that they had weathered this first storm together.
The incident at the party was now behind them and Jorah knew he should not have doubted her. That just wasn’t the type of person she was, as Daenerys was most certainly a one-man kind of woman. She held his hand every chance she got, and on those occasions when they strolled through the park or walked through the city on their dates, she linked her arm with his, her body pressed close against his side.

The seasons were starting to change, summer giving way to fall. And that meant more opportunities for Jorah to keep her warm, either by draping his jacket over her shoulders on nights when they had work parties at rooftop bars or when they cuddled under the blanket on her couch watching movies. She enjoyed those nights immensely, bundled up against his side, teasing him that he was cuddly like a teddy bear. The comment always made him chuckle deep in his chest, a few times he nuzzled and snuffled against her neck like a bear might, which caused her to laugh until her sides hurt as she half-heartedly tried to push him away. One night in particular, the fun turned into a full-on make out session. They were like two horny teenagers, groping each other under the blanket and sharing heated kisses.

He hated to say it, because it was such a cliché, but he couldn’t help it if it was true. She made him feel young again, alive with feelings that he hadn’t felt in years. She may have been less than half his age, but they still got looks from people in public, as they made silent erroneous assumptions about the pair. But everyone who knew them and saw them interacting together understood their relationship was far more than a superficial sexual fling. They had a spark, a certain unexplainable chemistry and rhythm to their relationship.

Jorah had told her on their first date that he wanted to take his time and get to know her. And the more dates he went on with her, the more time he spent with her, the more he discovered the depth of personality she possessed. He knew her in the business world, but it was outside of the workplace that he realized just how wonderful she really was. She had this childlike sense of wonder about things as he learned one Saturday afternoon.

He asked her to choose what they did for their date that day. He watched her mind work before he saw a light in her eyes as she smiled. “Let’s go to the zoo.”
As they walked around the place hand-in-hand, she pointed out different animals, taking pictures and reading the placards by the exhibits. When they approached the bear enclosure, she stopped and turned to him smiling, her arms winding around his waist to give him a brief hug. He leaned down and whispered against her ear that he believed her about him being like a bear because he loved her honey. She gasped and playfully slapped his chest, but her eyes danced and the blush that rose on her cheeks now wasn’t just from the cold.

She saved her favorite place for last. She took hold of his hand and practically dragged him through the doors of the expansive reptile complex. She walked along the left side of the building first; the banner above the exhibit stated “The Lizards of Australia”. She pointed to different species and mentioned facts about each one, from the Australian Frilled Dragon to the indigenous flap-footed lizard, a member of the infraorder Gekkota. Jorah looked at them and thought they couldn’t possibly be lizards as they only had vestigial hind limbs. It seemed like every question he asked her, she seemed to know the answer. He marveled at this new tidbit of information he discovered about her. As they walked further through the building, slowly passing through the exhibits on South America and Africa, she stopped in the section headlined South Asia. They walked until she paused in front of the deadly Komodo Dragon. She told him all about how this lizard wasn’t actually poisonous, as everyone thought it was. No, it actually had toxic proteins that it secreted through two glands in its lower jaw. Upon being bitten, the prey would die slowly, the secretions acting as an anticoagulant.

As she continued to talk, she noticed he was gazing intently at her. She turned to look at him, “What?”

Jorah stared at her, impressed. “Nothing, I just had no idea you knew so much about these animals.”

She looked away, a bit shy. “I’ve loved them since I was little.”

“It clearly shows.” He tilted his head, his brow quizzical, “So why didn’t you become a biologist or a zookeeper?”

A look of sadness filled her eyes as she nervously played with the corner of her zoo guidebook. “My parents died when I was really young in a house fire. I was raised by my older brother.” She pursed her lips and Jorah could tell this was a difficult subject for her.

He took her hand in his, his voice soft, “Why don’t we find a better place to talk about this?”

She nodded, before they walked from the building and exited the zoo, driving somewhere quieter to hear her story.

They sat in the corner of her favorite coffee shop, the place nearly deserted as it was between the afternoon and evening rush. She sipped her tea before setting the cup down slowly and continuing her story.

“My older brother, Viserys, was…not a good man. He had been involved in crime from as young as twelve, in and out of juvenile detention for much of his teenage years. We had a family friend that let us live with him until my brother was of age, then we moved out. We never lived in one place for long, as he always had to stay one step ahead of either the authorities or those he had
wronged. Or both, as was often the case. They used to call him “The Dragon”.

Jorah had been sitting forward in his seat, his elbows resting on the table. His eyebrows rose at the man’s nickname. “Do I even want to know why they called him that?”

She sighed and he could have sworn he saw her shiver. “It’s best that you don’t.”

He nodded once before she leaned forward in her seat too. She took a deep breath, “Anyway, after years of moving around, he finally pissed off the wrong person. I got a call from the police one night; they said they had found a man’s body with my brother’s ID in his wallet by the side of a deserted road. They wanted me to come down and identify his body. His head was…” She closed her eyes, the memory coming back to her. Jorah slid across the bench seat and put his arm around her shoulder, his hand rubbing soothingly over her upper arm.

She turned her head to look at him as he said quietly, “It’s all right. You don’t have to tell me anymore if you don’t want to.”

She gave him a tiny smile before she said, “I was on my own after that. I worked two jobs, saving up enough money so I could eventually start university. I had dreamed of being a veterinarian, but I decided to get my degree in business as that seemed to be the most stable of the job markets.”

“I had been proud of you when you told me you were graduating this past April.” His thumb touched her cheek softly, “But now that I know everything you’ve been through, I’m even more proud now.”

Daenerys leaned into his touch before she rested her head on his shoulder. She had always wondered how he would react to her past. Only one other boyfriend had known about it and there had been a look in his eyes that she was somehow less than him, branded forever as the sister of a criminal. Jorah didn’t look at her that way. She only saw admiration for what she had overcome, no judgement or recrimination.

She lifted her head when he asked, “How about we end this evening on a happy note?”

“What’d you have in mind?”

“How about dinner and a film? Your choice.”

Daenerys smiled, “That sounds perfect.”

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They ate at a small Indian place they loved before going to the cinema. The film choices were pretty dismal, so they both agreed on a period drama that seemed interesting enough. About an hour into the film, however, they discovered why the theater had been empty when they took their seats. The film was ploddingly slow and the acting was terrible. Jorah thought he might fall asleep and he had never done that during a film before. One glance at Daenerys told him she felt the same way, her head propped up by her hand, her arm resting in the arm rest.

He was just about to lean over and ask if she wanted to leave when he felt her hand rest on his upper thigh before it slipped down between his slightly parted legs. His breath caught as he sat up straighter, his head turning to look at her. She stared at the screen, acting as if nothing was going on, but he saw a smile playing at the corner of her lips. She cupped him through his jeans and right then he wished he had worn different pants. He sank down a bit into the seat and spread his legs more, allowing her easier access to him. He glanced at her, her bottom lip now firmly between her teeth,
sitting there nonchalant, but looking as tempting as could be.

Out of the corner of her eye, she could see Jorah’s head fall back against the reclining seat and the roll of his throat as he swallowed roughly. She felt him lengthening under her hand, his cock harder with each stroke between his legs. The thick fabric of his jeans meant that he probably didn’t feel as much as when she had done this for him as he wore his dress slacks, but the rapid rise and fall of his chest meant that he sure felt enough for it to still be extremely good. It only took a single slide of her finger along the underside of his cock for him to lift the arm rest separating them, turning slightly in his seat, his hand reaching over between her own parted legs. He saw as much as heard her gasp at the heat of his large hand against her, his finger rasping over the seam of her leggings, knowing full well that it ran right over her clit. Her lips parted before her tongue darted out to wet them, her breathing labored. She squirmed under his hand, her hips trying to press herself harder against him. He didn’t give in; he wanted to tease her a while longer. The material of her leggings was thin enough that he could feel the tremendous heat of her, a portion of it slightly damp. Jorah took his hand away only to slip it under the waist band of his cock for him to lift the arm rest separating them, turning slightly in his seat, his hand reaching over between her own parted legs. He saw as much as heard her gasp at the heat of his large hand against her, his finger rasping over the seam of her leggings, knowing full well that it ran right over her clit. Her lips parted before her tongue darted out to wet them, her breathing labored. She squirmed under his hand, her hips trying to press herself harder against him. He didn’t give in; he wanted to tease her a while longer. The material of her leggings was thin enough that he could feel the tremendous heat of her, a portion of it slightly damp. Jorah took his hand away only to slip it under the waist band of her leggings and panties, easing between her legs, the digits gliding over her intimate flesh effortlessly. He gritted his teeth at how aroused she was and leaned over, whispering against her ear, “When we get back to my place, I am going to lay you on the bed, put your legs over my shoulders and do with my tongue what my fingers are doing right now, slow, tight circles, and I will not stop until you come for me.”

Daenerys gripped his cock once more through his pants before she turned to him, her voice urgent, “There’s something I want to do first.”

He slipped his hand from her pants as she unbuttoned his jeans and eased the zipper down. She reached inside and tried to take him out gently, which wasn’t easy with the pants he wore. His chuckle was short lived as she finally managed to free him, her hand stroking his hot thick length in a firm grip. She smiled at him with one eyebrow arched before she leaned over and took him into her wet mouth, her lips tight around the shaft. She faintly heard him curse, “Fuck”, his voice rough with desire as she licked the underside of his shaft. He had told her once, after she had pleasured him like this, that the way she licked him there should be illegal. Her hand rested against his thigh as the other stroked over what would not fit into her mouth. Her pace was slow at first, her tongue dancing along the sensitive underside, her hand swirling slightly as it moved in rhythm with her head over him.

Jorah struggled to be quiet, but occasionally a short groan or a soft hiss would escape his lips. The last time he had done something like this was in his teenage years. But this was no inexperienced fumbling in the dark. This was with a woman who knew exactly how to please her man, knowing he would give her all the pleasure she could stand, and then some, later. And, with the way she was licking him precisely where he loved it, he knew he wouldn’t last long.

The salty taste of the slippery clear fluid that always preceded his orgasms greeted her tongue. She increased her pace and his hand rested against her head. She knew it was not a gesture of control, but rather the loss of it. His breathing was ragged and he groaned softly as she felt his shaft harden further in her hand and thicken slightly between her lips. She hummed encouragingly around him just before his hips lifted from the seat slightly as he came, his thigh tense under her hand. His breaths were deep and labored as his release coated her tongue in thick spurts, in time with the throbbing of his shaft. He felt utterly spent as he sat there catching his breath, watching her lick him clean before pressing a kiss to the head.

She eased him back into his pants once he had grown soft before zipping his fly and refastening his pants. He could hear the smile in her voice as she whispered against his ear, “Now I can cross that off my list.”
He chuckled, “What else is on this spectacular “list” of yours?”

She leaned over and whispered against his ear, “You’ll find out eventually.”

He took hold of her hand and said, “Let’s get out of here so I can keep my promise.”

She nodded eagerly before he led the way to the exit. They walked briskly to his car before he drove home as fast as the speed limit would allow.

And, as he always did, Jorah kept his promise.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you all for your continued reading of this work. As always, comments/kudos are very much appreciated :)
A Painful Past Pt. 2

Chapter Summary

It is Jorah's turn to share his painful past.

Chapter Notes

For the next 3 chapters, there won't be any sexy times. The action is starting to pick up and the emotional bond between them will become more important than the physical one. Rest assured, the intimacy will return.

Disclaimer still applies.

Jorah invited her over to his place for dinner that night. They had been taking cooking classes together, something she had suggested after she discovered that, despite the fact that he had a gourmet kitchen, he only really knew how to cook a few simple things. He had agreed, thinking it would be something fun they could do as a couple. He also enjoyed learning new things, and since cooking is about the details, he found it to be right up his alley. She marveled at how quickly he picked up the knife skills and the timing for cooking different kinds of protein like meat or fish. It also didn’t hurt that he looked delicious in an apron. *Kiss the cook,* she had thought, *couldn’t have been more fitting for him.* Daenerys enjoyed the cooking too, but she found baking to be her thing. Jorah told her her chocolate soufflé was positively sinful and the noise he made as he sampled it during class made her bite her lip, as it reminded her of another noise he made at a far more intimate time.

When she had asked him what she should bring to this dinner, he told her she only needed to bring her beautiful self. She couldn’t help but smile to herself at his sweet compliment.

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She arrived just on time and waited for him to answer the door after she knocked.

“Hello, love.” He paused, his eyes moving over her in appreciation. “Don’t you look exceedingly beautiful tonight?”

He opened the door wider so she could step inside. He closed it behind her and leaned in to give her a kiss. The scent of tomatoes and parmesan cheese surrounded her as he got closer to the kitchen, whatever he was cooking smelled wonderful. He took a bouquet of cellophane wrapped sunflowers from the marble countertop and handed them to her with a small smile. The corners of her eyes crinkled as she took them from him, they were her favorite flower and he had given them to her on quite a few of their other previous dates. She took a crystal vase from the cupboard and filled it with water. She unwrapped and arranged them in the container before she sat at the bar counter overlooking the kitchen and watched as he finished the last parts of their dinner. They talked as he waited for the pasta to finish cooking and for whatever was in the oven to finish. She noticed that he was wearing his black apron tied around his waist and she thought Jorah looked like he would fit
right in on the cooking channel. The timer dinged and he took a foil-covered baking dish from the
oven before setting it on the counter and removing the foil, the steam rising from the chicken
parmigiana. He took the pot of pasta from the stove next, draining the water into the sink, before
gathering portions in his tongs and spinning it into a delicate mound on each other plates. With a
spatula, he placed a piece of chicken over the pasta and then ladled a chunky tomato sauce over it.
He sprinkled finely chopped basil over each before he took them to the glass dining table, already
set for two.

She went to the table as he returned to the kitchen to get a bottle of red wine. He took off
his apron and left it on the counter before he set the bottle down and pulled out her chair for her so
she could sit. He poured her a glass then he filled his and took his seat across from her.

“This looks and smells delicious.” She cut a piece of the chicken and ate it. Daenerys
closed her eyes as she chewed, the flavors of the cheese and chicken paired with the garlic and basil
of his freshly prepared tomato sauce mingled together in her mouth in perfect harmony.

“What do you think?” Jorah gazed at her expectantly, almost as if he thought she might not
like it.

“It’s mouthwateringly good. You’ve really taken to this cooking thing. I think you might
have missed your calling.”

He chuckled. “I think I’ll stick to the world of business, thank you very much. This is
something I just want to share with you. Besides, I never would have discovered that I even had this
ability if it hadn’t been for you.” He grinned at her as he raised his glass, “I’ll toast to that.”

She lifted her glass, clinking it with his before they each took a sip. As they enjoyed their
meal, they talked about work only briefly before moving on to a host of other topics. She loved
these times with him, just the two of them, without the structures of business. He was such a
different person outside of work, laid back and quick to make her laugh. They continued talking long
after their plates were empty, savoring the last few sips from their glasses of wine. She rose from the
table to help him clear it, but he gave her a look that said no way would she be helping him do that,
telling her that she was his guest. He told her to make herself comfortable on the couch, that he
would be with her in a moment. She took her wine glass and sat on the black leather sofa, picking
up the current issue of National Geographic from his glass coffee table, the cover story about the
lizards of Australia.

“I see you found it.” He drew her attention away from the magazine as he sat down next
to her, placing his glass on the table beside hers. “When I saw that in the mail yesterday, I knew
you’d love to read it.”

Jorah had learned about her fascination for the scaly creatures when they had gone to the
zoo for one of their dates. He had smiled as her face lit up at the reptile house, taking pictures with
her phone and rattling off facts about the different species. He hadn’t been surprised at her
intelligence; it was one of things he really liked about her. She challenged him and he found that
very attractive indeed.

She set the magazine back on the table before she turned to him, drawing her leg onto the
couch and tucking it under the other. There had been something that had been nagging at the back
of her mind since the incident at the party a couple of months ago. Daenerys felt now was a good
time to find out.

“Jorah, can I ask you something?”
He mirrored her position on the couch before he replied, “Of course.”

“It’s about that thing that happened two months ago at the party. When you apologized, you mentioned something about insecurity. I wanted to ask you about it at the time, but for some reason, I didn’t. I want to know what you mean by that.”

He took a deep breath as his hand slipped from the back of the couch to his lap. He was silent for a moment before he sighed, “I had been meaning to tell you something and I suppose now is as good a time as any. I think it will answer your question.”

Jorah paused before he met her eyes, “I was married before.”

She had thought it would be something far worse, what with the way he had paused and the look he had in his eyes now, one of sadness tinged with regret.

“That’s not that big a deal. I would have been more shocked if you had said you’d never been married.”

He half-smiled before he continued, “Well, there’s quite a story attached to it.”

She glanced at her watch, “The night is still young.”

Jorah ran his hand through his hair, “It started six years ago. My father was CEO of the company at the time and he was grooming me to take over for him. I had been employed by him since I graduated university, working my way up through the ranks. One day, he told me he wanted to retire and he went to the board with the proposition of making me CEO, to which nearly all of them agreed. It was at the retirement party that I met my ex-wife, Lynn, a friend of one of my former colleagues. She was Hollywood bombshell beautiful and extremely interested in me, the connection between us was intense straight out the gate. The phrase ‘hot and heavy’ sums it up quite nicely. We married not long after that. I had so much going for me then: I was the CEO of a flourishing company, newly married and on top of the world.”

Daenerys gave him a puzzled look, “It seems like everything was going well. So what happened to change all that?”

He gave a short rueful laugh, “Oh, something changed all right. Me.”

She scrunched her brows together, waiting to find out what he meant.

“I didn’t want to seem weak at the job, despite the fact that I had no clue how to run a company. I couldn’t ask my father for help, he was the type to tell someone to stand tall and just get things done. So, I did what I thought was the best option: I threw myself completely into my work. Late hours, weekends, you name it. I became obsessed with making it perfect. And, because of that, I became emotionally unavailable. Lynn and I fought constantly. She accused me of not caring about her or her happiness and I accused her of being needy and selfish. It was horrible. The worse it got at home, the more it drove me to my work. But it also made me feel extremely guilty. We would make up, the physical connection was really all we had at that point, and things would be all right for a week or so. And then we’d fight again. It was a vicious cycle that went on for months.”

He shook his head and ran his hand over his beard. “I figured that if I gave her what she wanted, she would be happy. So I bought her whatever she desired and let her spend money on everything. After several months of this, I found myself in massive debt. I didn’t know of a way out, so I made a decision that I regret to this day.”

He sighed. “My father had a similar, but much smaller, version of his company in the Far
East and a Chinese company was interested in investing in it. Only thing is, they wanted the other fifty percent of the controlling stake in the company, meaning they would be full owners.”

He closed his eyes as he said quietly, “So I sold it to them for far less than its real value.”

Daenerys’ jaw dropped slightly. She had a feeling that was a big mistake.

“My father was furious when he found out. He threatened that if I ever did something so foolish again, that he would cut off my head. I knew he was speaking metaphorically of course; he actually meant he would remove me as CEO and disown me. I paid off the debt, but it made me resent Lynn. I decided to give our marriage one last chance. I took two weeks off work and we went on a vacation to Majorca, Spain. She was finally happy and I was too, we were both more relaxed than we had been in months.”

She sensed that there was a big ‘but’ coming.

“But it was short-lived.” He ran his fingers over his forehead, a look of deep hurt in his eyes at the memory he was reliving.

“One afternoon, she wanted to go back to the hotel room. She said she wasn’t feeling well and that I should just stay where I was, assuring me that she would be fine. I believed her and I stayed, for a while anyway, before I went back. I walked into the room to find her in bed with another man, who happened to be a bit younger than myself.”

Daenerys’ eyes went wide and her jaw dropped the rest of the way open.

“I was stunned. So many emotions were running through me at the time: anger, betrayal, sadness, shock. I turned and walked out. She ran after me, but she didn’t even try to apologize for what she had done. Apparently, this affair had been going on for some time. She had met him a few months before when he was in London on business. I had wondered why she was so keen on Spain for our trip instead of my first suggestion of the French Riviera. I left on the next flight and filed for divorce the following day. The proceedings were messy and full of shouting and lies on her part. She told me that I had driven her to commit adultery, that my lack of emotional availability made her seek it in the arms of another man.”

He laughed ironically, “Oddly enough, she was right, to a degree anyway. As time passed after the divorce, I looked back on the marriage and realized that there were so many mistakes I had made. Things that I could, or rather, should have done differently or better. I vowed that if I ever became involved with someone again, I would not make the same mistakes twice. I needed to learn how to balance my life so that I would not neglect them. Being successful and having money are all well and good, but those things won’t make you laugh or hold your hand when times are tough.”

Jorah reached out and laid his hand over hers on the couch, “So, long story short, to answer your question, when I saw you talking to that younger man, it brought up all of those old feelings. But I should have known better, you aren’t my ex-wife. In fact, you are everything she could never be.”

He squeezed her hand gently in his, warmth evident in his clear blue eyes. She didn’t quite know what to say in response to his words or the look in his eyes as she felt a blush rise on her cheeks, so she simply smiled. She knew they had only been together for five months, but she was starting to feel something for him that she hadn’t felt before with her other boyfriends.

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Later, as she lay in his bed, wrapped up in his arms, the knowledge hit her: *I’m falling in love with him.* All she could do was smile at the fact that this feeling felt oh so right. But then she worried her bottom lip between her teeth, the uncertainty of Jorah’s feelings toward her throwing a cold blanket over her emotions. She fell into a fitful sleep, worry weaving its way through her dreams.
Threats

Chapter Summary

A threat from within the company makes itself known.

Chapter Notes

As I wrote this story, I knew there was going to be some sort of external conflict. So here we go :/

A sharp rap on his open office door drew Jorah’s attention. He gestured for the man to enter before he pointed to the chair facing his desk. He was just finishing a phone call as he stared at the man in front of him. Jonathan Hawkes, a large shareholder from the Board of Directors, had been a thorn in Jorah’s side for quite some time now. He had been the lone dissenting vote when Jorah was made CEO. Since Jonathan was no longer an employee of the company, just a stockholder, he had outside influence on future investors. The man was in his early 40’s, but he had the keen business mind of a man much older.

Jorah hung up the phone. “What can I do for you, Jonathan?”

He tapped the manila folder in his hand against his desk as he spoke, “As a large investor in this company, I like to keep my eye out for potential problems before they can become a reality.”

Jonathan tossed the folder onto the desk, “You need to see what’s in there.”

He stared at the younger man for a moment before he took the folder and opened it. Inside were several pages of news stories printed from the internet. The headline on the first read “Man Found Dead” and the accompanying photo showed a crime scene with a body underneath a white cloth. Jorah scanned the article, words like “head”, “blunt object”, and “money laundering” caught his eye. But it was the name of the victim, Viserys Targeryen, that gave him pause. Daenerys’ brother, he thought. He flipped through the other pages; they were simply more of the same, with differing headlines.

Jorah placed the file back on his desk. “I already knew about this.”

The other man looked taken aback. “For how long?”

“Long enough.”

Jonathan simply stared at him for a moment before he asked, “And you’ve done nothing to solve the problem?”

Jorah rested his arm on the arm rest, his finger running over his chin. “There is no problem to solve.”

He laughed then, short and hard. “Not a problem? Need I remind you that you’re the
public face of this company? If investors were to discover that you were dating some woman whose brother was a convicted felon with a rap sheet as long as my arm, on the run from the law, and actively engaged in criminal activity up until his death, what do you think they would do? Certainly not invest, I can tell you that.”

Jorah leaned forward, his elbows on his desk. “That woman, her name is Daenerys. She is an employee of this company. Her brother has been dead for five and a half years and she had no connection whatsoever with her brother’s nefarious activities. She is an innocent victim of relation and circumstance, nothing more. Don’t sit there and act like your past is entirely squeaky clean.”

Jorah stood then and walked around his desk to stand by the man’s chair. He leaned forward and placed his hands on the arm rests, “Mark my words, if the information in that folder ever sees the light of day, I know the first person I’m coming for.”

The men stared at one another, unblinking, before Jonathan yielded and looked away. Jorah stood and leaned back against his desk. The younger man rose from his chair, smoothing his hands over his suit jacket as he said, “That information was not difficult to find. All I did was type her name into a search engine. I’m sure investors can do the same thing, remember that.”

Jorah’s voice gave him pause as he walked to the door, “Keep what I said in mind as well.”

Jonathan turned and glared at him before he put his hands in his pockets and sighed, walking out of the office.

Jorah sat at his desk and stared at the folder. He wasn’t the least bit worried about Daenerys’ past. It was not as if she had been committing these crimes alongside her brother. What did concern him was Jonathan, the man could be unpredictable and he certainly wouldn’t put it past him to test his resolve. If anyone ever discovered the connection between the dead man and his girlfriend, he decided he would figure it out if and when the time came, although he sincerely doubted it ever would. He took the contents of the folder and fed it into the shredder under his desk before moving on to prepare for an important meeting.

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Daenerys was the only person left in the conference room after the meeting. As she collected her things from the glass table, she heard the door shut behind her. Before she could turn around, a man’s voice said, “I know about your brother.”

She froze, the papers in her hands halfway off the table. She swallowed, schooling her features, before she turned to see Jonathan standing by the door, his hands in his pockets, a smug look on his face. “And?”

“I told Jorah about it earlier today.”

“He already knows about that,” Daenerys said, trying her best to keep her voice calm.

He pursed his lips. “He told me as much.”

Jonathan took a step toward Daenerys. She felt cornered and her heart started to race, the room had only one exit and he blocked the way to it.

“But there is something about your brother Jorah doesn’t know. And he never has to find out about it either.” The look in his eyes was malicious, his words cryptic.
She didn’t know what to say, so she kept her features as impassive as possible.

His eyes moved over her and Daenerys’ stomach turned. Her hands felt clammy, the icy grasp of fear closing around her heart. He took another step toward her as he said, “Everyone has a price.”

She tried to take a step back, but was met with the table, like a knife’s edge in her lower back.

His chuckle was sinister as he mocked her, “Don’t worry, my dear, I’m not going to proposition you or anything like that. You’ve already slept your way to the top.”

Jonathan’s words hit her hard, like a sucker punch to the gut. Did everyone around the office think that way about her or was it just his opinion? She didn’t really want to think about that right now, nor could she think of anything witty to come back at him with. She was rendered mute by a kaleidoscope of emotions. She simply stared at him, hoping he didn’t realize just how hurt and afraid she was.

He took one hand out of his pocket to itch idly at his cheek. “Now, you have it in your power to keep this information a secret. Because I can guarantee that if this goes public, it will permanently ruin Jorah’s reputation.”

“What do you want me to do?” Daenerys cursed inwardly as her voice vacillated with fear.

His smile was cruel as he said simply, “Quit.”

Her brow knit together as she stood up taller. “What?”

He sighed in exasperation. “I know you’re not that stupid. If you quit, this information stays a secret.” He shrugged, “If you don’t, then it’s entirely possible that you’ll be visiting Jorah in prison.”

This hit her like the other half of the one-two punch and she instantly knew he was baiting her. Jorah was no criminal. Daenerys’ voice was quiet with shock, “Jorah would never-”

“He arched an eyebrow, “Clever girl.”

Daenerys saw something in his eyes, a ghost of disbelief. Perhaps he had expected her to simply roll over and give up easily. Well, she thought, not in his lifetime anyway.

“I’m sure you knew the illegal activity your bother was involved in.” The look on her face told him no. “Hmm, well, you must have known the circumstances that brought about your brother’s death.”

“I only found out later he was laundering money for someone.” The memory of that night of police questioning came back to her.

He stroked his clean-shaven jaw. “And, since you are so very clever, perhaps now you can put two and two together.”
She shook her head slowly. Her voice was full of skepticism, “Jorah would never do something illegal like that. He’s an honorable man.”

Jonathan pointed his finger at her, “And it is so fucking frustrating just how honorable he is.” He took a deep breath, “But, thank heavens his father wasn’t. Viserys’ greed cost him dearly in the end, though. Wooden baseball bats, I’ve discovered, are a bitch to clean.”

The look on his face drew the air from her lungs. She did put two and two together then and got the horrid sum of four. Viserys was laundering money for Jorah’s father and she was standing face to face with her brother’s killer.

Jonathan saw the realization dawn in her eyes and his gaze was cold. “You have everything you need to know to make your decision. If you don’t do it by week’s end, you’ll leave me no choice.”

He walked to the door, his hand resting on the handle, “You know; I don’t normally take a perverse pleasure in ruining a person’s life. But this time, I think I just might.”

He left the room with a parting grin. Daenerys exhaled the breath she had been holding. Her hand rested over her racing heart and the room pitched like a boat on a stormy sea. Her legs lost all sensation and she fell into a nearby chair. She was shaking and she felt like a fish on land, gasping for air. She closed her eyes, taking a deep slow breath. She sat there for some time in the lonely vacuum of the room. She ran her hands through her hair and rested her forehead against the coldness of the glass table top. Her mind was a jumble of racing thoughts, but then she lifted her head, her mind suddenly clear and she felt a glimmer of hope. She stood quickly and picked up an object hidden slightly by her portfolio. The bright red LED light of the tape recorder was still lit. She exhaled, for once thankful she had forgotten to turn it off after a meeting. However, a thought hit her and the exhilaration of catching him on tape left her body. She remembered the law said that you can’t share a recording of a conversation with someone without their prior consent. And she knew he would never agree to that. She felt sick to her stomach again, now completely unsure about what to do.
Daenerys didn’t go to work that day. It was the first day she had missed since she started working there. She lay in bed, the covers over her head as she had every intention of missing work tomorrow too. She didn’t answer her phone either. Daenerys could see she had 15 missed calls, all from Jorah. He left her nearly as many voicemails. He even texted her, something he never did, as he felt it was too impersonal. *I am worried about you love, please call me* was all it said. She groaned and put the phone back on her nightstand. She couldn’t run from him forever and the end of the week was fast approaching. She needed to make a decision soon, the consequences dire. She flopped on her back, throwing the covers off as she suddenly felt overheated.

Daenerys stared at the ceiling. She could never have believed that her brother would infect her life even now. *Will I ever be free of him*, she thought. She had expected that his death would be the end of it. Yet, there he was, coiled around her ankles, weighing her down, threatening everything she held dear. Her stomach protested loudly just then, but she wasn’t the least bit hungry, her gut full of nervous knots. The sun had set long ago and the night sky was ominous with storm clouds. She sat up and swung her legs over the side of the bed, gathering the strength to get up completely. She stood and just as she was about to walk out of the room, her phone rang. She glanced back and saw that it was Jorah again. She took a deep breath, knowing she couldn’t ignore him anymore. She picked up the phone and said quietly, “Hello.”

She could hear Jorah’s relieved sigh on the other end before he said, “Oh, thank god. I was so worried about you, love. You didn’t answer any of my calls. Are you all right?”

“I’m fine.”

There was a long pause on the line before he said knowingly, “I can tell by your voice that you are most certainly not fine. I’m coming over there right now.”

She sighed in defeat, “Jorah,-”

“I’ll see you in 15 minutes.”

He hung up before she could say another word. She closed her eyes and rested her forehead against the doorjamb. For the first time, she dreaded seeing him.

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As he drove to her place, Jorah was even more alarmed about Daenerys than he had been before, if that was possible. Her voice sounded distant and her response had been automatic. The fact that she had missed work was troubling too. It was all so out of character for her. Traffic was light and he made it there faster than he anticipated. He lucked out as there was a parking spot
almost right in front of her complex. He took off his suit jacket and left it in the car. He took the stairs to the second floor and knocked on her door.

He waited a few moments and was about to knock again when he heard the door unlock. The face that greeted him looked exhausted, dark circles evident under her eyes. She stepped back, pulling the door open further so he could enter. He watched as she closed the door and locked it. She seemed uncomfortable, unable to meet his eyes as she played with the cuff of her sweatshirt. He took a step toward her and he saw the subtle flinch in her shoulders.

She couldn’t let him touch her, because she knew if she did, she would absolutely lose it. She had to hold on to what little control she had left in this situation.

“Daenerys, love, you’re scaring me. Tell me what’s wrong.”

His voice was so full of concern that she finally lost the battle with containing her emotions. She sat down in the chair by the door, her elbows resting on her knees as she held her head in her hands, tears welling behind her closed eyes.

She heard him crouch at her feet. He rested a hand on her knee, his other tucking the hair that fell like a curtain over her face behind her ear. Her shoulders jerked as she finally let the torrent of tears go. She pulled her hands away from her face; her inhalation of breath was shaky, her bottom lip quivering. He said nothing as he pulled her into his arms. She went limp against him, trying to disappear into the warm comfort he offered. His shirt grew wet with her tears as he stroked his hand soothingly over her hair and back. He understood that words would do little in a moment like this, so he simply held her as long as she needed.

It was a while before the tears subsided, only then did she pull back, wiping her nose on her sleeve. She met his eyes then, bloodshot and puffy, before she looked away again, almost as if she was ashamed for him to see her like this. He turned her face to his, his hand cradling her jaw, his thumb smearing the wet track of her tears. She saw no pity or judgment in his eyes, only tender concern, as if he wanted to take whatever was troubling her and make it right any way he could. “I don’t know how to tell you this.”

His thumb moved over her cheek softly, “Whatever it is, it will be all right. Tell me.”

His reassuring voice calmed her a bit. Daenerys waited a beat before she said, “Maybe it’s better if you hear it yourself.”

She reluctantly left the warmth of his arms and stood, walking toward her bedroom. She was gone for a moment before returning to the living room, something small in her hands as she stood by the sofa. Jorah couldn’t help his confusion, the concern he felt now was tinged with anxiety as he came to stand by her side.

She worried her lip between her teeth, “But if I play this for you, I’ll be breaking the law.”

“Do it anyway.” His voice held a quiet determination now. “If it comes down to it, and I’m questioned by the authorities, I’ll tell them I was in another room and overheard it without your knowledge. Or I’ll simply lie and tell them I heard nothing.”

She saw the resolve in his eyes and she knew intuitively he would protect her, no matter what. She sat down on the couch and he came to sit next to her. She placed the recorder on the coffee table and pressed play. She watched Jorah’s face as he listened; it was a mask of impassivity. At least until Jonathan accused her of sleeping her way to the top. Then he pursed his lips, the muscles of his jaw jumping under the skin, his hand clenched in a tight fist, the other gripped his
knee, the knuckles white. His eyes narrowed as he listened further, but went wide as the recording revealed Jorah’s fathers, as well as Jonathan’s, crimes. He closed his eyes as he ran his hand through his hair. When the recording ended, he stood and began pacing near the coffee table. He undid his tie, leaving it draped around his neck, as he unbuttoned the top button of his shirt. He stopped, his fingers interlocked behind his head before his arms fell to his sides, his hands clenching into tight fists.

“It is one thing for Jonathan to try and intimidate me, but it is another thing entirely for him to threaten you. Does it make me less of a man if I want to deck that bastard in the face for what he said to you?”

His eyes were fiery and his posture upright and strong, but it was not with anger at her. It was fierce protectiveness that shone in his gaze, a deep desire to protect her that she found all together comforting and attractive. She gave him a watery smile, “Not at all.”

He gave her a small one in return before he sighed and his posture relaxed. “It all makes perfect sense now. Jonathan never let me see the company books and he spent so much time around my father, whispering in his ear like a bloody young Rasputin. I thought it strange when he, out of the blue, said he was retiring. And it’s no wonder Jonathan was the only dissenting vote on the Board when I was made CEO, he thought the position was guaranteed to be his. He’s been a thorn in my side ever since.”

Daenerys played with her fingernails, “So, it’s true that your father was involved in the money laundering?”

Jorah rubbed his hand over his cheek, his beard rasping his fingers as he continued to pace. “Something tells me no.” He sighed. “He loved the company; he would never do something illegal like that to jeopardize it.”

“Well, I know what I have to do.”

Jorah stopped and looked at her with shock, “You will do no such thing. If you give in and quit, then he wins.”

She stood, her voice slightly raised. “And if I don’t, he still wins. Whichever way you slice it, we’re fucked.”

He had never heard her curse before and even in this tense moment he found it charming. He smiled softly at her, “Let’s not be hasty. We have until Friday. Today’s Tuesday. I think I have a way to set this right.”

Her eyebrows raised in skepticism as she asked, “And what would that be?”

“Jonathan might be forgetting that I happen to know something about him. He also doesn’t know that the CFO is one of my oldest and closest friends. I’ll speak to him tomorrow.”

Her shoulders sagged as she sat back down, “I’m so sorry I brought this on you.”

He sat on the coffee table in front of her, his legs on either side of hers as he took her hands in his large warm ones. “You have nothing to apologize for. This is not your doing, it’s his. Jonathan has known this information for years.”

“And it never would have come out if I hadn’t started working there.”

“Daenerys, look at me.” Her eyes met his after a moment. “That may be true. But I also never
would have met you and that would have been a far greater tragedy. Do you have any idea how much joy you’ve brought to my life? I would not trade that for anything.”

Her eyebrows drew together and she felt the sting of fresh tears in her eyes. “Really?”

His thumbs caressed the backs of her hands, the smile evident in his voice, “Yes, really.”

Jorah raised one hand to cup her cheek and she leaned into his touch. He could see tears beginning to well again, but these were not ones of sadness or pain. It was the reaction to the tender affection so clearly evident in his blue eyes. Jorah wanted to tell her she was his second chance to get love right and the best thing that had ever happened to him. But he realized a simple declaration would best sum up the powerful feeling that he could no longer contain in himself, his voice as sure as his gaze, “I love you, Daenerys.”

Her lips parted and she gave a short soft laugh before she closed the short distance between them and pressed her lips against his. His eyelids slipped shut as he returned her kiss with a delicate, slow sweetness.

She broke the kiss first, her hand resting on his chest over his heart, the beat of it a little faster under her touch. Daenerys smiled, “I love you too, Jorah.”

He mirrored her expression and it was his turn to lean in for a kiss. He rested his forehead against hers before he stood and gathered her into his arms. He sat on the couch, setting her in his lap. She laid her head on his shoulder and snuggled against him. He drew a blanket over them and held her, his hand occasionally rubbing softly over her back.

It wasn’t long before she fell asleep against him. Jorah carried her into her bedroom and laid her down. He undressed to his boxer briefs and climbed into bed, drawing the blankets over them both, his arm around her waist, holding her against his chest. He fell asleep soon after to the gentle lullaby of her breathing.

Chapter End Notes

Sexy times return in the next chapter ;)
Chapter Summary

A difficult situation has brought our couple closer together.

Chapter Notes

The NSFW content is back ;) Thank you for your patience.

There are a few acronyms in this story that need explaining.

FCA = Financial Conduct Authority. They are in charge of regulating and investigating financial crimes in the UK.

CFO = Chief Financial Officer. He's the person in charge of the financial aspects of a company.

Also, this chapter is a bit longer than usual. But I promise it's for a good reason.

Enjoy! Disclaimer still applies.

Daenerys’ eyes opened slowly, the sky outside the windows just beginning to lighten. She felt the reassuring weight of Jorah’s arm around her midsection and the press of his body against her back. She closed her eyes, simply enjoying all the wonderful sensations of this quiet moment: the even cadence of his breathing, the softness of his hair under her hand as it rested on his forearm, and the oddly comforting warmth of his feet against hers. He had told her last night that he loved her, in spite of everything that stood in their path. The road ahead of them would not be easy, but with him by her side, she knew the burden would be made easier. He shifted, his arm tightening around her, before he stilled again. A fierce need came over her then, a yearning to be one with him that she could not deny.

She pressed herself against him; her bottom nestled against his groin. She heard his soft groan before she felt him nuzzle the back of her neck. She gasped when his lips pressed softly against her skin. His arm moved lower on her body as he drew her tighter against him, the feel of his burgeoning erection only added to the growing wetness between her legs. He moved behind her and she turned slightly to see he had propped himself on his elbow, the drowsiness in his eyes quickly being replaced by a look of desire. It was nearly as strong as what she felt for him in that moment, her hand rising to rest against his cheek as she drew him down into a kiss. It started slow, but the ember of their passion soon ignited into a blaze of want. Her fingers carded through the hair at the back of his head before running down over his neck and shoulder to rest over his breastbone, his heart pounding under her hand, the soft fur of his chest tickling her palm. Their tongues mirrored a mating dance as ancient as the feelings they shared. Jorah withdrew from the kiss, his hand grasping the hem of her sweatshirt, his voice urgent, “Take this off, love. I need to see you, to feel you.”

She sat up long enough to remove it, throwing it somewhere by the bed before she lay
Daenerys watched Jorah: the slow exhalation of his breath, the way his eyes moved over her, the reverence of his touch over the skin of her belly, it was as if he was seeing and touching her for the first time. Those deliciously rough fingers of his trailed over her before he cupped her breast in his hand and she arched into his touch. He kneaded the fullness gently, his thumb barely touching her hardened nipple. Between kisses along her neck, he whispered, “Your breast fits so perfectly in my hand, as if they were created for one another.”

Daenerys was not sure how long he touched her bare skin as time seemed fluid. He explored every exposed inch of her, his tender words of adoration like a second touch, one that went deeper, into her heart. Their lips met and parted many times over. He gathered her against his chest again before his hand reached slowly inside the waist band of her sweatpants and panties, his fingers slipping over her clit and between her folds. She moaned at his touch, arching back against him. He responded with a moan of his own, his lips against her ear, “God, Daenerys, I can feel how much you need me.”

His pace was magnificent torture. Between the slowness of it, the open-mouthed kisses on her neck, shoulder and upper back, the sudden warmth of his tongue as it darted out occasionally to lick her, the rasp of his beard and impassioned breath on her skin, she could not even attempt a thought. Her nerves felt hyper aware, every minute detail amplified in a way she had never experienced before. Soon it was not nearly enough, her body wanted more.

“Jorah, please, I need you inside me.”

He could never deny her when she pleaded in that sweet breathy voice of hers. He removed his hand from between her legs, his fingers trailing wetly over her skin. She pulled her pants and underwear down below her knees, her legs kicking them the rest of the way off. Behind her she could hear Jorah pulling his own clothing out of the way before she felt the press of his hard bare length against her bottom. He grasped her inner thigh and drew her leg over his, her lower body arching to aid him as his hand held her hip, the head of his cock easily finding the source of her abundant wetness. Their groans mingled as he slowly buried himself to the hilt, filling her completely. The wet hot clutch of her around him nearly ended things before they had even begun. Jorah took a deep breath, but it was stolen from his lungs the moment he began his slow pace. The slick slide of her along the underside of his shaft had him gritting his teeth, the hold on his control tenuous. Based on the sound of her soft cries, the pleasure of it was nearly too much for Daenerys as well. A few more thrusts and he groaned against her shoulder, “I won’t last long, love.”

She moaned softly, “I don’t care. I just need you.”

She grasped his hand and drew it between her legs. He knew just how she needed his touch, the heel of his hand pressing low on her abdomen, his fingers circling her aching clit.

He felt the occasional soft flutter on his shaft when he stroked her just right, her breathy cries of “right there” snapped his control and he sped up his thrusts and the motion of his fingers. She reached behind her and gripped his hip, her nails digging into the skin.

Her hold tightened as the wave of pleasure began to crest inside her. Her whimpers turned into a moan, “Oh God, Jorah, I’m gonna come.”

That was just what he needed to hear as he knew he couldn’t hold back. The rhythm of his thrusts faltered, his breath hot as he pant ed against her shoulder, his body desperate to spill inside her, “Let go, love, I’m right there with you.”

Her body tensed and the surge crashed over her, its warmth starting from her center and radiating out through her limbs. Her body trembled and her back arched, her other hand gripping the sheet in
front of her as she used it for leverage to push back against him. He felt her throb around him and he finally let go, her name a reverent whisper into her hair, as he held himself deep within her, his release leaving him in long pulsing jets, each one drawing a groan from deep in his chest. The feel of his thick wetness inside her made her whimper softly in response, riding the last of her pleasure, his name on her lips as she collapsed limply against him. He gathered her tight against him as he slipped from her body. As they caught their breath, she turned her head toward him and her eyes opened slowly.

It was the look he saw there, one of pure love and contentment, which stole the air from his chest. No one had ever looked at him the way she was now, as if he was her everything. He caressed her cheek with the backs of his fingers, their gazes locked. So many words passed silently between them and a blissful sensation filled him as he drew a shaky breath. He heard her soft exhalation, a tear forming in the corner of her eye. Her lips parted, intending to say something to him, but he placed his thumb over them and said tenderly, “I know, love, I feel it too.”

She smiled softly at him and turned completely in his arms, pressing her chest against his. He drew her to his body as he lay on his back, his hand resting on the gentle curve of her bottom, “We have a few hours yet. Get some rest.”

She snuggled against him as she stifled a yawn against his chest. Jorah felt his eyelids grow heavy, although he didn’t want to sleep just yet, the feel of her body pressed against him something he did not want to miss one moment of. Soon her breathing was even, her body totally relaxed. Only then did he give in to sleep too.

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When her eyes opened again, she was alone in bed; the place where Jorah had been was still warm. Early morning sunlight filtered through the windows and the smell of brewing coffee filled the air. She stretched and sighed in satisfaction as the muscles of her body unwound. She got out of bed and pulled on her short robe, tying the belt loosely around her waist. She walked toward the sound of humming and was greeted with a beautiful sight: Jorah, in his boxer briefs and nothing else, leaning against the counter as he waited for the coffee to finish. He had some definite sex hair going on and she found him simultaneously adorable and gorgeous. As she watched him, a thought crossed her mind: A girl could get used to waking up to a man like that in her kitchen. She smiled, walking across her small living room, before tip-toeing up behind Jorah to surprise him. She wrapped her arms around his midsection, but he didn’t seem startled. He turned in her arms and smirked at her, “Though you may be tiny, I heard you the moment you stepped out of the bedroom.”

Daenerys made a face of pretend disappointment before she smiled and leaned up to kiss him. As was often the case, it became heated very quickly, his hands beginning to undo the belt at her waist. She stilled them and he looked at her with puppy-dog eyes. She shook her head, laughing softly, “If I let you do that, we’d never get to work today.”

He crossed his arms and tried very hard to be serious as he said, “Explain to me how that would be a bad thing.”

She sighed, one eyebrow cocked, “You’re incorrigible.”

Jorah heard the joking tone of her voice before he gave a sigh of his own, “All right. I see your point. Go get ready, the coffee’s almost done.”

Daenerys turned, but before she could walk away, she felt a gentle slap against her bottom. She looked over her shoulder at him and couldn’t help but start to laugh as she walked back into her room. She looked at herself in the mirror and realized she had some sex hair of her own.
Glancing at the clock, she knew she didn’t have time for a shower. She did the best she could with her hair before choosing black pants and a blue blouse from her closet. Once dressed, she stood in front of the mirror again, happy enough with her look.

Jorah walked in carrying two steaming cups of coffee. He handed her one before he set his down on the nightstand and picked his clothes up off the floor. She took one look at his shirt and said, “Are you sure you want to wear that? It’s really wrinkled.”

He touched the side of his nose, “I keep a spare in my car.”

She leaned back against the dresser and watched him as he dressed; suddenly wishing she hadn’t stopped his advances in the kitchen. She was not looking forward to today and how things would be at work. She was so lost in her thoughts that she didn’t hear Jorah say her name until he said it a second time, a bit louder.

She met his eyes and Jorah saw apprehension there. He left his tie loose around his neck and came to stand in front of her. “It’s going to be all right. I know it may not seem that way now, but I’m not going to allow that bastard to ruin either of our lives.” He took hold of her hand, “I don’t think he knows it yet, but he’s picked the wrong man to mess with. No one goes after the woman I love without paying dearly for it. I fight hardest for what matters the most to me.”

He squeezed her hand as he said this; the quiet resolve in his eyes and voice reassured her that he would do just that. She set down her cup and wrapped her arms around him, burying her face in his chest and inhaling his scent, feeling the calm that always washed over her whenever she hugged him. His arms went around her and he whispered against the top of her head, “I love you.”

She squeezed him in response and murmured, “I love you too.”

Daenerys thought it best that they not walk into the office together, at least until things blew over. As much as Jorah wanted to show a united front, he realized she was probably right, so they entered the office ten minutes apart. The minute Jorah sat behind his desk; he dialed the CFO’s extension. Robert had been his friend going back many years and he knew the man had a strong ethical code and could be trusted to keep things confidential. They chatted for a while before he asked if he could see the financial records dating back ten years, not wanting to draw too much attention to what his plan was. Robert readily agreed and told Jorah he’d have them on his desk before lunch. He ended the conversation and hung up, sitting back in his chair, pleased that the first part of his plan went so smoothly.

Robert was true to his word as he stopped by a couple of hours later and handed Jorah a flash drive with a digital copy of the records. He said he had the originals in his office if he needed them. Jorah thanked him as the man rushed out of his office on the way to a meeting.

Jorah told his secretary that he was not to be disturbed for the next hour and closed his door. He inserted the flash drive into his computer and began to open and review the files. The earlier years were clear, no discrepancies that Jorah could see. But it was the record dating back six years ago that gave him pause. As he scrolled through the documents, he made short notes on his legal pad in a code only he understood, in case anyone should find it. He crossed referenced his notes and made some startling discoveries. He sat back in his chair and rubbed his hands over his face. He exhaled a long breath before he leaned forward and dialed Daenerys’ extension.

Jorah sounded very serious as he told her to come to his office, that there was something she needed to see. She left her desk and walked over, telling the secretary that he was expecting her
before opening the door and closing it behind her. She noticed Jorah pacing behind his desk, something he always did when he was deep in thought. He gave her a small smile before he gestured for her to sit down in his chair. She took a seat and he leaned next to her, resting his hand on the desk. “Read those files and tell me what you see.”

She did, and at first it looked a bit confusing, but as she scrolled further it began to make more and more sense. After a while, she sat back in the chair and looked up at him. He had the exact same look on his face that she had on hers. “There’s a mountain of evidence against Jonathan in those records.”

He stood up and crossed his arms. “Precisely. All of those accounts, I cross-referenced them with company account records and employee lists. None of them ever existed, except in those documents there. They’re all fake, created in an off-shore bank in the Cayman Islands. Jonathan did not cover his tracks very well at all. He must be either extremely stupid or exceedingly arrogant to think he would never get caught.”

Jorah held up his hand and said, “There’s more.”

He took the mouse and clicked over to another window. “One of these is not like the others.”

As Daenerys looked at the three signatures, she noticed right away one of them was patently different. “That middle one is isn’t even close to the other two. Whoever signed those did a horrible job of forging the signature.”

“Exactly, the middle one is my father’s. The top one is Jonathan’s and the bottom one is his forgery of my father’s name. And, like you said, it’s a terrible copy. It’s all over these documents dated from that year, the year my father retired and your brother was murdered. It had completely slipped my mind, but Jonathan had been our interim CFO when Robert was ill with cancer. That is how he was able to accomplish this right under my father’s nose. The forgery tells me he had no clue what was going on. If he had known, he never would have willingly signed his name to anything. He has too much honor for that.”

She sighed. “So, wait a second, didn’t you take over the company in the middle of all this?”

“Actually, no. I was voted in as the new CEO in June of that year, but I did not officially take over the position until the new fiscal year that started at the end of January of the following year. So, none of this affects me. Well, not directly anyway.”

“Well, that’s good news, right?”

Jorah smiled at her as he rested his hands on his desk. “It is good news. I won’t go through the Board with this; it would be too much of a heads-up to Jonathan. I have plenty of evidence here to take to the FCA directly.”

“Then they can nail his ass to the wall.”

His smile broadened as he looked at her. “Have I ever told you that you’re positively adorable when you curse?”

She rolled her eyes and elbowed his hip, but he could tell she wasn’t really upset with him.

She sat back in the chair and said teasingly, “Well done, Sherlock. You’ve cracked the case.”
He chuckled. “I couldn’t have done it without you. That makes you my Watson, you know.”

She joined in his mirth. “I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

They were leaning in to kiss one another when there was a knock at his door. They parted reluctantly and she gathered her portfolio from the desk. He mouthed “later tonight” as he winked at her before she smiled back and left his office, her mind thinking about the fun later might bring.

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Daenerys had taken a cab home, as Jorah was at the FCA office nearly all afternoon and into early evening. At around five, he called her and said he was on his way. He told her to order take out, whatever she wanted, and he would be there soon. He arrived about fifteen minutes later, just as the delivery guy was arriving with their dinner. Jorah paid the man and set the food on the coffee table before he flopped down on the couch. He rested his head against the back of it and closed his eyes. He undid his tie and the first two buttons of his shirt as he sat there. The sight of him with his shirt open like that always made her want to touch the tantalizingly bare patch of skin, the hair she knew to be so soft peeking out at the top. She cleared her mind and sat down next to him. He opened his eyes and turned his head to look at her. He looked worn out and she wished she could help in some way.

“Rough afternoon?”

“I thought the questioning would never end. I don’t think I was much help to them as most of my answers were ‘I wasn’t present at the time’ or ‘I have no knowledge of such activity’. Something positive did come out of it; they are fairly certain, based on the evidence, that they have a strong case against him. They want to see the original files and they said they had contacted Robert while I was there to bring them to their office. They want to look at the last ten years, just as a precautionary measure.”

She put her hand over his as it rested on the couch, “That’s great news.”

He smiled at her. “It is. As you said, now they can nail his ass to the wall.”

They both started laughing at the memory of her words before she stood up and went to get utensils and plates from the kitchen. He looked at her quizzically, “Plates? I usually just eat Chinese right out the carton.”

“Me too.” She set the things in her hands down and lit the candles on her coffee table before she began to fill each plate with food. “I just thought that we could celebrate this little victory with a nice dinner.”

He simply stared at her with softness in his gaze, touched by all of the little ways she made his life better. “That’s a perfect idea.”

She went back to the kitchen to get them something to drink before returning to their makeshift dinner table with two glasses of wine. They ate in conversation, talking about things completely unrelated to work. After she cleaned up, she snuggled up against him on the couch and they watched a movie on TV, underneath the added warmth of a blanket.

About halfway through it, she heard Jorah’s soft snore. He really was exhausted and she dared not wake him. She stayed where she was until the movie was over and then sat up to turn off the TV. The candles had long since gone out and the room was lit only by the soft light from the
bedroom. Jorah’s eyes blinked slowly as she took hold of his hand, her voice soft, “Come on, let’s get you to bed.”

He followed her willingly out the living room and he sat on her bed, rubbing his beard and yawning. She undressed him and he watched her with a drowsy smile on his face. He stood up long enough to remove his pants and shoes before climbing under the covers. Daenerys changed for bed and put her hair into a braid before brushing her teeth. She stopped in the doorway of the bathroom and found Jorah asleep again. She smiled to herself and shut off the light. She got into bed next to him and turned on her side so she could see his face until she too fell asleep.
Justice Pt. 1

Chapter Summary

Justice is finally served, but it is bittersweet.

Chapter Notes

There is a NSFW scene at the beginning of this chapter ;)

Also this chapter was originally much longer. But I decided to divide it into 2 and post them together (hence the pt.1 and pt.2).

There are new tags as well :D

Daenerys stood under the warm water, rinsing the last of the suds from her hair. She thought she heard movement outside the shower curtain just before cold air greeted her back, only to be replaced by a warm body. Arms wound around her midsection and lips pressed against her neck, “Every man should be so lucky to be greeted with such a sight in the morning.”

She leaned against him, “I could say the same about you.”

He chuckled, “Not with the hair I woke up with. I was definitely a sight,” his lips against her shoulder, “and not a handsome one.”

She turned in his arms and looked at his hair, although it was now mostly wet from the shower. “I love your bed head; it reminds me a lot of your sex hair.”

Jorah smirked as he ran his hands through it, distributing the water as he moved more fully under the shower spray. She watched the water matte his delectable chest hair, drops clinging to his eyelashes and beard. He recognized the look she gave him immediately and gathered her to him, his hand cradling her head as he kissed her. The other caressed her back, moving down to the curve of her bottom, where he kneaded the swell of one cheek in his hand gently. They kissed for some time, her arms around him, touching and gripping the wet musculature of his back. He walked her backward until the cool tile greeted her feverish skin and he pressed himself against her body, his cock hard against her belly. “Jorah, as much as I want you right now, we don’t have time.”

“Love, we have an hour yet. Besides, there is always time for this. For you.” She watched as he dropped to one knee before her, guiding her leg over his shoulder, “You took care of me last night. Now let me return the favor.”

She gasped as his tongue weaved deftly between her slick folds, seeking out the tiny treasure that brought her such intense pleasure. A soft moan left her lips as her head fell back against the tile when he found it, wrapping his lips around her clit and drawing it to his questing tongue. She gazed down at him and found his eyes watching her as they always did. He had once told her that he loved to do this for her, the sight and sound of her as she took her pleasure from his mouth he had
said was the personification of perfection. His hands grasped her bottom and drew her more fully against his mouth, the swirling of his tongue slow. Her breathing quickened in direct relation to the increasing speed and pressure against her aching nub, the soft flutters that heralded her impending orgasm brought even louder whimpers from her lips. When she begged him not to stop, he redoubled his efforts, his tongue like a whirlwind. She gripped his hair tightly in her hands and held his face against her sex as her hips shuddered. Her body filled with heat as her orgasm crashed through her, her neck arched as she moaned his name, her legs trembling. She felt his finger slip inside her, groaning around her clit as he felt her throbs of pleasure. His tongue slowed and he licked her in time with those pulses, extending the bliss as long as her body could stand it. Soon, it was too much and she pulled away from him, her body sagging against the wall. He stood and wrapped her in his arms, the heady flavor of her on his lips as they kissed. The water had long since grown cold and he reached behind him to turn it off. They stepped from the shower and dried one another off. Once they were sufficiently dry, she arched an eyebrow at him and said, “Go lie on the bed. I’ll be right there.”

Jorah didn’t need to be told twice. His eyes watched her through the open bathroom door as she pinned up her damp hair, the image reminding him of a painting he saw with her once when they had gone to the art museum. The artist’s name escaped him and for good reason, Daenerys’ nude body was more beautiful than any painting could ever capture.

She turned off the light and paused in the doorway. Their eyes met and held before she smiled at him and walked toward the bed, the slight sway of her hips seductive. She broke his gaze to look over his body, her eyes stopping at his thick cock, jutting proudly from his nest of ginger curls. She was torn as to whether she wanted to push him onto his back and ride him slowly or kneel between his legs and take him in her mouth. The former choice won out and she crawled onto the bed, gently pushing him so he lay flat. He watched her turn and straddle his hips, her entrance poised over the head of his cock. She looked over her shoulder at him, her lip between her teeth. The look in Jorah’s eyes, one of dark lust, only made her desire for him burn hotter.

He watched himself slowly disappear into her wet heat, his groan combining with her soft sigh as her body met his and she rocked her hips gently. She stayed still for several moments; the only sound her quiet breaths, her fingers tensing against his thighs as she began her slow pace. Daenerys had discovered just how good this position could be if she rolled her hips just right, his shaft rubbing perfectly over that little place inside her with each thrust. He knew she found it when her head tipped back and he felt the soft flutter of her around him, his name a soft whimper.

“Take your pleasure from me, love, do what makes your body feel good. “ Her movements strained his voice, making it husky with desire. “God, Daenerys, I wish I could see your face. I love to watch you take me like this.”

His hands caressed what he could reach of her lower back, her bottom and her hips. “The sensual sway of your body, your eyes half-closed in pleasure, it is all so perfect.”

She loved when he talked to her like this as she moved over him slowly. It created the perfect experience for her, all of her senses alive and heightened: the warmth of his skin under her hands, the sound of his deep voice speaking to her in just the right way with just the right words, the slick slide of his hard cock inside her, and the hint of their combined sweat in the air. Sex had never been this way for Daenerys before, so much more than the physical sensations. With Jorah, she finally understood why it was called ‘making love’ because that was just what it was to her and she was sure it was that way for him too.

She had the most beautiful back he had ever laid eyes on, the long graceful line of it giving way to the dimples at the base of her spine and then the glorious curve of her bottom as it bumped gently
against his groin with each downward thrust.

Soon, the leisurely pace was not enough for either of them. His hands held her hips; the gentle guidance of his touch as she rose and fell over him at an increasing pace she knew would bring them to their blissful release. The soft sound of their bodies meeting united with their rapidly drawn breaths. The higher pitch of her moans and whimpers blended with his throaty groans and grunts to create the ancient song of their pleasure.

With each thrust, her orgasm drew closer, the coiling heat in her belly tight. Her pace increased even more, his words the perfect catalyst, “Touch yourself, Daenerys.”

Her fingers moved over her slick clit and it did not take much before she arched over him, her rhythm faltering. Her head tipped back as she moaned his name, the clench of her sex around him deliciously sweet as heat engulfed her body. She fell forward, her arms shaking as she supported herself against his legs. Her body continued to move over him, as if by its own volition, needy for his release inside her. His grip on her hips tightened slightly and he groaned softly, his breathing deep. She knew he was close and she glanced down between his legs, his scrotum drawn snug to his body as she felt his body tense beneath her, his hands clenching on her hips in time with the throbs of his cock, his groan of her name low. She reached underneath his tight sac and rested her fingers against the skin there. Daenerys felt it, the spasm of the muscle in time with his release, and on the next pulse, she pressed gently. His hips surged beneath her, his voice guttural, “Oh fuck, love, wha-“

She watched the muscles of his legs twitching involuntarily as she did it a second time, his toes curled, his sentence unfinished as it gave way to a moan from deep in his chest, his breathing now quick pants. She glanced over her shoulder at him and the sight stole her breath: all of his muscles, from the cords of his neck to his pectorals and biceps, were clearly visible under his taut skin, his head thrown back, his lips parted, his eyes shut tight. *He has the sexiest orgasm face I’ve ever seen,* she thought.

His body sagged against the bed, completely spent. His eyes opened slowly and he blinked several times before he met her gaze, trying in vain to catch his breath. “You’ll be the death of me, love, I swear it. Where in heavens name did you learn to do that?”

She giggled and let him slip from her body before she lay down at his side, her hand moving idly over his sweat-dampened chest. “Like that, huh? I read it in a book.”

“I’ll have to write them a glowing review.”

She sighed, resting her head on his chest, his fingers trailing over her shoulder. She relaxed in his arms for a time and was just closing her eyes when he asked, “How much time do we have?”

She leaned up slightly, glancing at the clock. “About twenty minutes.”

“Perfect, enough time for another shower. Care to join me?”

She met his eyes, “Oh no, that’s how we got into this situation in the first place.”

He pouted, “I promise I’ll be good.”

She shook her head and got up, walking to the closet to pick out her clothes for the day, “I know *you* keep your promises, but I can’t say the same for myself when it comes to you.”

He got up then and walked over to her. He pressed a quick kiss to her shoulder, “What can I say, I’m just that desirable.”
She made a noise of shock and tried to smack him playfully on the arm, but he moved out of the way too quickly and she missed. He grinned triumphantly and disappeared into the bathroom, her voice following after, “You’ll pay for that later!”

***

Investigators from the FCA came to the office later that morning before they carried box after box of documents into the conference room and stayed behind the closed doors nearly all day. Over the next week, things happened at a rapid pace. The staff whispered amongst themselves about what was going on and the rumors started to fly. Jorah, for the most part, stayed silent when anyone asked him anything, only a few times did he answer, “We’ll see.”

Daenerys could tell Jorah was tense; his eyes always gave him away. She wanted this to be over as much as he did. She wasn’t surprised to find out the Jonathan had slipped out the back exit when the investigators showed up. It was all over the newspapers that they were looking for him and she figured he couldn’t run for long. During their initial investigation, they questioned Jorah and Robert at length again. And while they answered everything to the best of their knowledge, there were large gaps in the information that Jorah realized could only be answered by Jonathan or Daenerys’ brother. Since neither of them was available for questioning, the investigators had to rely on the records the company provided and bank registers from the off-shore accounts.

Then, two weeks later, a man from the FCA informed Jorah that his business was no longer under investigation as they had discovered no wrongdoing in the last five years. It was only 2011 that interested them. The man also informed him that Jonathan had been apprehended at the airport, trying to get on a flight to Russia, as that country had no extradition treaty with the UK. While in custody, he implicated Viserys as the sole offender, responsible for everything related to the crime. When the investigators discovered that Daenerys now worked for the same company her brother had aided Jonathan in defrauding, they wanted to interrogate her as well. She spent hours down at their headquarters, answering what questions she could. Most of the information she knew about her brother was second hand, things that she had learned from the police after his murder. She dared not mention the recording of Jonathan confessing, because she knew that if she did, she would be brought up on charges herself. They had multiple indictments they were planning to bring against him, amongst them forgery, money laundering and insider trading. This meant that there would most likely be a trial, unless Jonathan pled out first.

It was front page news in the business section the next day and, according to the article, Jonathan did in fact take the easy way out. He pled guilty to all charges in order to get a lesser sentence. He would still be facing fifteen to twenty years in prison, but Daenerys felt it was a slap on the wrist as he would serve no time for murdering her brother. He would never admit to it publically and the recording she had of his confession was not admissible in court so it was just like he was getting away with it all over again. While it made her angry and sad, she consoled herself with the idea that at least he was behind bars and could no longer affect her or Jorah’s life.

Jorah made a public statement regarding the investigation to clear up any rumors or confusion. And it seemed to do the trick as business didn’t appear to slow all that much. They had two mergers pending and Jorah was leaving on a business trip to Dublin the following week. Things appeared to be back to normal, as she sat in his office on that late Friday afternoon, discussing merger details. He had long since sent his secretary home and the office was pretty much deserted. She wanted to clear up a few things about the acquisition before she went to the meeting in Edinburgh that following week. It would be the first one she was doing on her own and to say that she was freaking out was an understatement. Jorah reassured her that she would be fine; that she was more than ready and extremely capable to handle this on her own. It calmed her nerves that he such utter faith in her abilities.
He sat back in his chair and regarded her silently for a moment. “I wish you were coming to Dublin with me. I know it’s only three days, but you would make the trip all the more bearable.”

She sighed. “I wish I was too. Is it too late to pass this meeting off to somebody else on the team so I can go?”

He chuckled. “Unfortunately, yes.”

“Well, it was worth a shot to ask.” She smiled softly at him. “What do you do when you’re alone in the room at night after all the business is over?”

“Mostly, I collapse on the bed, worn out from meetings and small talk.”

She laughed as she conjured the image in her mind of Jorah spread eagle on the bed still dressed in his suit.

“Sometimes, I think about calling you. But then I remember the time difference and I realize it’s too late.”

“I wouldn’t mind if you did, no matter how late it was.” Her eyes looked thoughtful as she said, “I do miss the sound of your voice when you’re gone.”

His expression was tender, “I miss yours too. With everything that has happened these last few weeks, the last thing I want to do is leave you.”

She smiled sweetly, “Like you said, it’s only three days. Besides, absence makes the heart grow fonder.”

“That it does, love.”
After the discussion in his office last Friday, Daenerys was only a little surprised to see Jorah’s name on the caller ID that following Monday morning. He just wanted to reassure her that she would do a fantastic job. Before he hung up, he promised he would call her later and he told her that he loved her. Even though she wasn’t as nervous as she thought she would be, it was still the extra shot of confidence that she needed.

The meeting went well; she realized she really shouldn’t have been all that worried. Despite Jorah’s company being in the news so much recently, this business didn’t really seem to mind overly much. They understood that the events had taken place years ago and that the reputation since then was impeccable. She had dinner that night with two members of their Board before heading back to the hotel.

She couldn’t wait to take off her heels, take a hot shower and relax in bed. And she did just that when she arrived at her room. As she sat on the bed braiding her damp hair, she turned on the TV, the sound low for some background noise. She climbed into bed and half-paid attention to some comedy rerun as she waited for Jorah’s call. Her mind started to wander and her thoughts filled with him. She bit her lip as she remembered that night in Jorah’s bed, the second time they had been together. Around 11pm, her phone rang, “Hi Jorah.”

She could hear the smile in his voice, “Hello Daenerys.” He sighed. “It’s so wonderful to hear your voice.”

“The feeling is mutual. How’d your day go?”

He sighed again, but this time in exasperation. “Meetings, back-to-back, all morning and afternoon. We signed the paperwork to finalize the deal, though, so that went well.” He paused. “But enough about that, how was yours?”

“Everything went smoothly. They told me they would be calling you on Thursday to hammer out a few final details.”

“That’s great. I knew you could handle it like the professional you are.”

She chuckled. “Thanks, I’m really proud of how well it went.”
“You should be.” Another pause. “I’ve missed you. I think you would like Dublin. I overheard some people talking in the hotel lobby today about the reptile house at the zoo. Apparently, it’s fantastic. And I know how much you love those scaly creatures.”

She giggled. “I do. Maybe we can make a trip there sometime.”

“That sounds like a plan. No business, just pleasure.”

The sound of that word said in his deep voice never ceased to make her insides all warm and she felt the conversation start to take a turn in an entirely new direction. “I like the sound of that. Especially the pleasure part.”

He hummed in approval, “Do you know what I was thinking about before I called you?”

“Probably the same thing I was.”

“I will never forget that night, the first time I made love to you in my bed. The first time I made you come with my mouth.”

She exhaled a shaky breath. “That wicked thing you did pulling the hood of my clit back, god, where did you learn to do that?”

He chuckled. “I was just trying something I always wanted to do, Sweetheart.” His voice deepened before he continued, “Do you know what I am thinking about right now?”

“No,” Her voice breathy, “Tell me.”

“In my mind, I am with you, sitting in a chair facing the bed. You’re lying before me and your long elegant fingers are between your spread legs, covered in your wetness, moving over your clit.” He groaned, “You look so very naughty while you do it too.”

She inhaled sharply. “You make me want to be naughty, Jorah.” Daenerys hesitated before she said, “Let’s do it.”

“Do what exactly? I can’t be there to watch you.”

She bit her lip as she asked, “Have you ever had phone sex?”

All she heard was Jorah’s heavy breathing before he replied, “That’s something I haven’t done before.”

“Would you like to do it with me right now? You know, talk me through what you’re thinking.”

His voice sounded positively wicked as he said, “I’d love to. Tell me what you’re wearing.”

“What I always wear to bed.”

He moaned softly. “You’re naked. God, Daenerys, you have no idea how much I wish I was there with you right now.”

“Oh, I think I do.” She pressed him, in the voice she knew that drove him crazy for her, “Talk dirty to me, Jorah.”

The noise he made sounded every bit like an animal before his tone went rough, “I
couldn’t watch you touch yourself for very long. All I would want to do is bury my face between your silky thighs and cover my tongue with your nectar, slowly teasing your clit until you came for me.”

Daenerys gasped as she murmured, “Oh my god.”

“I know how much you love my mouth on you. For me, it’s not just the taste of you, so sweet and purely feminine, it’s infinitely more than that: the scent of you surrounding me, your beautiful body quivering with pleasure, seeing and hearing the moment your orgasm overtakes you.”

Her heart rate kicked up at his words and a pulse of desire went through her center, she could already feel the wetness between her legs.

Jorah continued, “I can hear how aroused you are, love. The way your breathing becomes faster and yet also deepens. I am sure your pulse is quicker now too. Since I can’t be there, will you do something for me?

Her reply was husky, “Anything.”

“Pull the covers off your body. Close your eyes and listen to my voice. Follow the path of my words with your hand. I want you to imagine that it is my fingers touching you, exploring your gorgeous body.”

She did as he said, lying uncovered on the sheets with her eyes closed, anxiously waiting for him to continue.

“I love the delicate shell of your ear, running my lips over it as I whisper all of the ways I want to bring you pleasure. Drawing the lobe gently between my teeth before I kiss that tender place just below your ear, the one that makes you sigh. The swan-like curve of your neck, worthy of a thousand open-mouth kisses. The hollow at the base of your throat that begs to be licked. The creamy mounds of your breasts topped with rosy nipples, hard and aching for my mouth. The gentle curve of your womanly belly, dusted with the fine soft hair that only goddesses have on their skin. The delicate jut of your hipbone that gives way to the valley where your leg joins with your body. The silken curls at the top of your sex. Every inch of your delectable body was made for pleasure, Daenerys. I know there are more secrets I have yet to discover and I am in no rush to find them.”

Her breathing was shorter and shallower now, his words and the deep richness of his voice had her nearly there and she didn’t want to wait anymore. “Jorah, please.”

“Please what? Tell me.”

“I need you to make me come.”

“So very impatient.” He teased her with a soft laugh before his tone became sensual again. “I know what you need, love, and I promise I will give it to you.” He paused. “Slip two of your fingers between your legs and tell me how wet you are.”

She whimpered as she dipped her fingers into her wetness. “I’m soaking wet for you.”

“I have no doubt that you are. God, I love that little sound you make. It is the same one that falls from your lips when I lick you the first time. When we are through, there will be a wet spot on the sheets. I guarantee it. Bring your fingers to your lips and tell me how you taste.”

She gasped at his lewd request but did it, her tongue licking over her fingers. “A little salty, but also sweet.”
“Mmm, I can almost taste you now. Yours is the only honey this bear wants. And, when I get home, that is the first place I will visit.” He waited a beat before he continued, “Spread your legs for me and slip two of your fingers inside. Find that special little place I discovered the first time I had you. The one that made your eyes go wide and your body arch.”

She moaned as she found it, pressing it just so with her fingers.

“Oh, I love when you moan like that. Do you know it makes my cock throb; makes me desperate to slip into your wet heat. But not before I give you your pleasure first. Stroke that place the way I do, as if you’re beckoning to the ecstasy you deserve. Then draw your fingers up to your tender little pearl. I am sure they are so slick with you now they will slip easily over your swollen clit.”

Her breath caught at the first touch of her fingers there before she whimpered his name.

“I love when you say my name like that. But I love it even more when you scream it at the height of your pleasure. I want your fingers to do what my tongue does when it’s there; slow, taut circles around your clit. I can tell you are so close already, Daenerys. I can hear it in your breathing and the noises you are making. It won’t be long before you are writhing on the bed, your body flooded with heat as you shatter for me.”

She tried to go slow; her body felt like it was on fire. But she was needy, unable to hold back. “I need…faster.”

“I was right, you are close. Give in; touch yourself the way you need it. I love looking up your body when my lips are wrapped around your clit and my tongue is teasing it. The flush of your skin, your nipples hard and tight, and your beautiful face etched with pleasure. The way you grip my hair, holding my face against you in your desperation for the release I am so eager to give you. The way you plead for me not to stop, to stay right there, to go faster. And then your breath catches, just like it did right now, and I can feel your clit harden against my tongue and I know you are going to come for me. Stroke your clit faster. I want to hear you cry out my name, love. Let me hear your pleasure. Come for me, Daenerys.”

And she did, her body shuddering, his name a high loud cry.

She lay there, trying to calm her breathing and her heart, his voice tender and soothing, “That is the most erotic sound I have ever heard. The only thing missing is that I can’t gather you in my arms and caress your body as I kiss you.”

She sighed, her eyes closing. “I love when you do that after my orgasms. It completes it for me, if that makes any sense at all. My brain is mush at the moment.”

She heard him chuckle, “I know what you mean, love. The physical sensations becoming one with the emotions. I feel it too.”

Her eyes snapped open. “Did you-“

“Come? No, but this wasn’t about me. This was for you and fulfilling your fantasy, love.”

She sighed, her body heavy with satisfaction. “But-“

He nearly growled, “Sweetheart, believe me, when I get home, I am going to be positively ravenous for you. The moment I walk in the door, I don’t care where it is, I will have you.”
Daenerys knew she was poking the bear, but she asked anyway. “Is that a promise, Jorah?”

“You know it is.”

She couldn’t help but whimper. “My mind is full of all sorts of possibilities.”

He chuckled darkly. “So is mine. And I will leave you to dream of them tonight.”

“I’ll have sweet dreams then for sure.”

“As will I.” He paused, his voice now sweet and soft, “Good night, love.”

“ ‘Night, Jorah.”

She sighed and closed her eyes. Jorah knew she had an overactive imagination and it began to conjure up a whole host of suggestive images. She had heard the mischief in his voice and she turned onto her stomach, a loud whine of frustration muffled by the pillow. *Two days is way too long to wait,* she thought.
Welcome Home

Chapter Summary

Jorah returns home from a business trip. To say he misses her is an understatement.

Chapter Notes

A chapter of sexy times before another shoe drops: ominous music plays: What could possibly be waiting for our favorite couple? Stay tuned!

The italics in curly brackets are Jorah's text messages. I hope it makes sense.

Jorah’s flight wasn’t set to get in until early evening. That gave her the better part of the day to get ready. First on her list, though, was a nap. Her plane had landed at Heathrow around 9am and she was exhausted. The moment she got to his place, she dumped her suitcase by the door, set the alarm for three hours from now and shed her clothes before climbing into bed. The sheets and pillow still held his scent, though it was faint, and she cuddled up under the covers and drifted off to sleep.

She slapped blindly at the alarm clock when it rudely interrupted her dream. And it was such a good one too, she thought. She sat up and stretched, feeling much more rested, before she took a quick shower. Then it hit her, as she stood there braiding her hair, she had none of her clothes at Jorah’s loft. She dug through her suitcase and smiled to herself as she found the extra pair of clean panties she always brought whenever she travelled. I’m over-prepared for things, she mused, before her thoughts turned to what Jorah would do if he saw her in the underwear she held in her hand. She let out a shuddering breath, surprised at how little it took to get her turned on. If she was honest with herself, their dalliance over the phone had nowhere near satisfied her craving for him. Once she had hung up, and for the next night after, her dreams were positively X-rated. She would wake up in the morning, frustratingly aroused; knowing the only way to get through the day would be to take care of herself. And her fingers, even though in her mind they were his, were a poor substitute. She couldn’t wait to have them and the rest of his glorious body giving her all of the pleasure she could handle. Her mind and body were now humming with desire and she went off to get dressed, only to begin the long six hour wait until he got home.

She watched TV, hoping that it would distract her. It did little good as it seemed every channel had something on that was sexual in nature. She finally settled on a movie that appeared promising, at least until the male and female leads ended up in a rainy stairwell together and then Daenerys stared wide-eyed as they made passionate love to one another. Her head fell back against the couch, and behind her closed eyes, she imagined it was Jorah taking her like that. She pressed the heels of her hands against her eyes and shook her head. She gave up on TV and paced around the house, did jumping jacks, read, and ate, anything to stop thinking about sex. But it was little use; she was coiled so tight, she was certain it wouldn’t take much to send her off like a rocket.

Her cell phone rang, “Hey Honey, did your flight just get in?”

“Yes, I’m just waiting for a cab. Are you at my place, Daenerys?”
She smiled, “Of course.”

His voice lowered, “Good, you have no idea how desperately I need you.”

“I can’t wait anymore either.”

She heard a car door slam shut and then Jorah rattling off his address before he said to her, “This will be the longest forty-five minutes of my life.” He groaned and then whispered, “I dreamt about you.”

“What a coincidence, so did I. I’ll tell you if you tell me.”

“I’d love to, but I don’t want the driver to know about our sex life.” He paused, “I’ll text you it instead.”

Texting was something he had only done once before, so she figured it must have been quite the dream. “All right and I’ll text you mine.”

“I look forward to it. Goodbye, love.”

“Bye.”

She didn’t have to wait too long before the ping signaled an incoming message:

{I’m lying on a rug in front of a fireplace. You’re kneeling over my face, my hands caressing your silken thighs and bottom as I pleasure you slowly, the skin glowing in the light. Your head tips back and I hear your sweet voice moaning my name, your orgasmic nectar all over my tongue.}

Her hand rested against her chest. Yup, she thought, my heart’s still beating. God, did this man have a way with words, she could see them vividly in her mind. She responded with the only word that fit:

Wow.

{Your turn.}

She closed her eyes briefly, thinking back to the last dream she had of him.

We’re parked somewhere secluded. It’s raining and I’m sitting on the bonnet of your car. You reach under my skirt and pull my panties off before you unzip your pants and slip into me. I’m not wearing a bra under my blouse and you unbutton it, laying me back on the cool metal. Your hands knead my wet breasts, your thumbs teasing my hard nipples as you take me, my legs locked around you.

His response was not as quick, but when it finally arrived she couldn’t help but smile:

{God, love, what you do to me.}

She couldn’t think of anything to text him back, her mind now on hungry overdrive. She felt like a randy teenager, or at least what she thought that might be like as her youth hadn’t been all that sexually active. She tapped her fingers against her knee, the wait seemed endless. Finally, Daenerys heard the key in the lock and she knelt on the couch, her elbows resting on the back. She watched him shut the door and lock it, tossing his keys on the small table by the door. His eyes moved over her and a smile spread across his face, “You’re wearing my shirt.”

“And little else.”
He made a sound low in his throat and took a step toward her.

“Wait, I wanna watch you.”

He tilted his head questioningly, but his eyes were playful.

“Take off your jacket and tie.”

As much as the strong desire for her coursed through his veins, he gave her what she wanted. Not just because it made her happy, but because, when he did things like this for her, it made her want to pounce on him. And the knowledge that someone wants you that badly is a heady aphrodisiac. The sparks flew between their eyes, the air heavy with hot energy. She watched him utterly entranced as he slipped his suit jacket from his body, tossing it in the direction of a nearby chair. His fingers, *those long, strong digits*, make quick work of his tie. He pulled it from his collar with a hiss of silk and dropped to the floor. His hands move to the buttons of his fitted dress shirt.

“Wait,” she breathed, “let me.”

His hands drop to his sides, immobile at her command. He watched her get off the couch, *his shirt* brushing over the tops of her thighs, barely concealing her, as she walked toward him with purpose. She stared into his eyes, her fingers fumbling with the top two buttons before she huffed in frustration and grabbed the edges and pulled, buttons flying across the room, tinkling off the hardwood floor. His chest expanded as he inhaled deeply and his pupils dilated at her uninhibited eagerness, her hands suddenly all over his bare chest. He cursed roughly under his breath and lifted her, turning and pressing her against the door. Her legs tight around him, her hands unable to get enough. His lips can’t either, her ears, her neck and *oh heavens finally*, on her own. His tongue slips into her mouth and she moans at his passion. He carries her to the couch and lays her down, his body pressing her into the cushions. Their kiss is rough, their tongues dueling, his teeth nipping at her lip. He slips to his knees between her spread legs, his hands taking hold of the bottom of the shirt and she sits up long enough for him to pull it off of her. She falls back, the paleness of her skin nearly glowing against the black leather. He palms himself through his slacks as his eyes move over her. They stop and stare at her lacy panties, “You’re going to need to wear these again so I can fully appreciate your body in them.”

She wiggles against the couch and he chuckles darkly at her impatience for him. He hooks his fingers into the lace and pulls them slowly down her legs, “You know, I couldn’t help myself, love. After I got off the phone with you at the hotel, I took myself in my hand and thought of you.”

He didn’t need to elaborate further, the sight of him stroking his cock flashed in her mind and she inhaled sharply. There would be time later to tell him she wanted to see him do that. Right now, she wanted all of him. His hands caress over her thighs before he grasps her knees gently in his hands and spreads her legs wider for him. He licks his lips unconsciously and draws his middle finger between her slick folds to her entrance, where he slips it inside her.

“Jorah,” she whimpers.

“Oh, Sweetheart,” a sound low in his chest as her muscles clench around the digit pressing so perfectly inside her, “I’m going to make you come so hard for me.”

She squirmed against the cushion, her plaintive whimper of “please” made his cock throb.

His head dipped between her legs, his pace quick as he knew she didn’t need his usual slow teasing. He slipped a second finger inside her, curling them just right, his tongue whipping over her hardened nub. She moaned long and loud, her hips rocking against his hand. She had missed this so much, the
feel of his beard on her inner thighs, deliciously scratchy as he pleasured her. Her hands gripped his hair, her hips jerking against his mouth. His moans from between her legs are indecent and the vibration of it only add to the sensations he’s already eliciting from her. Each hard fast lick of his tongue has the muscles of her thighs twitching involuntarily, her body under his complete control. Her whole body tingles, every nerve alive and firing as she feels herself at the edge of bliss. She holds his face to her center as the tight ball of heat in her belly snaps and she gives a high loud inarticulate cry, her mind unable to formulate his name, let alone a coherent thought. He continues to lick at her, his fingers thrusting into her, the pleasure nearly too much for her overly sensitized flesh. He pulls back abruptly, standing and unzipping his pants, not even bothering to undo them further as he pulls himself out. He kneels on the couch and draws her legs over his shoulders. His arms clamp around her thighs and hold them tight to his chest, her lower body suspended from the couch as he thrusts into her without warning. She gasps, her body still in throes of pleasure and he holds still a moment, his eyes meeting hers, “God, Daenerys, I love when I can feel you throb around me.”

She is helpless, totally under his control and it thrills her. He so often submits to her and her desires, that on the rare occasions when he does take control, it doesn’t feel at all like domination to her. He is a slave to his own passions now, but in doing so, he is also a slave to hers. He sees the need mirrored in her eyes and he always gives her what she hungers for. She knows he would never force her and that his sole purpose is her pleasure. It is always her first in everything he does. His pace is fast, he holds nothing back and her eager cries tell him he’s giving her exactly what she wants. He had missed her body desperately, but it is her beautiful face that he misses most. The way she looks at him as he takes her is unlike anything he has ever witnessed and he swears that if he were a religious man, he would think he was glimpsing heaven. His urgent words are nonsense intermingled with grunts of exertion and she doesn’t even want to try to string them together as they chase their release. One word does make it through the haze, love, and he repeats like a prayer to the gods. Each time it passes from his lips, it becomes deeper and rougher, until it ends up nothing more than a rapidly exhaled breath. She can feel how close he is, his hips losing their subtlety, and she slips her hand between her tightly pressed thighs. Her clit aches for stimulation and she gives it the quick motion it needs. Her body seizes, her back drawn taut like a bow, her eyes wide as she moans his name, the cells of her being turning into liquid desire. She whimpers and mewls, her orgasm seemingly endless, rising again just as she feels it ebb away. Her eyelids slip shut, unable to stay open, even though she desperately wants to see his face as he gives himself over to his own imminent climax.

“Fuck,” he curses roughly as his head falls forward, his body shaking with his orgasm as he clutches her legs tight. He holds himself within her still quivering warmth and he feels at once utterly empty and completely one with her. Ever mindful, he slips from her body as he lowers her to the couch. He leans over and gathers her to him before he lies back on the cool leather, his hand caressing her back as they catch their breath together.

“Ravenous indeed.” Her voice a lazy satisfied whisper.

He laughs softly and then grows quiet. She lifts her head to find him staring off into the distance. He meets her questioning gaze and his voice sounds almost worried, “Is it wrong that I want you this much?”

She looks at him in astonishment, “What do you mean?”

He glances away shyly before he says, “I’ve never wanted anyone the way I want you.” His fingers graze over her cheek, “And it’s not just that. I’ve never been in love like this before either.”

She smiles softly at him, “Jorah, neither have I. I’ll admit it was strange to me at first how strong the desire was. But now that it’s joined with love, it’s not strange or wrong at all.”
“It just feels right.” They both say it at the same time, the look they give one another was a mix of surprise and joy. He kisses her then and a sweet powerful feeling sweeps through her.

His stomach picked now to growl loudly and she giggles against his lips, “He knows how to kill the mood, doesn’t he?”

“With one hunger sated, the other takes over.” He laughs as she sits up, “Have you eaten dinner yet?”

She shakes her head.

“I have an idea. Let’s stop by your place, you can get dressed and I’ll take you to dinner.”

He loves the pleased look on her face, “Sounds like a great idea.”
Chapter Summary

Someone makes an unexpected visit. And Jorah has a few surprises for Daenerys.

Chapter Notes

I think I may have been exaggerating the seriousness of this chapter with the note I left on the last one. This chapter does contain a major event, but it's not something that will hurt our couple. I just wanted to get that out there.

Also, I didn't want to add one of the new tags for this chapter as it would give away the surprise. I hope you all understand.

Lastly, I really want to thank everyone who has read this story and left a review/kudos. Even if you didn't, the fact that you're still hanging around for this is a great blessing.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Lucy, Jorah’s new secretary, stood in front of Daenerys. She was obviously freaked out by something, what with the way she wrung her hands, her frantic words like rapid fire, “Daenerys, you gotta help me. There’s a man in Mr. Mormont’s office and he’s really frustrated with me. He wants to know where he is and when I told him…he interrupted me before I could finish and just kept asking all these questions and he…I just didn’t know what to do and so I came to find you to-”

She rose from her chair as the anxious young woman was talking, it was more like babbling really, and came around her desk to place her hands on her shoulders, “Lucy, calm down. Take a deep breath for me, ok?”

She waited for her to do it before she asked her, “First things first, who is this man?”

Lucy swallowed and took another breath before she said, “He didn’t tell me. He said that I should know who he is.”

Daenerys frowned. “Well, that’s not very helpful. All right, let me go talk to him.”

She followed Lucy’s brisk pace back to his office. She opened the door and closed it behind her, approaching the desk. An older man stood beside it, his back to her.

“Can I help you, sir?”

He turned and Daenerys found herself face-to-face with a much older version of Jorah. Well, she saw a family resemblance anyway. The man’s hair and beard were white, but his blue eyes were sharp and alert. He had a commanding presence, as tall as Jorah, but his body was bulky and much broader than his son’s.

His voice was gravelly, “Who are you?”
Daenerys kept her voice calm, “My name is Daenerys.” She offered her hand and he took it in his own.

“Jeor Mormont.”

_Damn, his hands are HUGE_, she thought. His handshake was firm but he did not crush her fingers as some men usually did.

“You must be looking for Jorah.”

“Yes, I need to speak with him.”

“I’m very sorry, but he is downtown at a meeting. He won’t be returning to the office today.”

The man stared at her a moment, “Do you have a number that I can reach him at?”

Daenerys smiled. “Yes, let me write it down for you.”

She walked around Jorah’s desk and opened a drawer to get a pen and legal pad. As she wrote down his cell phone number, he said, “Your name sounds familiar. Are you Daenerys Targaryen, the woman who was mentioned in the newspaper?”

Her stomach fell. _Great, she thought, here comes the questions._ “Yes,” she answered, trying to keep her features blank.

He sat down in the chair opposite her and asked, “Were you aware of what your brother was involved in?”

She didn’t appreciate his tone; her response came out harsher than she would have liked, “No, I learned fairly early on not to ask my brother about anything he did. His threats of violence were enough to keep me quiet.”

Jeor rested his fingers against his bottom lip, regarding her with a quiet intensity. “How long have you known my son?”

“I’ve worked here for over a year.”

“There is a photograph of you on his desk,” he paused, narrowing his eyes slightly, “How long have the two of you been involved?”

_Shit._ “Eight months.”

His hum of contemplation was quiet, considering what a large man he was. “Then you must be aware of his past?”

“Yes.”

“It does not trouble you?”

She took a deep breath. “No, and why should it? Everyone has things in their past they aren’t proud of. But Jorah is a different man now.”

“How so?”

“He is aware of his faults and has made the necessary changes to correct them.”
Jeor nodded slowly as he listened to her. “So you are also aware of what he did to this company?”

“Yes, he regrets it to this day.”

The man’s eyebrows arched slightly at her words. “He told you this?”

“Yes, Jorah deeply regrets selling the subsidiary. He has told me that he wishes he could do it over again but differently. He never intended to hurt you or this company.”

He gazed at her silently, absorbing what she had just said before he stood and held out his hand. “I’ll take that number now.”

She handed him the piece of paper; he took it, folded it in half, and slipped it into his pants pocket. He held out his hand, “It was a pleasure to meet you, Ms. Targaryen.”

She shook it, “Likewise, Mr. Mormont.”

He walked to the door and opened it, pausing there as he asked, “Do you believe that people deserve a second chance?”

She met and held his gaze, “Yes, everyone does.”

He stared at her for a beat before he nodded once and left.

Once he was out of ear shot, she exhaled loudly and sat in Jorah’s chair. She picked up his office phone and dialed his number. She tapped her nails on the desk waiting as it rang once, twice, three times before he answered.

“Jorah, you aren’t going to believe who I just spoke to.”

He was silent on the other end for a second before he answered her, his voice wary, “Who was it?”

She sighed. “Your father.”

“What?” She heard the shock in his voice as he continued, “What did he want?”

“He asked for your phone number, he said he needed to speak with you.”

“Great, that’s just great.”

“Oh, and there’s one more tiny little thing.” She paused, “He knows we’re dating.”

“Bloody fantastic. How the hell does he know that?”

She gave a nervous laugh. “Apparently, he saw my picture on your desk.”

“He was looking around my office?”

She could hear the frustration in his voice. “So it would seem. Maybe I shouldn’t have called you. This is something better heard in person.”

His voice softened, “No, love, it’s all right. I’m glad you called to tell me. At least I can be on the lookout for his call now instead of being blindsided with it.” He sighed, “You’re still meeting me downtown for dinner, yes?”
“Of course, I’ll see you at 6 o’clock.”

“See you then. Goodbye love.”

“Bye Jorah.”

***

As she sat next to him in the small booth in the back of the quiet restaurant, she couldn’t help but notice the tension in his posture. She rested her hand over his on the table, and when he met her eyes, she gave him a reassuring smile and squeeze of his hand.

His shoulders sagged. “I’m sorry if I ruined our dinner, Daenerys. After everything that has happened between my father and me with regard to the company, I never expected to hear from him again. And then, out of the blue, he appears.”

“Jorah, you didn’t ruin anything. I can’t imagine what it must be like to know he wants to talk to you after all this time, the emotions and thoughts that must be going through your head right now.”

“What did he say to you?”

“He asked me if I knew about what my brother had done. I said no. He asked how long we’d been dating, I told him. He wanted to know if I knew about your past and I said yes. Then it got weird because he asked me if your past troubled me and if I was aware of what you did to the company. I told him that it didn’t and that I knew what happened but that you were different now and that you regretted it deeply. That seemed to get his attention.”

Jorah arched his eyebrow, “Really?”

“Yeah, he stared at me for some time after I said that. It was like he was trying to figure out if I was feeding him a line or not. Then he got up and walked to the door. He asked me one last thing though; if I thought people deserved a second chance.”

“And you said?”

“I told him of course they do.”

Jorah took a sip from his wine glass before he set it down, his gaze fixed on the candle in the center of the table as he looked deep in thought. Finally he said, “Well, there is nothing I can do about it now. I’ll just have to wait and hear from him to discover what he wants. I can’t even begin to imagine what it could be though.”

He sighed and looked at her, turning his hand over under hers, his thumb rubbing across her knuckles softly. “I had a surprise planned for you.”

She smiled at him, “You did?”

“Yes, and I’m not going to allow this unexpected visit from my father to ruin it.” He reached into his coat pocket and took out a long flat box. He slid it across the table to her as he said, “I know it’s a bit early, but well, open it.”

Her brow knit together as she took it from the table and opened the lid. Inside, resting on top of a large white envelope was a silver keychain. On it dangled three charms: A scripted initial ‘D’, a small round birthstone from Daenerys’ birth month and a bear.
She lifted it from the box, turning it over in her hand. “I love this. Where’d you get it?”

“I was walking past this boutique near the hotel in Dublin and the owner makes personalized gifts. I saw this and I couldn’t resist.” He paused, “But it is more than just a keychain. It comes with an offer.”

“I don’t understand.”

He turned in his seat, “You spend most nights at my place as it is and I have already given you a key.” He noticed she was now even more confused, “Daenerys, I want to wake up to you every morning and fall asleep next to you every night. I guess what I’m trying to say is I would love for you to move in with me.”

Jorah took her hand, “Let’s make it official, permanent.”

The words got stuck behind the lump in her throat; all she could do was nod. She saw the dimple on his cheek just before he leaned over and kissed her softly.

“Open the rest of it,” he said as he sat back against the booth.

She set the keychain back in the box after she had removed the envelope. Inside there were two first class plane tickets. The destination: Martinique. She gasped and looked at him, a grin on his face at her reaction.

All she could make were noises; no words came to her as she stared at him in astonishment.

“I know our one year anniversary is not for another four months, but apparently this private resort is very popular. It requires a reservation in advance and I could only get one for three months from now. We’ll be celebrating our anniversary a bit early. I hope that is all right with you?”

She gaped at him before she found her voice. “Are you kidding me? Of course it is. A private resort? What…I mean, I don’t even know what to say.” She felt the sting of tears at the corner of her eyes. “No man has ever done anything like this for me before.”

“Then they were all colossal idiots because you deserve the best a man can give you. I’m just lucky it’s me.”

She leaned over and kissed him before she murmured softly against his lips, “Thank you.”

He pulled back and said, “There’s something else.”

She looked at him, wondering what else he could possibly surprise her with after all these bombshells.

“You know the meeting I was at this afternoon?” She nodded. “Well, the company’s CEO was visiting from New York and he mentioned a conference there next week that he thought might be beneficial to us. In addition, I need to travel there to finalize the deal and sign the paperwork anyway. You know what that means, don’t you?”

She could barely contain her joy, “We’re going to New York?”

He chuckled. “Yes, we are. Our first business trip together.”

She gave a soft squeal of delight and threw her arms around him as best she could, given the fact that they were seated. She slowly realized that people were starting to watch, so she sat back,
clearing her throat as a blush rose on her cheeks.

“I don’t think this evening could get any better.”

He smirked at her, “Oh, I can think of a few ways it could.”

She shook her head at him, but smiled, the corner of her bottom lip between her teeth. Did she ever love how his mind worked.

Chapter End Notes

Well, that happened. I always wanted these two characters to see each other again and possibly mend the fence, so to speak.
Chapter Summary

A business trip to New York turns out to be far more pleasurable than either of them expected.

Chapter Notes

I won't update the tags for this chapter as it will give away *something* of the surprise. Also this chapter is a bit long, but I promise it's worth it.

Sorry for the lateness of the update...I will try to make them more frequent in the future :)

This business trip to New York meant they would be traveling out of town together for the first time. Jorah spared no expense, booking a room at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. The day of the flight came and Daenerys was very excited. She had never been to New York before and was really looking forward to seeing the city and Central Park.

They arrived at the hotel in the afternoon, and after checking in, took the elevator to the 40th floor, walking down the hallway a short distance before entering their room. Daenerys’ eyes went wide at the luxury of it; she had never stayed in a hotel so fancy in all of her life. Jorah had walked ahead of her to open the drapes so she could see the surprise he had for her. She gasped as she saw Central Park laid out before her, the skyline behind it. She knelt on the chaise lounge-style sofa before turning to Jorah with a smile, “You really went all out, didn’t you?”

He loved to see her happy and the wonder he saw in her eyes warmed his heart. “Of course, your first time in New York should be special.” He leaned down and kissed her before he went to unpack his suit case and hang up his suits. She gazed at the view a bit longer before she began unpacking too.

The next couple of days were jam packed with meetings and conference panels; they barely had time to enjoy the city. Jorah promised her that they would make another trip to the Big Apple in the future, just to enjoy the city without the responsibilities of business obligations. The final night of the conference meant a large gathering in the grand ballroom, complete with hors d'oeuvres, an open bar, and according to the conference program, dancing. He had mumbled something about not being a good dancer when she had read that out loud. She laughed and told him that she didn’t believe it, as she had experienced first-hand that he had plenty of rhythm.

She saved a new dress just for that night: a red and white cocktail dress with a jewel neckline and an open back. She chose it precisely for that reason, as she loved the feel of his hand against the bare skin of her lower back. Daenerys heard a low groan of appreciation as she emerged from the bathroom. She looked up to see Jorah getting up from a chair by the window, his eyes moving over her body as he walked toward her.
“You know, this party is not mandatory. I would much rather take you to dinner somewhere nice, then bring you back here and make love to you.” His words were laced with desire as his hands rested on the gentle curve of her waist.

“I know you would. And while I’d love that too, it’s important that we make an appearance, for the sake of the company. Networking and all that.”

He could hear the smile in her voice, but he knew she was right. Jorah sighed. “All right, no more than two hours though. That is all I think I can stand, what with the small talk and you in that dress.”

“Well, you in that blue dress shirt and suit aren’t helping matters either.” She bit her lip and he saw a hint of mischief in her eyes. “Perhaps now is a bad time to mention the fantasy I have.”

Daenerys saw his jaw clench as his hands tightened slightly around her, “Fantasy?”

She made a noise of agreement before she leaned up on tip-toe to whisper in his ear, “Oh, just a little thing involving that window behind you.”

Jorah glanced over his shoulder before he looked back and found her gazing up at him through her long eyelashes. He groaned, “Don’t tell me it now or we will most certainly miss the party.” She giggled as he offered her his arm and they exited the room.

Unfortunately for her, they were not alone in the elevator going down; otherwise, Jorah would have been all over her. Instead, he ran his hand over the gentle swell of her bottom, watching her chest expand rapidly in a sharp gasp. She looked up at him and he could see the beginnings of desire smoldering in her eyes. He rested his hand against her lower back as they exited the elevator and walked to the ballroom, his thumb moving in gentle small circles over the skin there. Daenerys knew he was torturing her, but it was the most pleasurable kind of torment. She had discovered long ago that it made the end result of their evening all the more gratifying. He leaned down and whispered against her ear, asking her what she wanted from the bar, his lips brushing against the lobe gently, and the warmth of his breath ghosting over her skin. She swallowed and took a breath before she told him a ginger ale because she did not want anything to interfere with her enjoyment of their night. He left her side with a gentle smile and a parting brush of his fingers against her back. Her heart was already beating faster and they had just arrived. *How in the world am I going to make it through this,* she thought.

The evening seemed to drag on for Jorah; the inane chatter of some of these people was mind-numbing. The hors d'oeuvres had been delicious and so were the bite-sized deserts, or so Daenerys told him as he didn’t eat any, the whisper to her that he would have desert later made her gulp. He was already anxious to get back to the room, what with the way she would glance at him occasionally, her eyes moving over his body, holding his gaze a moment too long before looking back at the person she was talking to. *She’s eye-fucking me,* he thought, *and she knows it too.* But if Jorah was being honest with himself, he was doing it too. He couldn’t help it; not only was she the most beautiful woman in the room, he also happened to be deeply in love with her. Soon, they were saved from the small talk as they heard the music start up, the DJ playing the usual dance songs. People made their way onto the dance floor, but Daenerys just stood there with him for a while, both of them trying not to laugh at what some of these people called ‘dancing’.

It wasn’t until five or so songs in before the DJ played something slower. She recognized the song immediately and arched her eyebrow at him before she took ahold of his hand and pulled him on the dancefloor. Jorah drew Daenerys against him, his hand resting on her lower back, his other hand holding hers against his chest. They started to dance and she leaned up, whispering playfully against his ear, “You’re such a liar, you can dance.”
He pulled back and winked at her before he leaned in and said so only she could hear, “It is only slow dancing, love. Just swaying to the rhythm of the music…and your body. I can’t help it that we move so well together.”

Her hand tightened against his back. He was driving her crazy; everything he’d been doing was turning her on: the whispering, his words, the delicate touch of his hand, and the look in his eyes. She could tell she was already extremely wet and she wiggled her hips teasingly against him. She could feel the groan under her hand, the noise of the room swallowing up most of the sound of it. As the song came to its end, his grip on her tensed and his words were heated against her ear, “Let’s get out of here.”

She smiled at him as he took her hand and led her from the room. Daenerys loved to see him like this, his usually calm demeanor so affected by her. There was an urgency about him that thrilled her, made her own desire burn hotter. They waited for the elevator, and when it arrived they got in, pressing ‘40’ for their floor. He was just about to lean over and kiss her when someone came running for the elevator, pressing against its closing doors so they could get in too. Jorah took a deep breath and glared at the man’s back as the doors shut. He pressed ‘15’ and Jorah was happy he did because if the man had pressed a higher number, he would have growled at him to get out and find another damn elevator.

Daenerys could see and nearly feel the tension in his body as they watched the numbers slowly tick up. They finally arrived at his floor and the man got out, they waited for the doors to close again. Jorah turned to her, bracketing her body with his arms. She could feel his cock beginning to harden as he pressed his body against hers.

“Do you remember that night in the elevator?” His eyes watching her reaction as she smiled slowly.

“How can I forget?” Her hands coming to rest on his chest.

“I can still picture it in my mind, the way you took hold of my hand and placed it under your dress against the silky skin of your thigh. When I discovered how aroused you were, I knew I needed to taste you. To see your beautiful naked body laid out on my bed as I took my time learning all of the ways I could bring you pleasure.”

By the time he was finished, her hands gripped at his suit jacket, her breath coming in short breathy gasps. His lips moved against his and he leaned in and kissed her. His kiss was passionate, his teeth nipping at her bottom lip, the taste of his mouth like sin. He slipped his thigh between hers and pressed it against her center, her moan loud as she ground herself against him. His lips moved over her throat, his hand taking hold of her leg and drawing it to wrap around his hip, then skimming up the back of her thigh with a hot urgent caress. Her hands threaded through the hair at the back of his head, his tongue licking her racing pulse, and she knew it would not take much more of the perfect pressure against her clit to bring herself to orgasm. As if to torture her, the elevator dinged and the doors slid open. He stepped back from her reluctantly as they exited and walked quickly to their room. He took the key card from his pocket and opened the door, allowing her to enter first. He put the ‘do not disturb’ sign on the handle before he closed it. Daenerys was on him again the instant the door clicked shut. The motion activated lights came on, filling the room with soft low light, as Jorah pressed her against the wall, her hands all over his body, her leg wrapping around his hip again. To him, it felt like she was literally trying to climb him and he obliged her, gripping her waist and lifting her into his arms. He walked across the room to the window before he set her down.

He turned her and brought her body against his. His hands ran over the sides of her body to rest at her hips as he spoke softly against her ear, “Tell me your fantasy, love.”
She inhaled a shaky breath, suddenly a bit shy at revealing her deepest, darkest imaginings to him. “I want to kneel on the couch while you pleasure me with your mouth. Then I want to stand at the window and have you take me from behind.”

His cock throbbed at her words, his hands traveling up her body to cup her breasts as he thrust slightly against her bottom. He kissed his way to the juncture of her neck and shoulder, where he bit at her gently. She moaned and pressed back against him, her hips undulating against his hard cock, the sensation stirring something primal in her subconscious. “It turns you on to think someone could see you like that, doesn’t it?”

Her head fell back against his shoulder as she whispered, “Yes.”

Jorah chuckled softly as he guided her to the couch, where he eased the zipper of her dress down before pulling the garment over her hips and off her body. He crouched at her feet, noticing instantly she wore no panties. He groaned at the sight of her, “I am glad I didn’t know you were bare under that dress or I would have had you in that elevator, fantasy be damned.”

He pressed a kiss to one cheek before he nipped softly at it, his hands caressing over the swell. Her breathing was erratic, a mix of whimpers and sighs, as she turned to look at him over her shoulder. His eyes were full of lust as she watched him looking at her.

He met her gaze, his voice deep and rough with desire, “Kneel for me, love.”

Daenerys knelt on the couch; her legs spread a bit, her back slightly arched. A moment passed, the only sounds in the room were their combined heavy breathing. She looked over her shoulder to see him staring at her, his lip between his teeth, “Look at you, my beautiful wanton goddess.”

He went and took the chair from the desk and positioned it behind her just right so he could pleasure her. He sat down and leaned forward, his hands parting the cheeks of her bottom a bit more so he could see her fully. The lips of her sex were rosy-red and covered in slickness. “How long have you been this wet for me, Daenerys?”

Her response was labored. “Since the beginning of the party.”

Jorah hummed his approval before he gathered her essence from her inner thigh with his finger and brought it to his mouth, holding her gaze before his eyes slid shut at the taste of her. “This is why I did not take something from the desert tray. I have my own sweet treat right here.”

She whimpered at his words, “Please, Jorah, I can’t wait anymore.”

He didn’t have the heart to tease her, seeing as he had actually been doing it all night anyway. He leaned in and licked her from the base of her clit to her entrance, the pressure of his tongue just the way he knew she liked it.

She gave a strangled cry of “yes!”, her hips jerking against his mouth. Daenerys had been on the knife’s edge of arousal all night and with one swipe of his tongue he had her so close to her peak. He licked the opposite direction before he drew her clit between his lips and sucked her. Her hands gripped the back of the chaise, her back arching more as she pressed back against his mouth. His tongue circled and flicked at her, her legs trembling, her voice loud as sounds and words mingled inarticulately in her passion. She could not see with her eyes what he did now, but she pictured in her mind’s eye how he had looked on all the other numerous times he had done this and it made her skin flush with heat.

Jorah loved to do this for her, the taste and scent of her always made him hard. They had never done
it this way before, but he knew he would most certainly want to do it again. The only thing missing was the sight of her face, so beautiful as she fell into ecstasy at his ministrations. But he could see it in his mind, the image of it forever seared into his consciousness. He listened closely to the changes in her breathing and the pitch of her voice, fluent as he was in the language of her body. He focused all of his attention on the place he knew she needed him most this close to the end, desperate for the warmth of her release on his tongue.

“Oh god, right there.” She whimpered as he took her clit between his lips, his tongue hard with its rapid flicks. “Don’t stop, you’re gonna-“

Her sentence hung unfinished in the air as her body shuddered, the orgasm blindsiding her as it pulsed through her sex. The first syllable of his name was all she could say as it stole her breath, her heartbeat loud in her ears. He eased her down from her peak slowly, her body felt weak as she collapsed slightly against the couch.

It took quite some time before her breathing returned to normal, his hands caressing over her skin tenderly. She looked over her shoulder at him, a smile on his face as he sat there, his lips and beard still glistening from her. She turned and sat on the couch before she leaned forward and drew him in for a kiss. She found it wildly erotic when she could taste herself on him. She leaned back, resting her arm over the back of the couch, before she said, “Take off your clothes.”

Jorah smirked at her before he stood and slowly removed his suit jacket. He unbuttoned the cuffs of his shirt before he undid his tie, drawing it free of its knot. He tossed it on the bed behind him before he started unbuttoning his shirt. He did it unhurriedly, watching her face as she gazed at him with rapt anticipation. There was something very sexy about watching Jorah take off his suit, and in her mind she heard music with a thumping beat, almost like he was stripping for her. He pulled the shirt from his body and let it drop to the floor. He saw her draw her bottom lip between her teeth, her hand tightening against the back of the couch. She leaned against the arm of it and removed his shoes and socks before standing up again to unfasten his belt, pulling it from the loops before it joined his shirt. He undid his pants, easing the zipper down gradually. He pulled them down and off before he hooked his thumbs into his tented black boxer briefs and took them off too.

She inhaled audibly at the sight of him naked, the lean musculature of his body never ceased to make her want him. Her eyebrow arched as she stared boldly at his magnificent hard cock and she smiled at the thought that popped into her mind. She crooked her finger at him, beckoning him to approach her.

Jorah took a step toward her, watching as she leaned forward and grasped him in her hand, his breath catching as she stroked him. Her thumb ran along the sensitive path of nerves on the underside of him, his fists clenching at his sides. He looked down and saw her gazing up at him, holding his eyes as she leaned in and licked the same path her thumb had just taken. He groaned, the sight of her doing this to him never ceased to send electric shocks right through his groin. She licked over the head of him, a sound of gratification deep in her throat at the taste of the clear fluid that seeped from the tip.

She watched as his eyelids slipped shut, panting and groaning as she wrapped her lips tightly around the head and took him into her mouth. He was like iron covered in warm silk, and as Daenerys had told him once before, she loved to do this for him. There was something about watching this strong man lose all control, it was the trust and love she saw in his eyes. She supposed that it was probably why he loved to put his mouth on her so much too. She moved over him slowly, savoring the thick hot length of him as deeply as she could take him.

Watching her lips moving over his shaft and feeling her tongue flick over the sensitive underside
caused him to tense his hand in her hair. It was never a command or a way to control her; it was more of an embrace. “Daenerys, please.”

She let him slowly slip from her mouth before she rose from the couch, his arms wrapping around her and kissing her as he walked her to the window. Her heart raced as he turned her around and she placed her hands against the window, arching her back and gazing over her shoulder at him provocatively. He moved her hair over one shoulder and leaned over her, his lips on the skin there as he angled his hips and slipped into her. Her head fell forward as her fingers tensed against the glass, moaning at the way he filled her. He groaned against her shoulder as he started a slow pace, nearly withdrawing completely before sliding in again. His fingers caressed the length of her spine before traveling over her sides and cupping her breasts in his hands, gently pinching and rolling the nipples with his fingers. One hand reached up and gently turned her face to the side, kissing the corner of her parted lips. She pushed back against him, drawing a grunt from his chest.

Daenerys met his gaze, pleading as much with her eyes as her words, “Jorah, please, take me faster. I need you harder.”

He didn’t obey her right away; instead, he savored a few more deep slow strokes before he started the quick, hard pace she desired. She met each of his firm thrusts using the leverage of the window to press back. The sound of their flesh meeting filled the room, the carnal beat of their atavistic dance. He stroked the arch of her stomach, his hand coming to rest just above the curls of her sex before slipping between her legs and gently stroking her clit in slow tight circles, a long low moan issuing from deep in her chest.

The change in her breathing from deep long breathes to short shaky gasps told him she was near the edge. “You’re close, aren’t you, love?”

“Yes,” so breathy and soft he nearly didn’t hear her.

His fingers moved faster over her and he felt her body begin to shudder, the pitch of her voice going higher, “Oh, just like that.”

Now he too found it hard to respond, his own impending orgasm a familiar tightening in his groin. His words were rough, his tone nearly a growl, “Let go for me.”

His voice and words did it for her and she came, his name a high, loud cry, her breathing nearly in time with the pulsing of her sex around him. He could hold back no longer, a few quick hard thrusts were all he needed before he spilled himself inside her, her name mingled with profanity in a damp moan against her neck.

Her legs buckled slightly and threatened to give out completely, but he caught her, drawing her body against his. He rested one hand on the glass next to her own, placing tender kisses against her neck and shoulders. Jorah supported her weight as they came down from their highs. He slipped wetly from her body, drawing soft groans from them both.

He gathered her in his arms bridal style and carried her to the bed, pulling the covers back with one hand before laying her down. He removed her shoes before climbing into the bed by her side and drawing the covers over them. She snuggled up to his body, her leg going over his hips and her arm across his torso. He held her to him, his hand stroking over her hair and down her back. After a while, the lights in the room went off automatically. He reached over and switched the lamp on, the glow of the light soft. He closed his eyes for a moment before they opened again, a contemplative look on his face. “Do you have any more fantasies you care to share with me?”

She giggled softly and lifted her head. Her impish look said it all. Jorah’s deep chuckle was his only
response.
Reconciliation Pt. 1

Chapter Summary

Reconciliation is a process and often times the first step happens in an unexpected way.

Chapter Notes

I apologize for the long delay in updating. Hopefully you are all still hanging around :)

This was originally one long chapter, but I thought it was better as three parts.

Lastly, thank you to everyone who has read/left kudos/commented. It means more than you know!

“Quartz…triple word score.”

Jorah smiled triumphantly as he set down the letters on the Scrabble board. Daenerys had been winning, but with that one word, she was now far behind again. She groaned as she looked at her available tiles, knowing he had cut off the one place on the board where she could have scored a lot of points.

His phone rang and he met her eyes with a puzzled look on his face. They never got calls this late on a Monday evening. He went over to his coat hanging on the wall by the door and took out his phone. He looked at the screen for a moment as he obviously didn’t recognize the number before he answered, “Hello?”

There was a short pause before he added, “Father.”

Daenerys watched him with wide eyes, noting the near instantaneous shift in his posture and set of his jaw. She knew the two men had not spoken in many years. She watched the conversation unfolding before her and it seemed very one-sided. Jorah said only a few words before he hung up. He sat down in his chair across from her, his hand running over his face. He exhaled a long breath before he said, “He wants to see me. Well, both of us actually. This weekend. At his home. For two days.”

She didn’t think her eyebrows could arch any more than they already were. “He wants us to stay the weekend at his house? Wow, I wasn’t expecting that. I thought he would just call you and say whatever it was he wanted to say.”

“That’s what I thought too. I was hoping for it.”

He sat back in the chair and crossed his arms. She could tell he was miles away by his distant gaze. For once, she didn’t know what to say to make him feel better. She stood and came around behind him, leaning over and wrapping her arms around him. He seemed to come back to himself at her touch, his hand resting over hers. They stayed like that for some time in the quiet of the room. Jorah
patted her hand, “There’s nothing I can do about now. I have to let it go and deal with it as best I can when the time comes.”

“That’s all you can do, really,” she said quietly.

He turned to her and smiled, but it did not reach his eyes. He stood, her arms slipping from around him. He gave her a quick kiss, “I think I’m going to go to bed.”

She watched him as he walked toward the bedroom, wishing there was some way she could help him.

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The rest of the week was more of the same. There was a constant underlying tension in Jorah, a look in his eyes of dread and anxiety. He didn’t sleep well; she had awoken in the middle of the night a few times to him pacing in the living room, the TV on unwatched in the background. She hated to see him like this and she tried her best to make him feel better. A few times, she did break through and he was his old self again. But the morning of their departure, he was the worst she had seen him. His tone was curt, the words monosyllabic. As they drove, city gave way to countryside, but Jorah’s white-knuckle grip on the steering wheel persisted. Cornwall was quite a ways from London and the trip was mostly quiet. She spent her time looking out the window at the beautiful scenery that passed by. Eventually, he turned on to a country lane. A house came into view and Daenerys’ jaw dropped. She stared at it, she had never seen a house so big in all her life and she decided sprawling estate fit it better.

He pulled up the drive and parked. He turned off the car and stared past her out the window at his former home. He must have noticed her expression, “I know, it’s massive.”

She was so shocked to hear him talk; she turned to him and said jokingly, “He speaks!”

He smiled, but his brows drew together. “I owe you an apology, love. This whole week… I shouldn’t have taken this out on you. You were trying to help me get through it and all I did was act like a shit.”

Her expression was soft as she rested her hand on his over the gear shift. She saw some of the tension visibly leave his body, his shoulders less rigid. “It’s gonna be ok. Whatever happens, I’m right here by your side.”

She squeezed his hand to emphasis her words and he gave her one of his genuine smiles then as he drew her hand to his lips. He met her eyes, “And you’re more than I deserve.”

She shook her head, “No, we deserve each other.”

He nodded before he looked at the house again. He took a deep breath, “Once more unto the breach, dear friends. Here goes nothing.”

They exited the car and he collected their overnight bags from the trunk. They approached the front door and Jorah rang the bell. Only a moment passed before a man in a suit answered the door.

“Young Master Jorah! It has been quite some time.”

“Barton!? Still hanging around, I see?”

She didn’t expect there to be a butler, nor did she expect what happened next. Jorah
dropped their luggage and they embraced in a great bear hug, the two men clapping each other on the back. They seemed so happy to see one another, she couldn’t help but smile.

They broke apart and Jorah put his arm around her waist to bring her closer, “Barton, there is someone I’d like you to meet. This is my girlfriend, Daenerys.”

The corners of the man’s eyes crinkled even more as he looked at her, “My dear, I’m charmed.”

He took hold of her hand and kissed the back of it, grinning as she said, “It’s nice to meet you too.”

Barton turned back to Jorah, “Well done, Young Master, very well done indeed.”

She blushed at his words and Jorah’s arm tightened around her slightly. “Now, Barton, she’s spoken for. I’m sure there are many ladies in the village who would love to be seen on your arm.”

The man laughed, but then regained his composure, “Where are my manners? Can’t go prattling on like this. Let me take your bags.”

He picked them up and led them through the open door. Daenerys gawked at the interior of the house. It was all hardwood with a dark marble floor. There was a painting on the wall of the foyer, a man and a woman holding a small boy. She watched as Barton set the bags down and left through a hallway to their left. She walked slowly over to the portrait before she looked over her shoulder at Jorah, “This is you and your parents, isn’t it?”

His gaze grew melancholy as he came to stand next to her, “Yes, I think I was about three when this was done.”

He turned to find her looking at him, her head tilted to the side, “You look like her. Your eyes and your hair color, anyway.”

“You aren’t the first to say that. They say I am like her in other ways too.”

“Staring at the old painting, I see?”

A gruff voice behind them drew their attention and they both turned. Jeor approached them, his hands in his pockets. He was not dressed in a suit this time, rather, he wore a forest green sweater and dark dress slacks. Even in this spacious reception area, he still seemed larger than life to her.

“Jorah.”

He reached out his hand to his son and he took it, their handshake was brief as he answered back, “Father.”

He turned to her then and his gaze softened a bit. “Ms. Targaryen, it is a pleasure to see you again.”

She took his proffered hand, “Likewise, Mr. Mormont.”

“This is the second time we have met, so it is Jeor now.” He addressed them both, “You have arrived just in time for supper.”
He turned and walked back the way he came, leaving them standing there. Jorah turned to her, “It is Jeor now? I dare say he’s happier to see you than me.”

She smirked at him as she started to walk backward down the hallway, shrugging, “What can I say, I’m loveable.”

He returned her look and shook his head as he followed after her.

***

Supper turned out to be fairly civil. Jorah was surprised; he had fully expected it to be a meal choked down in awkward silence. The two men spoke at length, but it was mostly about the company and the state of the business world. Next to him, Daenerys ate mostly in silence. Jorah tried to include her in the conversation where he could, but unfortunately she couldn’t contribute all that much. He felt for her, stuck in the middle of this situation. His hand reached for hers as it rested in her lap, a soft squeeze drew her attention and he smiled softly at her, one she returned.

Once the meal was over, they all retired to the sitting room for some more conversation before Jeor announced he was headed off to bed. He bid them good night and left the room. When Jorah was sure his father was long gone, he exhaled loudly and sat back in his chair, his body now totally relaxed.

“Well, all in all, that wasn’t nearly as terrible as I thought it would be.”

“I think it went rather well. Your father was talking to you, although I realize it wasn’t a very personal conversation.”

“There’s always tomorrow,” he said guardedly, “But now, all I want to do is lie down and sleep.”

She smiled. “That sounds like a great idea.”

He led her up the stairs and down a long hallway to their room. It was fairly large with many full bookcases and posters on the wall of football stars from a time she assumed was before she was born. It dawned on her and she turned to him, “This was your room, wasn’t it?”

He stood in the doorway, his hands in his pockets, “Yes and you are the first girl to ever be in it.”

Her voice was full of disbelief, “Oh, I don’t believe that for a second.”

“No, it’s the truth. My father was strict about me not having girls in my room. That didn’t mean that I couldn’t bring them elsewhere in the house.”

He wagged his eyebrows suggestively and she made a noise of shock as she shook her head slowly, “A Casanova even back then I see.”

He shut the door and walked toward her, wrapping his arms around her waist, “Some things never change.”

He leaned in to kiss her, but she pressed her hands against his chest to stop him. He looked at her questioningly as she said, “We can’t do this in your father’s house with him sleeping right down the hallway.”

“I’m not a teenager anymore.”
“I know that, but you know how loud I can be.”

He arched an eyebrow, “I am well aware and I love that about you. But I know you can be quiet too.”

She slapped his chest half-heartedly, “I think we can survive two days without doing it.”

He groaned and made a face of mock disappointment, “All right, I don’t want you to be uncomfortable. You’re worth the wait.”

They got ready for bed and cuddled together under the blankets. That was something she was not about to go without.
As Jorah got ready that morning, she took the opportunity to look around his room further. She surveyed the vinyl on his shelf: Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan, The Beatles, and a few James Bond soundtracks. She knew he had good taste in music, but his collection at home was all in digital format. The books on his shelf ranged from Shakespeare and Blake to some authors whose names she didn’t recognize. It was a large book on the bottom that caught her attention and she crouched to take it from the shelf. She stared at the title, *The Joy of Sex*, before she opened it, now extremely curious to find out what was inside. Her eyebrows shot up at the artful, yet somewhat explicit, drawings of couples engaged in sexual acts. She flipped through the pages and read sentences here and there before a voice startled her, “Find something you like?”

She shut the book quickly and put it behind her back, hoping he didn’t see what she was looking at. He walked toward her and continued to do so until her bottom met the edge of his desk. He leaned over and reached behind her, a naughty grin spreading across his face as he held the book in his hands. “I think we’ve tried most everything in this book together.”

A blush still colored her cheeks as she asked, “Why do you have it?”

He leaned back against the desk next to her, thumbing through the book, “My father wasn’t about to give me the “sex talk” when I was a teenager. So he gave me this book and told me to read it. If I had questions afterward, he said I could ask then.”

“Did you?”

“Not really, but I decided I wouldn’t let him off so easy. So I asked him about performing oral sex on a girl, figuring it the most awkward thing I could ask him.”

She laughed. “What did he say?”

“He had great aplomb about it. His advice was actually more detailed than I expected. He said it was all about finding the right speed and motion that worked for her because every woman is different. Her body would let me know what felt good for her, I just had to pay attention.” He chuckled then, “He also said if she tells you not to stop, then you’re doing it right.” He looked at her,
“Sound familiar?”

She felt the blush rise all over again and he laughed. “Come on, let’s go down to breakfast before I get ideas from this book and take you out to the greenhouse.”

As she followed him, she asked, “Greenhouse?”

He looked over his shoulder at her as he walked out the door, “Yes, because then we aren’t in the house anymore.”

She playfully smacked him on his rear and he rubbed at it, pretending to be hurt as they made their way to the dining room.

They discovered Jeor had already eaten long ago, so they ate and talked comfortably, alone in the large room. Barton came in when they were done to tell Jorah his father wanted to speak with him on the terrace.

He took a deep breath as he held her hand, “So it begins. Wish me luck.”

“You’ll be fine. Good luck.”

Jorah grabbed his long navy wool coat from the rack in the foyer and joined his father. The clouds in the distance threatened a storm, the sky overhead dull and grey. Jeor stared out over the vastness of green grass and trees that was the garden, his hands resting on the stone railing. He turned at the sound of the French door closing, “Sleep well?”

Jorah came to stand next to him. “Well enough.”

The older man turned to his son, “How is it that the women in our lives are always the voice of reason?”

Jorah didn’t know what he was getting at, so he decided to say nothing as he looked at him.

“I was thinking about what Daenerys said to me the last time I saw her. And you know,” he paused, his hands taking up residence in his pants pockets, “She’s right.”

“About what?”

Jeor looked out over the garden again, his eyes fixed on something in the distance, “All of it. She is very wise for her age. And it would appear she understands you better than I do.”

The older man grew contemplative for a while before he said, “When you came to me five years ago and told me what you had done, I was furious. So much so, that I could not see past it. I did not listen, something your mother had always told me I needed to work on. You tried to tell me then that you were sorry, that you regretted your mistake, but I could not hear you through all the anger I clung to so tightly.”

Jorah’s gaze was unwavering as he met his father’s eyes and said, “I still deeply regret it to this day.”

The silence was heavy between them before he responded, “Five years is a long time to hold on to something. When I saw you make that public statement and the way that you handled the difficult situation of Jonathan’s crimes, I realized everything was not as it once was. We have both been carrying regret for far longer than we should have.”
Jeor turned and the younger man mirrored him, “She is right, you have changed. It has taken me far too long to acknowledge it. I know now you are not the man you once were.” He rested his hand on Jorah’s shoulder, “I am proud to call that man my son.”

The hand that rested there had been heavy, but now it felt as though a feather had taken its place. Jorah took a deep breath, swallowing against the lump that was forming in his throat, hoping his voice would not betray his emotions, “All I have ever wanted was to make you proud.”

Jeor smiled at him and Jorah couldn’t help but reciprocate it, “What you have done within yourself and with the company, making it far more successful than I ever could have, how could I not be proud of you?” His hand tightened on his son’s shoulder before he added, “Let’s get in out of this cold. My bones are too old for this shit.”

He laughed then, a loud barking noise from deep in his chest and Jorah joined him as they walked back to the house.

His father stopped, “One more thing.” Jorah met his father’s eyes, “Hold on to that woman in there. She has been good for you.”

“I plan to.”

Jeor’s eyebrows arched, “You’ve considered marriage?”

“I thought about it briefly, but it has only been nine months. I don’t want to rush in like I did last time.”

“She’s not her, not by any stretch of the imagination.” He tapped Jorah’s chest with his index finger before they continued on.

***

Jorah found Daenerys in the large showroom garage off the main house.

“So what do you think?” he asked as he walked toward her.

“Barton found me wandering the halls as you were talking to your father and asked me if I’d like to see something “really neat”, his exact words. And he’s right,” as she swept her arms in gesture to all of the cars around her, “this is awesome.”

She grew serious, “How did it go with your father?”

A small smile graced his lips, “Far better than I ever hoped for.”

“That’s great. I’m really glad you two worked it out.”

“Me too.” He nodded to the vehicles, “My father and I used to restore old cars when I was growing up. It was his way of bonding with me and we did have a good time together.” He regarded her thoughtfully, “Pick your favorite. We’ll go for a drive.”

“Really? Won’t your father be upset with you taking one of these cars out? I mean, they are in pristine condition.”

Jorah shook his head, “No, he drove them on occasion and I’m sure he still does. Now, go ahead and pick one.”

Daenerys’ eyes scanned over the two lines of cars before she pointed to a dark green car at
Jorah rubbed his hand over his short beard before he asked her, “You know which car that is, right?”

She nodded once, “That’s the Aston Martin V8 Vantage Volante from my favorite James Bond film, *The Living Daylights.*”

“Color me impressed. My girlfriend knows her Bond cars.”

“I know some of them, but that one is my favorite.”

“Let me get the keys. You should grab a coat in case the rain decides to make an appearance.”

She left to get one and when she came back, he was leaning against the car. He must have put his coat inside already because he stood there in just his blue button up shirt and black dress pants. *Damn, he looks like a suave secret agent,* she thought. She regretted telling him that they wouldn’t have sex for two days because the way he looked standing there made her want him right now.

Jorah observed the subtle shift in her eyes, the way she looked him up and down as if he wouldn’t notice. She stood in front of him, “Shall we, Mr. Bond?”

He winked at her and opened the door, closing it after she got in. He came around to his side and got in. He started the car, the purr of the engine made her fingers tense against the leather seat. There was something about the sound of a classic sports car that made her heart beat a bit faster. It also didn’t help matters that the man driving looked so damn handsome.

He pressed a button on the garage door opener attached to the sun visor before they exited and drove for the main highway. Jorah exceeded the speed limit slightly as he drove along the coastal road not far from the house. She watched him, his hand on the gear shift, the occasional flex of the muscles in his leg as he engaged the clutch. In a way, the relationship between him and the car was strangely intimate; he had to know the timing and the sounds the transmission made so he knew when to shift. It reminded her of the way he was with her, listening to her body’s response to him to know what he needed to give her more of. She couldn’t believe how much driving in a car with him was turning her on. All too soon, they came to a junction in the road and turned around to go back.

Along the way, the car jerked suddenly. Jorah slowed and dropped down a gear, thinking he had pushed the car too hard after such a long time sitting unused. It did it again and continued to do it even after he had gotten down into first gear. He waited until they came to a wider part of the road before he pulled onto the dirt shoulder and turned the car off. He started it again and put in the clutch, pushing the gas pedal, closing his eyes as he leaned forward and listened to the engine. The sun had set long ago and the rain had started to fall soon after, so he grabbed his coat from the back seat and a flashlight from the glove box before he got out of the car and lifted the hood. He was out there a few moments before he shut it again and got back in. He shook the water from his coat and ran his hands through his hair. “It’s the fuel pump.”

He wasn’t necessarily telling her, it was more just a statement of fact. He took out his phone and dialed a number. They were engaged in a short conversation before he hung up. “Well, it looks like we’ll be here awhile. They say they can’t get a tow truck out here for at least two hours. Do you have any ideas for how we can keep warm?”

A smile spread slowly across her face, “Yeah, I can think of a few.”
“These ideas, would they happen to be on that list of yours?”

Daenerys looked at him from underneath her long eyelashes, “What do you think?”

“I think I love how your naughty mind works.” He rested his hand on her thigh, “Do you want to tell me or do you just want to show me?”

“A little of both. First, I think we should get in the backseat where there’s more room.”

It was a bit of a struggle in the confined space, but with some maneuvering and a lot of laughter, Jorah was finally sitting where she wanted him. She climbed into his lap, her knees on either side of his hips. He reached onto the side of the seat in front of him and eased it forward as far as it would go. Jorah’s long legs still didn’t fit all that comfortably, but he couldn’t have cared less as she ground herself against him, her hands resting against his chest. “I can’t think of anyone else I would rather make out in a car with for the first time.”

“You’ve never made out in a car before?”

She could hear the surprise in his voice and she said, “No, we moved around so much I never did half of the things other girls my age were doing.”

His hands cradled her jaw, the thumbs ghosting over her cheeks, “I will have to make this extra special then.”

Her fingers rested lightly on his lips, “It already is because it’s with you.”

The only sound was the pouring rain outside the car as they looked into each other’s eyes. In a way, he lamented her lack of a ‘normal’ teenage life. But on the other hand, he was happy she didn’t have one. That way she could experience all that she had missed the first time, only now with him and he fully intended to make it something she would never forget.

He moved to kiss her and she met him halfway. His lips moved softly over hers, there was no hurry in his exploration of her mouth. The tips of their tongues touched, retreated and touched again before they met in an erotic tango. His hand rested on her hip, the other cradled the back of her neck as they continued to kiss. Her hair fell around them, surrounding their faces with the light lavender scent of her shampoo. Their lips parted only long enough to draw breath before he threaded his hands through her hair and nipped softly at her full bottom lip, his tongue darting out to lick delicately over it. Her sighs of pleasure were nearly inaudible; he felt them against his lips more than he heard them. He spent quite some time kissing her; it had been a while since they had enjoyed the simple bliss of this sensation. She had lips that were made to be kissed and he would never get enough of them. His hands moved over her body, but his touch was not urgent, he merely intended to feel as much of her as he could. She rasped her teeth over his bottom lip before she kissed and licked her way along his neck to his ear, her tongue tracing the edge of it before she drew the lobe between her lips. She knew they were sensitive, his hands tensing against the swell of her bottom, drawing her against him. She whimpered at the perfect press of him against her clit, even through her jeans, his cock felt so good against her like that. She rocked her hips against him, her fingers undoing the buttons of his shirt.

Her whisper was fervent against his lips, “I need to touch you.”

She undid the last one with shaky hands and pushed the fabric to the sides, exhaling through her nose, her lip between her teeth as she ran her hands over his lean chest and stomach.

His fingers set to work undoing her blouse as well, easing it down her arms before he
undid the front clasp of her bra. She pulled it off and tossed it to the side, pressing her breasts against
him. Their sighs mingled as skin met skin and she wiggled slightly against him. He chuckled through
his groan, the juxtaposition of her hard nipples and soft mounds against him all together wonderful
and sensual.

He cradled her shoulder blades in his hands and leaned forward, his tongue tracing the
rosy skin surrounding her nipple before he drew it between his lips and laved it. She arched into his
mouth and pressed her center against him all at once, her desire for him spiking. A switch inside her
flipped as he teased her nipples, the rasp of his tongue and the warm wetness of his mouth, the
whimper of his name that fell from her lips was needy. Her hands gripped his hair and held him
against her, her hips undulating in his lap.

She was entirely consumed by her need for him, the tenderness no longer enough to sate her. The
last time she had been intimate with him was before his father’s phone call and she realized that six
days was far too long to go without him. She wanted him right now and nothing would stop her.

Jorah felt the change, her body burning for him. And he saw it in her eyes as she climbed from his
lap to lie across the seat next to him, frantically pulling off her shoes and undoing her pants before
she took them and her panties off. He followed her lead, undoing his own clothing and releasing
himself from the confines so that he would be ready for her. Then he saw it in the dim light: the
glistening copious arousal between her legs. And something snapped in him too, now he understood
why she was so desperate for him.

She was back in his lap not a moment later, her hand grasping his erection, drawing it to her center
and sinking down on him, her loud wanton moan of “Oh god yes” made his jaw clench.

Her hands pressed against his chest as her head fell back, her breathing labored as she tightened her
inner muscles around him.

“I need you so bad, Jorah.”

His hands held her hips, “Take what you need, love. My body is yours.”

There was something about his voice in that tone that stirred something inside her, deep in her
subconscious, which made her quicken her pace. Their heavy breathing had long since fogged over
the windows and the pouring rain added a cadence to their coupling that made it feel wild and
forbidden.

Jorah could not decide where to look: her beautiful face, contorted in pleasure, or where his cock
disappeared inside her, glistening in the low light. He knew she was close already and that kept his
eyes riveted on hers, the sight of her in ecstasy more beautiful than anything else. This was so unlike
anything he had done in his youth, the woman on top of him loved and wanted him in equal
measure; this was most certainly not some quickie in a backseat.

He leaned back and planted his feet against the floor of the car, using the leverage to lift his hips into
her downward thrusts. She cried out sharply and her short nails bit into his chest.

The sound of their passion filled the car as she pressed her hands against the head liner,
“Please…touch me.”

With one hand still on her hip, he slipped his thumb over her hard nub and her body quaked. He
moved it fast and her hips faltered, “Oh, Jorah, I’m...”

His voice was a rough growl, “That’s it, Daenerys, come for me.”
Her head fell back and she cried out, unable to articulate her pleasure as it coursed through her in delicious waves. The pulsing of her inner muscles brought his orgasm racing to the surface, his hips arching under her, burying himself deep inside her as he came, his hands tight around her hips, a groan deep in his chest.

They stared at one another as they caught their breath. She slumped slightly against him and his hands cradled her face, their eyes full of love as she said, “I seriously doubt it would have been like this when I was a teenager.”

Jorah chuckled and she joined him. Soon they were laughing, completely uninhibited. She moved to the seat next to him and started getting dressed. The tow truck driver had to be arriving soon and she didn’t want to have to rush. She sat, cuddled against his side under his large wool coat. They talked to pass the time until they heard a truck pull up in front of them. They got out of the car and huddled under the one umbrella they had, his coat draped over her shoulders. The driver looked at Jorah, then at Daenerys and then at the fogged up windows of the car, a knowing smirk on his face as he put two and two together. Jorah simply glared at him and the man got the message, clearing his throat and prepping the car to be towed. Daenerys glanced over at Jorah and then did a double take, trying desperately to stifle her laughter behind her hand.

“What’s so funny?” he asked.

She pointed at his chest and he looked down, one of the buttons was fastened in the wrong place, making the shirt front uneven. He started fixing it, shaking his head all the while, before he asked, “Do you think he knows?”

All she could do was laugh.

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The tow truck brought them and the car back to the house. Jorah explained to his father what had happened to the car. Jeor took one look at the still slightly fogged windows and crossed his arms, a knowing smile on his face.

Later, after a hot shower, Jorah started a fire in the hearth of their room and they cuddled together under a blanket in front of it, the rain still pouring outside. Neither was sleepy yet, but her head rested against his shoulder.

“Love, can I ask you something?”

She lifted her head and looked at him.

“In the car, you said you didn’t get to do some of what the other girls were doing because you moved so much. Was there more to it than that?”

Sighing, she said, “It was partly because of the way my brother was too. He always told me we didn’t have money for things when I would ask for them or he’d tell me that I couldn’t go places because he wouldn’t know where to find me if we needed to leave quickly. I tried to push my luck once and it didn’t turn out so well.”

“What happened?”

She grew silent and still, her voice nearly a whisper, “He hit me.”

“He did what?”
She could hear the protectiveness in his slightly raised voice, “It was just once and it wasn’t all that hard. But that cliché about seeing stars when someone hits you, that’s actually true. The chaotic array of twinkling light blinds you for only a second, but it feels like an eternity.”

He traced the delicate curve of her cheek with his fingers, his words tender, “It doesn’t matter that it was only once or not that hard, he should never have hurt you like that. And no one ever will again, not if I can help it.” His jaw shifted and his tone darkened, “Your brother should count himself lucky he isn’t still alive, I would have made him wish he’d never been born.”

She smiled softly at how protective he was of her. She had never felt so safe with a man before. He really was like his nickname, but most importantly, he was her bear.

Jorah’s eyebrows drew together, “It’s clear from the way he treated you your brother didn’t love you. What about a boyfriend?”

She gave a short cynical laugh, “Boyfriend? Forget it. The one guy I dated when I was sixteen, Viserys threatened to kick the crap out of him if he came around again. That relationship was short lived.”

“Such a hard life for someone so young, how did you manage it?”

“I read a lot.” She got a far off look in her eyes then, “I’d put myself in place of the characters in my books. My favorite was about a powerful Queen with a loyal Knight that secretly loved her.”

“Did you ever find this Knight?”

She bumped him with her shoulder, “I think so.”

“And my love for you is no secret.”

His eyes warm with affection; he reached for her hand and rested their interlaced fingers on his leg. They stared into the fire, enjoying the quiet company of one another for a while before he heard her yawn. He squeezed her hand gently, “Come on, love, let’s get you to bed.”

She followed him willingly, her hand rubbing lazily at her eye as he pulled back the bed clothes and climbed in. She crawled in after, her body cuddled up against him as he tucked the blankets around them. He kissed the top of her head, whispering into her hair, “I love you.”

He received no response, she was already fast asleep. He smiled to himself and closed his eyes, the sleep that came over him the most peaceful it had been all week.
Reconciliation Pt. 3

Chapter Summary

Daenerys and Jorah are on a pathway of discovery.

Chapter Notes

I apologize for the lateness of this chapter. Life...it happens.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Tell me about your mother.”

The rain of yesterday had ended sometime during the night and Daenerys wanted to see the grounds of the estate. They walked through the trees and across the grassy slopes, her hand resting in the crook of his arm, their warm exhaled breaths visible in the slight chill of the early afternoon air.

“I was so little when she died that I only have one memory of her and it is hazy at that.”

She looked up at him and he sighed, “I am somewhere outside and I can see her smiling at me. Her lips are moving, but I don’t know what she is saying.” He paused, “I don’t know if it is even real or not.”

“Did you ask your father?”

He arched his eyebrow at her, “What? About the memory?”

She nodded.

He nodded short through his nose, “It was an unspoken rule in our house not to speak of my mother.”

“Why?”

“I was never sure really; I think the pain of her loss was simply too much for my father.”

They walked in silence for a while before she asked, “You said that people think you were just like her. Who told you that?”

“Ah,” he chuckled, “That would be Maege, my father’s sister. According to her, my mother had quite the effect on him. You see him now, a bit gruff and stern, but apparently, when my parents were dating and up until she passed, he was very different: sweeter, more romantic, and infinitely gentler. At least with her he was. And Maege teased him mercilessly about it. She would roar with laughter as he glowered at her comments. Or so she told me. I believe it, that’s the type of person she was.”
“I’m sorry.”

He rested his hand over hers, giving it a gentle squeeze, “She was the only other connection I had to my mother. And since my father won’t speak of her nor will he allow Barton to either, the memories will go with him when he passes.”

“What else did Maege say about her?”

“She was beautiful, with her red-gold hair and dancing blue eyes. She was intelligent and very witty. However, despite her sweet disposition, she could also be a no-nonsense woman who wasn’t afraid to put my father in his place. She challenged him and could be very stubborn. But her deep affection for him was very clear. A hopeless romantic, when she loved someone, it was with her whole heart.”

“That sounds like someone I know,” she said with a wink.

“I could say the same for you.”

She pressed closer to him, the warmth of his long wool coat evident even through her own jacket.

They turned at the corner of the house and Daenerys gasped at the large garden in front of her: row upon row of Christmas roses, with their luminous white petals, the scent of them wafting in the air. “These are beautiful.”

“This was my mother’s. It would appear my father still keeps it well-maintained.”

Across from them was a strange green plant she had never seen before. It had no flowers, but it seemed to be dormant. “Do you know what these are?”

He laughed. “That’s called Bear’s Foot. Maege let slip once that my mother used to call Jeor “Her Bear” and that she planted it to tease him.”

“Hmm, now why does that sound familiar?”

He smirked at her before she turned to look at the roses again, “He must still be very much in love with her.”

Jorah slipped his hands into his pockets, “That would probably explain why he never remarried.”

“Never?” She paused, “Wow. That is both so very romantic and also sad for him. To be alone all of these years.”

She stared off in the distance as she thought about what it might be like to lose the person you gave your whole being to. Then she looked at him, the thought of losing him made her chest ache painfully and now she understood perfectly why Jeor never married again, his wife still held his heart. Jorah had hers and she couldn’t imagine loving someone else the way she loved him.

He noticed the glassy sheen of her eyes and took her face in his hands, “I can completely understand why he never found someone new. No one could replace her in his eyes,” his thumb brushing away the tear that slipped from the corner of her eye, “just as no one can replace you in mine.”

She sniffled and gave him a watery smile before she wrapped her arms around his neck.
He held her as she whispered against his throat, “There will never be another for me either, Jorah.”

He pressed his lips to her temple and felt her shiver. Leaning back to look at her, he said, “Let’s get inside where it’s warm.”

She took his hand, their fingers intertwining as they walked back to the house.

He opened one side of the French doors and she walked in ahead of him. He shut the door and they walked through the library and into the hallway.

“Daenerys,” he whispered, “I just realized something.”

He looked around to see if they were alone before he wrapped his arm around her waist and pulled her against him, “I haven’t kissed you yet today.”

His lips were on hers before she even had a chance to protest the fact that they were kissing where his father could walk in on them at any moment. Her eyelids slipped shut, her hand gripping the lapel of his coat, his kiss so good she didn’t dare want him to stop now. His lips were cool, but his tongue was oh so hot gliding against her own. She whimpered in his mouth and he walked her back, her body now deliciously trapped between the wall and him. Frankly, she didn’t care if the Queen of England walked in right then as his hand splayed across her lower back and drew her tighter to him. Her hand moved from his neck into his hair, threading through his soft waves.

A throat cleared loudly nearby and Jorah jumped back as if he had been caught stealing a cookie, his fingers rubbing over his chin as he turned to see his father standing there, hands in his pockets. He could have sworn Jeor looked almost amused as he said, “Jorah, a moment.” He walked past them before he added, “If you can.”

“Oh my god.”

Daenerys’ voice was muffled, her hands covering her face. Jorah couldn’t help it, he started laughing. She glared at him, her cheeks red with mortification.

“This is so not funny.”

“Oh, yes it is.”

His mirth broke down her embarrassment and she joined in, then sighed, “You better go see what he wants.”

He winked at her over his shoulder as he walked in the doorway his father had just entered.

Jeor stood in front of the large picture window, but turned at the sound of Jorah’s footsteps.

“Close the door please.”

As he did so, he said, “About that out there, I-”

His father chuckled, “Don’t you dare apologize. It has been far too long since there was that kind of love in this house.”

Jorah stared at him. Who are you and what have you done with my father, he thought.

He turned to the window again. “You two remind me of your mother and I,” his hand rubbed over his beard, “God rest her soul.”
Jorah couldn’t help it, “Why did you never talk about her?”

“When I lost her, I lost the best part of myself. To talk about her only succeeded in reminding me that she was gone. And I couldn’t bear it.”

All these years, he had been suffering inside. As much as he and Jeor hadn’t seen eye to eye and he had always felt as though he had let his father down, he felt sorry for him and his repressed grief helped explain a lot of things about his life growing up and the last several years.

“You know, it is the anniversary of her passing this month. And if I learned anything of what she taught me about love, she would not have wanted us to be the way we were.”

Jorah simply didn’t know what to say. He had never talked so openly to him before and a strange anticipation sat like lead in his stomach, as if his father was about to tell him some bad news.

The older man reached into his pocket and took out something small and black. “Before she passed, your mother made me promise to give this to you.”

Jorah took the box and opened it, his eyebrows rising in surprise. He recognized the contents from the painting in the foyer: it was his mother’s engagement and wedding rings.

“What-”

“She told me that when you had found the right woman, these would be hers. ‘To join her to our family’ she said.” Jeor cleared his throat, “Lynn was not right for you. I never said it; I kept my mouth shut as it was your life. She did not deserve to wear those rings and that is why I waited. Until now.”

“Daenerys.” The whisper might as well have been a shout in the still quiet. Jorah took a deep breath, “It has only been nine months. It is too soon.”

“I am not implying that you ask her today. These are for when the time is right. And you will know when it is.” He smiled to himself, “I did.”

“How did you propose?”

The older man sighed, his gaze distant and wistful, “I took her to the Hebrides on a month long holiday. I purchased the ring before I left, knowing I was going to ask her at some point. In a small pub in a tiny fishing village, a traditional band playing in the background, she looked at me and I just knew. I dropped to one knee and asked her right then.” He chuckled, “We were the recipients of quite a few rounds that night.”

Maege had been right after all, his father was quite the romantic.

Jeor rested his hand on his son’s shoulder, “The way Daenerys looks at you is the way your mother looked at me. And that is a rare and precious thing.”

All Jorah could do was smile as his father clapped him on the back and walked him from the room.

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“It was a pleasure to have you in my home, Daenerys.”

He shook her hand, his other resting over their clasped ones.

“I had a wonderful time, Jeor, thank you.”
He let her hand slip from his grasp before he turned to his son, “Jorah, you and your lovely young lady must come back for Christmas. It is time to resume the traditions your mother started all those years ago.”

He took his father’s proffered hand, “We’d be delighted, Father.”

The older man smiled, “Well, I mustn’t keep you any longer. You have quite a drive ahead of you.”

He walked them to the door and Barton opened it. Jorah embraced the butler before he stepped out the door, Daenerys waving goodbye as she followed after. Their luggage had already been loaded into the car and he opened the door for her before he got in. He started off down the drive when she asked, “Did you tell your father about the car?”

He smirked, “He wasn’t all that worried. Apparently, that car has had engine trouble before. His only concern was that we didn’t get anything on the leather.”

Her jaw dropped open, “Oh my god, how did he find out?”

“Two people, deeply in love, gone for several hours in a car that, upon its return to the garage, still had parts of its windows fogged over. He was young once too,” he glanced at her, “And as I learned just this afternoon, we remind him of the way he was with my mother. So something tells me he was quite adventurous with her as well.”

She ran her hand over her face, “I’ll never be able to look at him again without blushing.”

“He would never mention anything to you. He’s too much of a gentleman for that.”

“I know that, it’s simply the fact that he knows,” She sighed, “Christmas is going to be interesting.”

He glanced at her out of the corner of his eye, “I suppose that means we won’t be taking out another one of your favorite cars next time?”

She wished she had something soft to throw at him just then, that way she could wipe the playfully smug look right off his face.

She arched her eyebrow at him instead.

“I guess that’s a no.”

Chapter End Notes

Christmas is coming. (Did I really just type that?!?) But there are a few others things that have to happen first. Stay tuned!
“Fucking prick…thinks he can challenge me. My offer is final. If he doesn’t like it, he can take his company somewhere else and just *try* to get a better deal. Let him know I’ll be waiting for him to come crawling back.”

Daenerys stood in the doorway, watching the scene unfold before her. Jorah paced by his desk, his suit jacket lying haphazardly over the back of a chair. Robert sat there, an amused smile on his face as he listened.

With a hard rap of her knuckles on the doorjamb, two sets of eyes met hers. It was late, nearly 7pm, and they were the only people left in the office. Robert said something about keeping this conversation between the two of them and then stood, saying good night to Daenerys as he walked past her out the door. She responded in kind and looked back to see Jorah slumping into his desk chair, rubbing at his temple, his eyes closed.

“I thought your offer was more than fair. His company’s profit margins for the last quarter were dismal. He’s an idiot if he thinks he’ll get better than your generosity.”

The door clicked shut and Jorah opened his eyes to find her slowly approaching his chair, his gaze losing its hard edge, “Ooo, talk business to me, love.”

She giggled and noticed that the irritation on his face was quickly disappearing too, “I’m being serious, Jorah. I was in that meeting and I thought he was a rude, insufferable man. ‘That offer isn’t worthy of my great company’, where does he get off?”

“It would seem not at all, given that he’s got that stick up his arse.”

Daenerys couldn’t help but laugh. And when he did too, it made her happy to see him back to his old self again.

Jorah sighed. “Well, I’ve had about enough of that for today.”
Stretching his arms, he closed his eyes and rolled his neck. Pushing off from the desk, she stood next to him, her hands massaging his shoulders as best she could, her thumbs pressing into the tense muscles she found there. His head fell forward with a groan, “You may have small hands love, but do they ever feel good.”

This wasn’t the first time she had done this for him. A few months back, after he arrived home after a particularly stressful business trip, she had told him to strip and lay on the bed. She had then proceeded to straddle him and massage the stress from his body. She smiled at the memory of finding him asleep from her ministrations.

“Jorah,” she said and he hmm’d in response, “How about I make you dinner tonight and then give you one of my famous de-stressing massages?”

“That sounds perfect.”

He stood and wrapped his arm around her. She thought for a second he was going to kiss her, but instead, he rested his lips against the top of her head and drew a deep breath of the scent of her hair. Daenerys’ arms wound around his waist and they stayed that way for some time before he whispered, “What did I ever do to deserve you?”

“I think the same way about you quite often,” she replied, taking his hand, “Now let’s go home.”

He didn’t need to be told twice.

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And Jorah had been right. Not three days later, the CEO returned, looking almost sheepish with his board of directors in tow. As they made introductions in the conference room, one man in particular caught Jorah’s attention. His face was so familiar, and yet, no matter how many times Jorah tried to place where he had seen him, he simply couldn’t. He pushed the bothersome thought aside and focused on the task at hand, presuming that he would figure it out eventually. Thankfully for everyone involved, the meeting was short and even luckier for them; Jorah’s generous offer was still on the table, one they readily accepted this time without negotiation.

As he stood there at the head of the table, shaking hands to finalize the deal before smoothing his hand over his tie and buttoning his suit jacket, he exuded an air of confidence and power. Watching him from the doorway, Daenerys couldn’t help but think that he looked like a victorious Knight, raising the tattered banner of the vanquished enemy high above his head. She knew how Jorah sometimes was after a merger was completed, a man who wanted to be in control in other ways too. She wanted him to take the lead, seeing as he so often submitted to her. But Jorah’s definition of control was vastly different than most men’s, it wasn’t about dominance. It was about leaving her breathless and completely satisfied; incapable of thought as she lay sprawled over his body in exhaustion. She waited until the conference room was empty; watching him gather his papers and close his portfolio before making her entrance.

“Well played, Titan of Mergers.”

Meeting her eyes, he smirked, “Is that a new nickname you have for me, love?”

“No, but apparently that’s what she calls you,” Daenerys said, waving a magazine in her hand.

“What?”

Laying it on the glass tabletop, she watched him read over the bold lettering on the front cover, “You’ve got to be joking.”
“Oh no, this is too good to make up. But wait, it gets better.”

Taking it in her hands, she flipped to the article and leaned against the table, “With his penetrating gaze and commanding presence, Jorah Mormont has brought new life to the world of mergers and acquisitions. A man not to be trifled with, his business acumen is rivaled only by his shrewd discernment of character. A true Titan of Mergers, a moniker he will carry with ease on his broad shoulders.”

Daenerys made a face and closed the magazine, “If the reporter had been a man, I would have thought he had a hard-on for you. Can she be anymore blatant in her approval? She’s gushing over you like this was an article for a woman’s magazine about the sexiest men in business.”

Despite the fact that his arms were crossed, the look on his face was one of amusement, “I remember the day she came to do that interview. Reeking of perfume and heavily made up, she flounced around my office, flirting practically non-stop and laughing a bit too eagerly at my jokes. It was pathetic actually. She asked me out to dinner, but looked utterly devastated when I told her I was off the market, madly in love with a smart, beautiful woman.

“Of which there is no mention in this article,” she spat, tossing the periodical on the table. She met his eyes and sighed, “Please don’t think that I’m not proud of you or happy that you’re on the cover of a major business magazine because I really am. It’s great for you and the company; I just wish she had done a better job of showing off the real you: your mind, your personality, and your accomplishments, not just worshiping your good looks.”

“I know, Sweetheart. What little you read to me does sound a bit effusive with the compliments. I’ll say this much though, at least I don’t look horrid on the cover.”

“Seriously, Jorah? Even your driver’s license photo is gorgeous.”

“You flatter me,” he said with a wave of his hand, the dimple evident on his faintly blushing cheek.

“It’s not flattery if it’s the truth.” Glancing over her shoulder, she stepped close to him and smoothed her hands over his jacket to curl around his neck, “When I walked in here, you looked the picture of authority. Perhaps she’s right after all; you really are the Titan of Mergers.”

“Well, I don’t know about that,” he looked past her for an instant before he pulled her flush against him and lowered his voice, “Meet me at the car in ten minutes. When we get home, I’ll show you what I’m really the titan of.”

“Oh god,” she said breathlessly.

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With the merger finalized last Thursday, another party was held to celebrate. Daenerys was beginning to understand why Jorah found them so tedious. She could think of a million things she’d rather be doing on this Friday night. The small talk was getting to her; the egotism from some of these men was sickening. But she knew that putting her best foot forward was right for the company, so she sucked it up and played her part. After a while though, she had to excuse herself from the conversation to get some fresh air, the room so packed with people that it had become stifling. The patio out front was empty and she was thankful to be alone in peace for a while.

Jorah couldn’t find Daenerys anywhere. He assumed she must be stuck in a conversation somewhere in the large, crowded room. He waited in the short line at the bar, his soda long finished. He always limited himself to one drink at these events, he wanted a clear head, unlike some of the
guests he saw, red-faced and laughing a bit too loudly at someone’s stupid joke. It was finally his turn, but a woman’s voice interrupted him as he relayed his order to the bartender, “He’ll have a Glenfiddich Excellence 26 Year Old.”

He felt his stomach drop to his feet. Oh fuck me; he thought as he turned and came face-to-face with the last person he ever wanted to see again.

“Lynn,” the shock was quickly replaced by impatience, “What are you doing here?”

She leaned against the bar, “Why Jorah, is that the way you speak to every woman you’ve ever loved?”

His jaw clenched, “No, just you.”

She pouted. “That’s a shame.” She reached out and ran her perfectly manicured red nails over the forearm of his jacket, a gigantic diamond ring lustrous in the light. “It’s so very good to see you again.”

He stepped back as calmly as he could, “I can’t say the same thing for you.”

“It’s still not amicable between us, is it? He shook his head and gave a short hard laugh, “How could it be? I found you in bed with another man and the divorce proceedings were hell on earth. Don’t expect me to do a jig.”

She glanced at the fingers of his left hand, holding his glass a bit too tightly, “Still single, I see?”

He sighed. “What do you want?”

She toyed with her drop earring, “Francisco was very pleased with how the merger went. And I just wanted to congratulate you on the success of it.”

He racked his brain, who the hell is Francisco? She noticed his confusion, “Francisco is my new husband, Jorah. You know who he is, you just mentioned him.”

Her smile was positively spiteful as she watched him make the connection: that was the man she was sleeping with in Spain, “I see.”

It was then that he put two and two together and realized that her Francisco was also the COO of the company they had just completed the deal with, the man whose face he couldn’t seem to place. What a fucking small world it really is, he decided.

“So why are you talking to me? Shouldn’t you be with him?”

“Oh, these functions are so boring, I like to mingle. You know that.”

“Unfortunately, I remember it well.”

Right about now, he wished he didn’t limit himself to only one drink. He really needed a second one, and quite possibly, a third.

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Daenerys weaved through the crowd toward the bar. She needed a refill of her soda if she was going to make it through a second pass of the room. As she got closer, she noticed a tall leggy blond woman in a tight cocktail dress talking to Jorah. I didn’t remember seeing her before, she reflected,
she’s a little hard to miss. She tapped the shoulder of the woman next to her, “Hey Mel, do you know who that is?”

She nearly choked on her drink as she noticed who Daenerys was pointing at, “Oh my god.”

“What?”

“You really don’t know who that is?” Daenerys shook her head. “Now that I think about it, she was around years before you came to work for the company.” Mel paused for dramatic effect before she said slowly, “That’s Jorah’s ex-wife, Lynn.”

Now she could finally put a face to the story Jorah had told her. And based on what he had said, she could see how this woman could have been all those things he described. She was a beautiful woman, Daenerys had to give her that, but she also looked narcissistic and stuck-up.

The look on Jorah’s face begged for a rescue and she decided she would do it as no one else was going to. She closed the distance between them and stopped next to him, “Jorah, Robert’s looking for you.”

She hoped he understood what she was trying to do, but he just appeared flustered. His pupils were wide and he looked as if he was an animal caught in the hypnotic wavering of a car’s headlights, incapable of deciding whether he should run or stay as his gaze shot back and forth between the two women. He seemed to recover well enough as Lynn asked him, “Who’s this beautiful young woman, Jorah?”

“This is Daenerys, a coworker. She was part of the team that worked the deal with Francisco’s company.” He turned to her, “Daenerys, this is Lynn.”

Her handshake was like a dead fish as she simpered, “Charmed. She paused, her finger tapping against her chin, “I could have sworn you would have been his secretary though, you seem more suited for that.”

Her voice dripped with malice, it was clear she felt threatened by Daenerys’ youth. She waited for Jorah to say something, anything, but the words never came. The awkward silence cut at her heart and that wounded her almost as much as his tone that had been utterly flat and downright cold as he introduced her. She tried to contain her feelings, but the way Lynn looked between her and Jorah, a knowing smile spreading across her face; she knew she had failed miserably. The woman said nothing; however, she held onto her discovered information like a precious jewel, most likely to be used against him later at the most inopportune time.

Daenerys pretended to notice someone across the room and she excused herself as gracefully as she could, her eyes starting to sting, the room blurring as the tears washed over her vision and collected in the corners. She made a beeline for the door and went straight to the bathroom, barely making it into a stall before the hot tears slid down her cheeks. She stifled a sob as best she could, as she wasn’t alone in the bathroom. He had treated her like she was nobody, totally disregarding their romantic relationship. Most men usually wanted to make their ex jealous by showing off their new girlfriend, but he had acted so coldly to her, as if he didn’t want her around. She unrolled some toilet paper and pressed it to her eyes, trying not to further ruin her eye makeup. She took a deep breath, waiting for the urge to cry again to pass. The door to the bathroom closed and she finally found herself alone, but the absence of noise was oppressive to her now. She exited the stall and stared at her reflection, touching up her eyes and blowing her nose. *That’ll have to do,* she thought, before she walked back out into the party.
Lynn finally decided to leave Jorah alone and relief flooded his body as she walked away. The tension of the situation soured his stomach and he felt mildly ill. A headache was blooming behind his eyes and all he wanted to do was go home. Every feeling he had felt at the end of the marriage had taken up residence in his chest as he had stood there with her and he discerned his life was so much better now without her in it. Speaking of his better life, he couldn’t find Daenerys after her unfortunate meeting with Lynn. There had been something in her eyes when she had excused herself, a combination of emotions that he found hard to decipher. He knew for a fact that he needed to talk to her though.

Jorah finally found Daenerys as the party was starting to wind down, standing alone on the patio overlooking the street below, her hands rubbing over her bare arms. She must be freezing; he thought as he took off his jacket and made to drape it over her shoulders. She snapped back to reality as the fabric touched her, “Are you sure you want to do that?”

She turned to him and her gaze was the same as her voice, cold and hard. They stared at one another and Jorah was unsure how to proceed, “What’s wrong, Sweetheart?”

He knew instantly he had asked the wrong question as the ice in her eyes was consumed by fire and she said mockingly, “What’s wrong?” She shook her head, her laugh was short and hard, “You have no idea, do you?”

He had seen her upset before, but this was on another level entirely. He slipped his hands in his pockets, conceding, “I know this is about Lynn.”

“Yeah,” She walked toward the door, but paused as she noticed he wasn’t behind her, “Are you coming?”

He followed after her as she walked quickly through the nearly empty room to the lobby, down the short flight of stairs, and out the front entrance. They waited, side by side, for the valet to bring his car, holding the door open for her when it finally arrived so she could get in. Once he was in the driver’s seat and they had gotten onto the road toward home, only then did he steal a glance at her. She stared straight ahead, her arms crossed. In the light coming from the dashboard, he noticed the wetness on her cheek. He wanted to say something, but her posture told him talking right now was not a good idea and so they spent the rest of the trip in total silence. He realized that the way he had introduced her had completely avoided their romantic connection. He had done that on purpose, but now he regretted it.

He parked the car and she got out, slamming the door behind her. His headache had gotten worse and he was not looking forward to the fight that was just waiting to happen. He and Daenerys argued so little, and when they did, it never lasted long and was usually about something easily fixed. This, he feared, would not be resolved quickly. He exited the car and followed her to the elevator.

They rode to his floor and she walked briskly to his front door, waiting for him to open it. Once inside, the door closed, she tossed his jacket over the couch and rounded on him. “So, Jorah, I’m your “coworker” now? A “team member”?”

She made exaggerated air quotes with her fingers as she talked before her hands dropped to her hips. She didn’t wait for him to respond before threw up her hands and walked away from him into the bedroom.

He followed after her, “Daenerys, stop, please. Talk to me.” He exhaled, his shoulders sagging. He knew he probably shouldn’t have said that earlier, “I didn’t mean it that way. I—“

“You what, Jorah? You didn’t want your ex-wife to know you found someone new. Or were you
hiding me for some other reason?”

Her little dig got his attention and he was starting to lose his patience, “That’s not fair, Daenerys.”

“Fair?” her voice rose in volume as she approached him, “You want to talk about fair? Ok, let’s do that. She attacks me right in front of you and you clam up. No pithy comeback, no defense for your girlfriend who you say you love, yet you let your ex talk to me however she wants.”

He lost it, “You have no idea what she’s like. Lynn is a selfish, manipulative bitch who will tear you down with one sentence and take perverse pleasure in it all the while. If I had introduced you as my girlfriend, she would have had a field day with you and caused such a scene you would not have believed was possible. If you think what she said to you was awful, and it was, it would have been ten times worse had she known what you meant to me.”

She crossed her arms, “Oh, so that makes it ok somehow?”

He ran his hand through his hair, his voice louder, “No, it’s not okay. But by not telling her who you really were, I saved you from the worst of it.”

She jabbed her finger in his chest, “I don’t need to be saved all the time, Jorah! I’m not a child that needs protecting. In case you hadn’t noticed, I can handle things myself. And I could have handled her too.”

She turned and his tone grew exasperated as he grabbed her wrist before she could leave, “I never said you were a child.”

She wheeled around and raised her right hand, as if to slap him, but he caught it and challenged her, “Go ahead, slap me. If you think it will make you feel better, do it.”

It dawned on him then what he was doing and he let go of her hands as if he had been burned. She stood there, utterly frozen. Daenerys blinked at him a few times, the anger leaving her eyes as she realized what she had almost done. Her breathing was short and shallow, her gaze darting over the features of his face. She saw the fire of his anger was nearly gone, his look shifting to one of remorse. His chest was heaving with the residual adrenaline of their fight and her hands dropped to her sides, her eyes beginning to sting, “Oh my god, I-”

She turned and ran toward the bathroom, Jorah following quickly after, only to arrive as the door slammed in his face. He knocked once, “Daenerys, please open the door. Let’s talk about this.”

No response came and he leaned against the wall before he slid down it to sit on the floor. He waited, hoping she would eventually leave so they could work things out. He glanced at his watch and fifteen minutes had passed with no sounds coming from the other side. He rubbed his fingers over his forehead; the headache was now like an icepick lodged firmly in his brain. Getting up slowly, he sighed and walked to the kitchen to take some aspirin. His stomach felt sick and it wasn’t just from the physical pain, it was the emotional hurt that made him ill too. He had never intended for his words to upset her, but he realized they had anyway. *I just wanted to protect her from Lynn’s vindictiveness, he thought, and look what I did in the process.* Taking a seat on the couch, he loosened his tie and undid the first two buttons of his shirt. He wasn’t sure how long he sat there in the silence, but it felt like hours. Eventually, Jorah toed off his shoes and lay back on the couch, trying to get comfortable as he assumed he would be spending the night on it. They had never fought like this before; the intense fire he had seen in her eyes was disconcerting. She felt every emotion more strongly than anyone he had ever met, and while in most cases, he loved that about her, this time it gave him pause. There was no doubt in his mind that he still loved her deeply in spite of her behavior, it simply made him wonder if he hadn’t caught her arm, would she have actually hit him.
Half of him knew he probably deserved it, the other was uncertain. As much as her actions concerned him, he was more disturbed by how he had grabbed her wrist as she had tried to walk away from him. He couldn’t believe he had laid a hand on her like that, he had sworn that no one would ever hurt her again yet he was the one to break his own promise.

At that moment he heard the soft padding of feet and then silence. He lifted his head and saw her standing there, worrying the cuff of his sweatshirt between her fingers, “Jorah…”

Her voice broke as she said his name quietly and he rose quickly from the couch to go to her. He noticed her shoulders jerk as two fat drops fell from her eyes. She swiped at her face with the back of her hand, the fabric pulled down over it. He stopped within arms distance of her when she met his eyes with her own red, puffy ones, “I’m so sorry.”

Her tortured voice, so soft and repentant, chased away any anger he may have had left inside him. She hung her head and all he wanted to do now was comfort her. He closed the gap between them, taking her face in his hands and drawing her eyes up to look at him, “No, Daenerys, I should be the one to apologize. This whole mess started because of me. I should have said something to her for the horrible comment she made about you. But most importantly,” those gentle blue eyes of his gazed back at her, “I should have told her exactly who you were, consequences be damned.”

His thumb caught the tear before it slipped further down her face, “I should have handled that situation far better than I did. I didn’t expect to ever see her again and her appearance there caught me off-guard and made me upset. But that is no excuse. I don’t want you to think that I was trying to keep you from her, I just-,” his shoulders sagged as he exhaled loudly, “I just wanted to protect you.”

Daenerys worried her bottom lip. That was one of the things she loved about him, the fact that he wanted to shield her from harm. But, in this case, he had inadvertently hurt her in the process.

“‘I know,’” she said softly. Her eyebrows drew together, “But, Jorah, I almost slapped you.” Her voice and look were one of disgust as she looked away, “I’m no better than my brother.”

With the light pressure of his fingers, he turned her face to meet his eyes, “Daenerys, you are nothing like your brother. I dare say I probably deserved to be slapped.”

“No you didn’t,” her tone and gaze, despite her tears, were adamant.

Jorah gently took hold of her left hand, drawing the sleeve up and turning her arm over, checking the skin. “It’s ok; you didn’t grab me that hard.”

He met her eyes, “It is definitely not ok. I shouldn’t have grabbed you like that.”

She gave him a sad half smile as she sniffled, “There’s a lot of things that shouldn’t have happened tonight. By both of us.”

“I whole-heartedly agree.”

“Jorah, I’m sor-”

“I know, love,” he interrupted her, “But I haven’t said it yet.”

“Daenerys, I am so sorry.” He said it as much with his words as he did with the way he looked at her.

She buried her face in his chest and wrapped her arms around him, his hold on her equally as tight.
She sighed, her words slightly muffled, “That was the worst fight we’ve ever had.”
“If that is the worst fight we ever have, I’ll consider myself blessed.”
She sensed there was something behind his words and she gazed up at him expectantly,
“Lynn was something else the last few months we were married,” She raised her eyebrows, “At least
you didn’t throw something heavy at me. We fought like, what’s the phrase, cats and dogs? The
screaming at one another was a nice touch too.”
“That sounds awful.”
He rolled his eyes, “It was, I’m just glad it’s in the past. My life is infinitely better now.”
“Mine too.”
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Sometime in the night, as they lay awake in bed; she turned to him, her arm and leg curling over his
body like a vine. Their eyes met in the darkness, and though he could not make out the fine details of
her gaze, he felt the emotion of it in his soul. He stroked his hand over her face again and again and
he heard her quiet exhalation of his name. Her hand slid around his side to join the other against his
chest, her eyes watching as she traced a finger over where his heart beat. He drew a shuddering
breath and found her looking at him again, the mood shifting between them. She gripped at his shirt
and whispered only one word, “Please.”
Everything happened at hyper speed, clothes tossed carelessly to the side before she pulled his body
over her, their legs tangling as much together as with the sheets. She kicked at them, and once she
was finally free, time slowed like spreading molasses, his hand coming between them to find her
more than ready for him. Her legs wrapped high on his body, her heels digging into his lower back
as he angled his hips and slipped with agonizing slowness into her, their gaze locked. A shared gasp
filled the silence and everything stopped, his body cradled in her warm welcoming embrace. He
couldn’t move, the intensity of the emotion he felt and saw reflected back at him rendered Jorah
immobile. Her hands cradled his face, her eyes searching his as she pulled his lips to hers for a kiss
full of forgiveness and love. Her palms slid over the planes of his back, coming to rest on his leanly
muscled backside. He needed little urging, he instinctively knew what she yearned for and he gave it
to her willingly. With the deliberate rhythm of his body, every gentle caress, every tender word, he
wove a tapestry of his penitence, to prove to her just how much she meant to him. Her movements
were an echo of his sentiment and tears slipped from her eyes unbidden, the strength of their feelings
stealing her breath as much as their actions did. She wondered vaguely how long they had been
moving like this, a seamless union she didn’t dare try to comprehend. His mouth paid tribute to her
lips and neck, bestowing whisper-soft kisses to her heated skin. Her whole being clung to his as the
sensations rose to a fever pitch, only then did he slip his hand between them, his fingers bringing her
along with him into the blissful oblivion that awaited them. He felt and heard her cross over first
when she whispered his name, every part of her trembling as she arched into him. She met his gaze,
reaching out with wide teary eyes to bring him across the finish line not a moment later; holding
himself within her, every rapid breath he exhaled bore her name. Her legs fell from his body, her
muscles refusing to respond to her orders. He held her to him with shaky arms and collapsed to his
side, his fingers brushing her hair from her face. His eyes had finally fully adjusted to what little light
there was and their vital signs returned to normal. He knew what she was feeling, his own eyes
glassy with unshed tears. He pressed his forehead to hers, their bodies still intimately connected. He
dreaded the moment he would slip from her and his hand pressed against her lower back, desperate
to stave off the inevitable. His emotions overflowed, sliding wetly down his cheek and under her
fingers. She kissed them away, the salt a final bitter reminder of the hurt she had inflicted. They


intoned their love with soft words and a snug embrace. The rift between them mended, the cycle of hurt and making up was finally complete and they slept in the warm peace of contentment.
Like A Bad Penny

Chapter Summary

Jorah comes face-to-face with an unsavory character from Daenerys' past.

Chapter Notes

This was supposed to be up 3 days ago, but my immune system decided to do battle with a head cold. It has been vanquished (mostly). Now on with the story!

Check the tags! There are new ones.

I totally made up the festival they go to. If it really exists, I had no idea (I researched online too).

A word of warning...there are mentions of verbal and emotional abuse in this chapter. Nothing graphic, but I want to give a heads-up in case this is something that you have unfortunately experienced. I don't want to make my readers uncomfortable or bring up any bad memories. If I do, I apologize.

Also, please see the notes at the end.

A cold gust of wind whipped Daenerys’ hair into her face, “Isn’t this weather just lovely?”

The deadpan comment made Jorah chuckle almost as much as her futile attempt to keep her tresses in check, “It wasn’t like this earlier,” he said to himself, his gaze focused skyward while he pulled his coat tighter around his neck, “I think it’s going to snow.”

“Snow? Really,” her mood brightening considerably.

He met her eyes with a smile, “I see this prospect pleases you.”

“Of course it does, that means it’s truly Christmas time.”

The happy light he saw in her made his smile widen. Simple things brought her such joy and Jorah thanked his lucky stars for the infectious happiness it spawned in him. His life before had been nothing but the dreary drudge of work. Her arrival brought balance to his existence and an almost child-like exuberance to his daily outlook, a wondrous reason to get up every morning.

Another gust of wind drew a shiver from her body, the ice in her glass tinkling, and she drew closer to his warmth, “Let’s get back inside before you turn into a gorgeous Popsicle.”

Looking up at him, she rose on tip toe and gave him a quick peck on the cheek, “Yes, let’s do that.”
The happy couple didn’t notice the man standing in the shadows, the orange glow of his cigarette tumbling through the air as he flicked it to the ground and followed after.

The ballroom Jorah booked for the company Christmas party was packed, employees and their plus-one’s enjoying the food and open bar. It was still two weeks until the holiday, but that didn’t seem to faze anyone, festive dresses in reds and greens and men’s ties in silver and gold gave the room a cheerful ambiance. The dance floor was crowded too, despite the fact that most of these people couldn’t dance to save their lives. But Daenerys and Jorah were only too eager to show them what a slow dance was really supposed to look like, excited murmuring and shocked looks greeting them when they left the floor.

“I don’t think they expected you to be that smooth,” she teased, nudging him gently with her shoulder.

He laughed. “I guess that means my ‘Titan of Mergers’ title is now in question.”

Before they could return to their table, she excused herself, telling him she’d be right back. So he sat and waited, sipping his drink and taking in the festivities.

The lobby outside the ballroom was desolate and the short hallway leading to the toilet was equally empty. Daenerys didn’t notice the man following her out of the party, nor did she see him wait near the fake potted plant. Once she was done with her business, she exited the ladies room.

“Well hello, Dany.”

She froze mid-step. Only two people in her life had ever called her that and one of them was dead. Schooling her features, she pivoted on her heel, “Damien.”

“Fancy seeing you after all this time. You look,” he paused to let his stare sweep over her body, “good.”

He was exactly like she remembered him: close-set brown eyes, shoulder-length hair of the same shade swept back, and a smile so wide it reminded her of a shark. It was that feature alone that made her legs feel numb and her skin crawl. Her composure shocked her despite the memories currently flooding her entire being with emotions and sensations, none of them were pleasant. In fact, they made her sick to her stomach, the contents churning and roiling in protest. Her mind screamed at her to bid a hasty retreat, but her feet were rooted on the spot.

“What are you doing here,” she asked impatiently.

Easing his hand from his pocket, he threaded his fingers through his hair and smiled wolfishly, “That should be quite obvious. I’m here with my date, Tess, from human resources. I’m sure you know her.”

I do and god help her, she thought. “No, I mean, what are you doing here, with me?”

“Well, I saw you on the patio with that bloke and I wanted to say hello,” he stepped closer to her, reaching out to touch her face. She flinched unconsciously and cursed to herself at her failure to keep her reactions impassive, which brought a smug quirk to Damien’s thin lips, “I see that hasn’t changed.”

His expression froze the core of her and Daenerys felt vulnerable now, whatever effort she had left in her to mask her emotions was waning fast.

“Anyway, Dany, who is he anyway? A bit too old for you, I think. Can he even keep up
with you? Then again, a sugar daddy footing your bill through life might be just what you need.”

“Leave Jorah out of this,” she said with a vehemence that surprised him.

“Whoa, defensive of him aren’t we? My my, you have changed. I see this Jorah has put a bit of courage in my girl.”

“I’m not your girl, Damien. Not anymore,” her voice was beginning to waver the longer she spent in his presence and she needed to get away now before she went to pieces, “I have to go.”

Like a striking snake, his hand darted out and gripped her hard around her upper arm, the fingers tightening, “I didn’t say you could go,” he leaned in close, the miasma of his cologne and cigarette smoke nauseating her further, his whisper as loud as a thunder crack, “Apparently, that lesson never stuck.”

“Take your hand off her.”

Jorah’s usually calm voice boomed in the empty lobby and he covered the distance with a purposeful stride, his eyes locked on his target. When Damien didn’t relax his hold, he repeated himself, “I will not say it again. Let her go NOW.”

Each word held such gravity that Damien decided it was probably in his best interest to do what Jorah said. The moment his hand loosened, Daenerys wrenched her arm away, but resisted the urge to run. The hand-shaped impression on her delicate pale skin was fading from deep red to pale pink right before Jorah’s eyes, but it did little to dampen the fierce instinct in him to protect her. It only succeeded in making it grow stronger; the mere thought of a man touching her that way a powerful fuel that brought a red haze to his vision.

“Ah, the famous Jorah rides to your rescue, Dany,” Damien turned his attention to him now, “Nice to meet you, old chap. It would appear we have something in common.”

“You and I have nothing in common,” he responded flatly.

“Oh, but we do. We’ve both had her.”

“Careful now,” Jorah growled, his right hand clenching at his side.

There was something subtly cruel in Damien’s eyes, his broad leer reminding Jorah of a great white shark, menacing and predatory. He had been conspicuously absent from Daenerys’ description of her dating history, a fact that unsettled him. She was not a woman to keep secrets, so there must have been a very good reason for why she had never mentioned him.

“I think I hit a sore nerve there,” Damien stepped back, his hands palm out in front of him in mock apology, “I’ll admit even I had a hard time keeping up with her, so I shouldn’t be surprised that you can’t. Then again,” his eyes sweeping over Jorah’s classy tan sport coat, “Maybe it’s the money she’s after this time.”

“Are you always this uncouth or is it that you’re compensating for your lack of witty repartee? Or perhaps it’s something else?”

“Good one. A man of refined language. Interesting,”’ his hands slipping into his pockets, “Dany has certainly changed. She was younger then, so maybe she’s realized that if she’s going to be on her knees, at least she should get something for it in return.”

Fast as an eye blink, Jorah lunged for Damien, grabbing a fistful of his shirt and slamming
him against the wall, the generic framed painting beside him rattling in response. Reaching back with his right fist, he was poised to assert himself on the younger man’s face, but Daenerys wrapped her hands around his bicep in an effort to stop him, her raised voice pleading, “No, Jorah, don’t. He’s not worth it.”

The men were a picture of opposites: Jorah with his teeth bared in a fierce snarl, a wild gravely sound issuing from deep in his chest, his eyes smoldering with rage. Damien, terror creeping its way across his wide stare, his mouth open in surprise, his perfect hair askew.

“Consider yourself lucky,” Jorah gritted his teeth and leaned so close their noses almost touched, his voice utterly composed, “If Daenerys had not stopped me, I would have broken your fucking jaw. Do we understand one another?”

For the first time, she saw Damien’s bottom lip tremble in fear. Now you know what it feels like, she thought. The men were about the same height, but Jorah had the slight edge in physique, his shoulders broader. Jorah let him go with a hard parting shove, Damien readjusting his clothing but unable to hold Jorah’s undaunted glare. Coupled with his rigid stance, they issued a powerful challenge that Damien couldn’t accept. However, once Jorah turned, he couldn’t resist a parting jab, “How pathetic, a little woman stopping you from punching me.”

For all the times he had called her unsavory things, had grabbed her arm tight, and had made her feel small, Daenerys had enough and she couldn’t stop herself. She stepped to him, wailing back with her right foot and connecting hard with his crotch. Damien crumbled like a house of cards, his hands wedged between his legs, coughing and cursing under his breath.

“No, Damien, you’re pathetic. You’re not even half the man Jorah is and you never will be,” she spat. Pivoting on her heel, she stalked away, Jorah by her side. Over her shoulder, she tossed one final thought, “You might wanna get some ice for that.”

Jorah was bursting with pride, unable to contain the smile that pulled at his lips. Daenerys, on the other hand, was still fuming, her hard expression was difficult for him to discern. She looked angry, but there was also a hint of long-awaited satisfaction lurking there. They waited in silence for the valet to bring his car. Once it arrived, Jorah opened the door for her and closed it after. He got in and steered the car onto the road toward home.

After a block, Daenerys finally said something, but it came in the form of high exasperated growl. At the stoplight, he glanced at her, “Are you all right, love?”

She met his eyes, deep concern colored them. His hand reached across the center console as was his usual way and she entwined her fingers with his readily. She let out a soft sigh, “I am now. You have no idea how long I’ve wanted to do that.”

Jorah chuckled softly, “I can just imagine,” his brow wrinkled, “Daenerys, w-”

“Why didn’t I tell you about him,” she finished his thought because she saw the question in his eyes before he could even give it a voice.

He said nothing with his words, but encouraged her with his wondering look. She worried her bottom lip then said, “Shame, embarrassment. And because I didn’t want to seem weak.”

That last quietly added sentence had his face snapping to hers, his eyebrows raised, “Weak? How could you ever think that you were weak or that I would think that of you?”

“Because I stayed with him for longer than I should have. Because I let him say and do
“What did he do to you,” Jorah asked quickly, his voice tinged with protectiveness, “Did that bastard hurt you? Because if he did, I’ll turn around right now and go back there to-”

She let out a short soft laugh, “My fierce bear,” her face grew solemn again, “No, he never actually hit me. He would just grab my arm like you saw him do and say things to me to make me feel worthless.”

“Oh, just that,” he replied sardonically, “Daenerys, just because he never actually struck you doesn’t mean that what he did wasn’t abuse. He may not have left any physical scars, but the ones he left on the inside still leave a lasting mark.”

She thought about his words, she knew he was right. Verbal and emotional abuse are horrible things too, crippling and devastating in their own cruel way. She thought back to how long it had taken her to regain her sense of self-worth, to reclaim the feeling that she was worthy of love and respect. And then she had met Jorah, the final small piece she hadn’t realized that she needed. She told herself that she wasn’t ready to be in any sort of relationship again, but she had felt respected and appreciated by him in ways that no man had ever shown her. Valued for her quick mind and gentle heart before her body and her sexuality. That was a powerful feeling and she looked at him now, his attention focused on the road ahead. He saw her for more than what she could give him physically, he saw her as an equal. Tears stung her eyes and she looked away, trying to sniffle quietly.

She knew she had failed when at the next stoplight, Jorah reached into his pocket, which wasn’t an easy task given that he was seated and his seatbelt was in the way. He handed her a tissue with a gentle smile, leaning over a bit to brush the backs of his fingers over her cheek. Her eyelids shut slowly at the sweet simple gesture before a short honk behind them broke their quiet moment. He drove on while she dabbed at the wetness pooling in the corners of her eyes. Their hands joined again for the last few moments of their trip and only parted when he parked and shut off the car. She turned in her seat toward him, “Do you know what I want to do right now?”

The corners of his eyes crinkled. “I want that too, love.”

Once inside, she undressed and put on a pair of Jorah’s sweatpants and one of his long-sleeve t-shirts. He changed too before joining her under the covers and drawing her to him.

They lay in comfortable silence for some time, her ear pressed against his chest. Then, resting her chin on his pectoral, she said, “I’m sorry I never told you about him.”

“Don’t be,” his fingers tucking her hair behind her ear, “I can’t imagine you wanting to open old wounds by talking about it.”

“Still, I shouldn’t have left that part out. I don’t want there to be any secrets between us.”

He respected that and his eyes met hers in expectation, so she began, “My brother introduced us. Well, I can’t even really call it an introduction, it was more like ‘here’s my younger sister, she’s hot, date her’. Sure, Damien was charming at first, although now that I look back on it, he was... pushy with his affection, like he was trying to hide something or convincing me to be with him. Anyway, I was so used to being controlled and mistreated by Viserys that I didn’t notice the change in Damien. It was slow, and I know that’s a cliché, but I only realized it too late. I thought it was what I deserved, after everything my brother had done, I was habituated. When he died, it was like a switch flipped in me, I had enough. I broke up with him because I recognized I deserved better than him. He didn’t take no for an answer for a while, showing up at the house I had shared with my
brother and at work. So I up and moved. I didn’t see him again until tonight,” she looked away, “I wish I had never met him.”

“I wish you hadn’t either, Daenerys. But you’re stronger for it now. You know your worth and that might have been an unintended parting gift from him. You deserve all of the happiness and success you’ve earned.”

“What about you?

He chuckled. “It would be selfish of me to say you deserved me too. Let’s just say I’m a bonus to your hard work and perseverance.”

“All right, I can’t argue with that,” she smiled, laying her head on his chest again. There was a brief pause before she asked, “How did you know this is what I wanted to do?”

“I know you, love. Anytime you’re stressed or tense, I’ve figured out that holding you soothes you and makes you feel better.”

“I love that you know me like that,” she snuggled closer, “You’re right, the sound of your heart and the feel of your warm strength are exactly what I need.”

“Don’t forget, I’m a serial cuddler. And you’re the perfect partner for it,” his hand stroked her hair, and after a time, she felt herself getting sleepy. Then his words dawned on her, reminding her of a memory from so many months ago.

“Jorah,” she murmured.

He hhm’d in response and she continued, “I don’t think I ever told you, but the first time you held me like this, I had always thought all of the corny ideas about being a perfect fit with someone else were lies,” she lifted her head again and his eyes met hers, “I was wrong. We’re like a puzzle, you and I, perfect interlocking pieces.”

Jorah’s eyes stung, and when he spoke, his words were thick, “You’re so right, love. You are my missing piece,” he paused, his brow tight with contemplation, “Does it make me less of a man to say that there are times when just holding you is all I want to do?”

“No, it makes you more of one,” she whispered, leaning up to kiss his lips softly.

She could feel the rumbling of his chest under her hand more than she could hear his amusement as she settled against him. She thought he had fallen asleep, his breathing even and steady, but then he spoke, “How about we go to that ‘Frolic in the Snow’ thing tomorrow?”

That seemed to get her attention and she looked at him enthusiastically, “Really? I’ve always wanted to go.

“No, my brother always said we didn’t have money for ‘wasteful’ things like that,” she scoffed, “But we sure had money for his fake gold watches and gaudy silk shirts.”

“Playing in the snow is not wasteful. What a fool, he should have been spending his money on you.”

She smiled. “It’s not about the money, Jorah. Some of the sweetest things you’ve done for me have been free.”
“Such as?”

“Rubbing my feet after a hard day, cooking me one of your fabulous dinners, letting me binge-watch my shows,” she squeezed him gently, “Cuddling me like this.”

Jorah smiled at the happy affection in her eyes, “You notice that all of those things you mentioned involve me just being with you, right? I get something from them too, you know. But that’s what love is, just being.”

He leaned up and kissed her, only to start chuckling against her lips. She looked at him before he said, “Have you ever played football? You’ve got a spectacular instep kick.”

She laughed. “That was just a lot of pent-up anger and frustration. I wasn’t trying to make it look good; I was going for maximum pain infliction.”

“Well, I dare say you succeeded. He’ll certainly be hurting tomorrow.”

Her mirth drifted off, “Jorah, would you really have broken his jaw if I hadn’t stopped you?”

He grew serious and heaved a heavy sigh, “No, but I undoubtedly would have either broken his nose or split his lip. I wanted to terrify him, to make him think twice about opening his mouth again.”

“It sorta worked.”

“That little weasel hid behind his cowardice and only said something once I had let him go and turned away,” then Jorah muttered, “Typical abuser.”

“He’s not worth you possibly getting arrested for assault,” she admonished gently.

“I don’t care about that, Daenerys. No man should ever touch a woman like that, let alone talk to or about her in that disgusting manner.”

“Then he must have been raised differently than you.”

“Yes,” Jorah huffed, “In the wild, with the other beasts.”

His analogy made her smile, “Let’s not compare him to the animals. I love them.”

“And here I thought you only loved reptiles.”

“I do love them,” she said, “But I love other ones too. In particular, one big, protective yet cuddly bear comes to mind. He’s sweet with me though.”

“That’s because he loves you.”

And his kiss told her exactly how much he did.

***

*Frolic in the Snow* was a festival that happened every year for the last three weeks of December. The large greenspace had been transformed into a snowy winter wonderland, and for a Sunday night, it was not nearly as crowded as they thought it would be. After paying the admission fee, they decided to take a walk along the arbor-covered pathway that ringed the park first, the snow crunching under their feet. Daenerys learned from the previous night to dress more appropriately, however, it was
easier to do so seeing as they weren’t going to a party. She wore a thick gray jacket with a faux fur collar, wisps of her silver hair peeking out of the side of the drawn hood. Dark jeans and black boots completed the ensemble and Jorah had to stop himself from staring too long at her. She was gorgeous tonight, but then again, she always was. Her eyes were bright with happiness and he wondered vaguely if her cheeks were sore from all of the smiling she was doing. Surrounded by the snow, their breath misting the air, it reminded him of Christmases he had spent in Northern Scotland as a teenager. The temperature during those holidays had dipped low and blanketed the ground in a thin layer of fluffy white.

“I would hazard a guess that you’re enjoying yourself.”

“And you’d be right,” she beamed at him, her gloved hand clasped in his.

The cold didn’t seem to affect Jorah, save for his cheeks, which were as rosy as hers from the chilly intermittent breeze. He looked so handsome in his dark pea coat, the collar of his thick green cable knit sweater peeking out at the top. They stopped to purchase some hot chocolate before continuing on, the sound of children playing filtered through the latticed barrier. The fairy lights that twinkled overhead cast a romantic glow and she caught his occasional side-eye glance at her. Daenerys knew what he was thinking and she was pondering the same thing. A kiss would have been perfect, but the pathway was crowded with other couples out for a stroll.

The end of the lighted corridor opened up into a large flat expanse, completely unoccupied. Having finished their beverages, they threw the cups in the trash. Eager to get started, Daenerys jogged over to a large pile of snow and began to build a snowman, packing it tight on the bottom into a large nearly round ball. Jorah helped her form the second, smaller sphere before making the third and final one for the top. He watched her gather two small handfuls of snow and put them on the top of the snowman’s head, a smile breaking across his face when he realized just what she was doing, her hands forming two rounded ears.

“Ta-da,” she stepped back, surveying their creation with her arms extended in front of her, “It’s a snowbear.”

He shook his head with a laugh, “A distant cousin from the Arctic.”

She giggled and pulled out her phone, gesturing for him to stand next to it. She caught the attention of a lone passerby, handing the woman her phone and standing opposite Jorah so she could take their picture. Daenerys smiled at the phone’s screen when she got it back, then turned it so he could see too.

“Our first Christmas photo,” her eyes misting over, “We look great together.”

“We always do. That’s one for the photo album.”

Pocketing her phone, Daenerys bent over and gathered a large handful of snow, forming it into a tight ball. He saw mischief dancing in her eyes a second before she took a few quick steps back and tossed it at him, hitting him square in the chest.

“You won’t win this snowball fight, Daenerys,” his eyes narrowing, but a hint of smile tugged at his lips.

They both bent and formed their snowballs, but she finished first and darted behind their snowbear for cover. She ducked her head around the left side to see where he was, but he was gone. The crunch of snow to her right brought her head in that direction, but it was too late, the round shape breaking apart low on her hip. She retaliated, but Jorah was quick, dipping out of the way with
ease. He gathered more snow than before this time, forming two large globs of white. She took off around a low snowbank, crouching behind it to form two of her own projectiles. One of his struck her back softly, Jorah wasn’t throwing very hard at all, in fact, he was going easy on her. She hopped over the bank just in time to miss his second throw before turning and firing back with one of her own. It grazed his shoulder, but she didn’t waste any time in tossing her second, this one hitting his stomach. White flakes clung to fabric of his coat and he brushed them away, “Good one, love.”

They continued in their battle a while longer, sometimes missing, other times both of them getting direct hits. It wasn’t until Jorah hid behind the trunk of a tree that she decided to get crafty. Taking slow steps, she tried to be as quiet as she could, watching where he hid all the while. When his head peeked out in the opposite direction from where she approached, she smiled to herself. Sneaking up behind him, she pulled the collar of his coat away from his neck and dumped snow down the opening.

Jorah let out a small shout of surprise, jumping a bit at the sudden cold, his hand sweeping under his neckline in a vain attempt to keep it from melting down his back. He turned and faced her now, “If that’s the way you want to play, so be it.”

His tone may have been playful, but Daenerys took off at a run anyway, knowing full well she couldn’t outpace him. She didn’t dare look back, the sound of his footsteps getting closer by the second. His arm was around her middle not a moment later, his other hand full of snow and snaking under the bottom of her coat to rub across her stomach. She squealed loudly, squirming in his hold, but unable to stop herself from laughing. He was too, a deep rumbling sound that she felt against her back.

“That’s not fair, Jorah,” she said breathlessly and he set her down.

“Fair,” he answered back with a chuckle, “How about you putting the snow down my jacket? Is that fair?”

“That’s called ‘gaining the advantage’,” she countered with one eyebrow arched and her arms crossed.

“Oh, so that’s what they’re calling it now. I must have missed that announcement.”

His gentle teasing didn’t distract her from fact that he had gotten closer to her while he had been talking. Her hood no longer covered her head and Jorah took it in his hands, pulling it back on to keep her warm, “I think we both won.”

“What makes you say that?”

He answered her question by drawing her into his arms, his fingers tucking some stray hairs back under her hood, “You succeeded in sneaking up on me.”

“And how did you win?”

“By getting to do this,” he said with a smile before he kissed her. The residual tingling from the melted snow on her skin disappeared, replaced by a spreading warmth that filled her from head to toe and made her forget all about the cold.

She broke the kiss with a soft sigh, “When you’re right, you’re right.”

“Let’s go home. We’ll make tea and cuddle on the couch.”

“I can’t argue with that.”
I know that many of you would have liked Jorah to slug that creep in the face. I did too. And I wrote it that way in the first draft. But then I realized something...Jorah is so often winning her battles for her and protecting her. What about Daenerys fighting back? Since she doesn't have dragons in this story and can't just 'Dracarys' the jerk herself, she did the next best thing. I wanted her to have the power here, the rewrite her own narrative and stand up for herself. To reclaim her power in a sense. I like strong female characters and I wanted her to have some of that, to not rely on Jorah to solve her problems all the time. I hope you all understand.

Second author's note: I know she had two previous relationships in the show. I didn't want to take one of those characters and make him Damien. However, there are aspects of each in this character I created. I did that on purpose. I have no strong hate for either Drogo or Daario (well, maybe Daario...). I just think Daenerys is better with Jorah...they are my OTP after all.

I'll step off my soap box now. Oh, by the way, the next several chapters will be Christmas at the Mormont house!
Tradition

Chapter Summary

Daenerys begins a Christmas tradition with Jorah's family. But old memories surface in strange ways.

Chapter Notes

First off, I want to apologize for my lack of response to comments. I'm all caught up now and I plan to stay on top of them in the future. Please know that I greatly appreciate the comments, kudos, and hits to this story. Thank you so much for your continued reading!

Secondly, these next several chapters will cover the day before Christmas Eve, Christmas Eve and Day, and the days after without any missing time unless it says otherwise (if that makes sense at all). Also they will all be fairly long, so heads-up for that.

In addition, there will be many scenes of sexy times. I missed writing these two that way. So get ready for lots of smut ahead!

“Jorah.”

“Yes?” he answered, peeking his head around the edge of the bathroom door.

“Can you come here for a second?”

He walked into the bedroom, carrying the last few items he needed for their extended weekend at his father’s estate. He dropped them into his overnight bag and came to stand in front of her, noticing a folded bright red garment in her hands.

“I want you to wear this for me.”

He arched an eyebrow at her and glanced at his watch, “Darling, we’re leaving in fifteen minutes.”

She cast him a look, “I don’t mean for that, Jorah.”

The more he considered the clothing and her mildly anxious expression, the more suspicious he got. He narrowed his eyes, “Wait a minute, is that one of those ugly Christmas sweaters?”

Her only answer was a soft nervous laugh.

He groaned. “Seriously, love?”
“It’s Christmas and I plan to embrace the spirit of the holiday to the fullest.”

“Well, there are plenty of other ways to do that.” He looked her over, “Besides, you aren’t wearing one.”

She grasped the zipper of her jacket and pulled, revealing a sweater in the same color as the one she held in her hand. He parted the sides and bent in close to see the design, “Are these bears dancing with Balmoral bonnets on?”

She giggled. “An astute observation, my clever bear.”

He straightened, a smile tugging at the corner of his mouth, “Flattery won’t get me to wear this, Daenerys.”

His tone was gentle despite his admonishment. She could see it in his eyes too, a look that told her if she pressed her luck just a bit more, he would give in.

“Oh come on, Jorah, it’s just one day out of the year.” She pouted, “Please, it’ll be fun.”

Between the puppy-dog eyes and the begging, he sighed and held out his hand. She squealed at his tacit agreement and gave it to him. He shook his head with a quiet chuckle, slipping his arms through the sleeves and pulling it on before he held them out in ta-da gesture.

She smoothed her hands over his chest, “You look absolutely adorable.”

“That’s precisely what every man hopes to be: adorable.”

She rose on tip-toe and pressed a kiss to his smirking lips, “Thank you.”

Despite his outward protestations, he didn’t really mind so much when he saw the way she looked at him, her eyes slightly shiny at the corners. His thumb was soft on her cheek, “You’re welcome, love.”

He wrapped his arms around her and she knew where this could lead if she let him have his way. “Oh, no,” she ducked from his grasp and busied herself with last-minute packing, “We need to get on the road.”

Sometimes he hated when she was right.

***

They pulled up the drive around late afternoon, bright white Christmas lights ringing the trees that bordered the entrance. He carried their bags to the front door and knocked. Jorah’s eyes went wide when the door opened and he saw Barton’s sweater. That’s impossible, he thought. He looked over at Daenerys and noticed her Cheshire cat-like grin. Just then his father joined the butler and he had to blink a few times because he was sure he was seeing things. They all had the same sweater he did; his gob-smacked expression brought a loud barking laugh from his father.

“Daenerys is quite the persuasive young lady. She called here two weeks ago, asking for our sizes. Obviously, I was confused, but she would give no further details other than to say it was a Christmas surprise and that she would be thrilled if we participated. How could I refuse?”

Jorah simply stared at her as she walked through the open door, his mind piecing together the random events over the last two weeks that at the time seemed strange but now made complete sense: her practically jumping out of her skin when he caught her looking through the contacts on his
phone, a hastily shut laptop when he got too close one evening, and the delivery of a package last Friday that sent her scurrying into their bedroom. Once inside, he reached for her hand and she turned, “Sweetheart, you’ve been planning this for two weeks?”

“Yeah,” she glanced away shrugging, “I thought it could be something I could share with your family. Sort of like a-”

“Tradition?” He finished her sentence for her and she met his eyes. There was shyness, but also warmth in those violet depths and he can’t help but wonder what her previous holidays must have been like. His gaze was as soft and warm as his smile, “Had I known what it meant to you, I never would have protested in the first place. The fact that you wanted to do something to incorporate my family into your yuletide celebration…” he shook his head slowly as he trailed off, only a sound akin to awe could leave his lips before he continued, “I don’t even know what to say, love.”

“You don’t have to say anything. Having this,” she gestured at the room and then at him, “with you and your father and Barton too,” she sighed and the next words are tremulous, “you have no idea what it means for me to be part of a family.”

He gave a short, soft laugh, “Oh, I think I do.”

Taking her into his arms, he pressed a kiss to her lips, his hand drifting up to cradle her face. A whistle and raucous applause burst the affectionate bubble surrounding them and they both turned to find two smiling faces watching their quiet moment. With an arched eyebrow, Jorah smirked at the men and laughed. Daenerys, on the other hand, was slightly shyer at being caught. Taking her hand in his, they follow his father’s lead into the sitting room. The previous moment was long forgotten, her eyes widening to take in the large Christmas tree in front of her, the evergreen scent surrounding her. She had never seen one so tall, it nearly touched the ceiling.

“Jorah,” she whispered, leaning toward him, “Why are there no lights on the tree?”

“I think there will be a lighting ceremony of sorts later.”

“Oh.”

Jeor turned, “It is not quite yet time for supper.” Rubbing his hands together, he asked, “Fancy a game of Trivial Pursuit?”

She and Jorah paired off against his father and Barton and soon the game was afoot. Jorah, with his vast knowledge of history, geography and literature was an excellent partner to her familiarity with entertainment and science. Sports proved to be a weak category, unless the question dealt with football or cricket, then Jorah was the master. They alternated answering the questions and when it came down to the final one about Shakespeare; Daenerys surprised herself by getting it correct. That meant their playing piece was complete, the six wedges like colored cheese. Now they only had to get to the center, the hexagonal hub of the board, and answer correctly the final question chosen by the other team. Seeing as she was the youngest of their pair, it was up to her to answer the question on her own.

The older men sat close together, murmuring over the questions, almost like they were conspiring to stump her. Finally decided, Jeor fixed his gaze on her and asked, “The Draco genus of lizards is named after the Latin word for "dragon". What dragonesque ability do Draco lizards have?”

He looked almost triumphant until a slow grin spread across Daenerys’ face. Jorah tried his
best to stifle his laugh, his fist in front of his mouth. “They can “fly” using wing-like membranes that
extend from their ribs.”

Jeor’s face fell and he tossed the card onto the board, crossing his arms and shaking his
head. He wasn’t seriously upset, however, and he broke into a wide smile, “Congratulations, my
dear. You’ve succeeded in helping my son defeat me for the first time at this game. Science always
was his worst category.”

“From now on, I’ll just be sure to have her with me when we play again,” Jorah said,
glancing at Daenerys to find her smiling at him.

Barton excused himself to check on the progress of supper and they went about putting the
game away. They chatted about business and life, and in his father’s words, Jorah could hear pride at
how successful he had made the company this year. It brought him happiness to know that he had
finally succeeded in gaining his father’s approval.

Barton reentered the room to tell them supper had been served and they all gathered in the
dining room. Jeor insisted Barton join them, saying it was only right he should do so.

The older man stood at the head of the table and addressed them, “In keeping with the
traditions started long ago by my late wife, I would like each of us take their turn and tell everyone
what they are thankful for most this holiday. Daenerys, if you’ll start.”

She stood, and for once, she didn’t know how to express what she was thinking. Her
mouth felt dry and she took a sip of water before she started, “I don’t remember my parents, but my
brother never celebrated holidays. This is the first time I will be spending it with a family.” Her eyes
started to sting, “It is the way Christmas should be. I’m sorry,” her voice broke a bit and she quickly
wiped her finger over the corner of her eye to stop the tear from falling. She cleared her throat, “To
spend it with the man I love,” she glanced at Jorah and found him smiling at her, “and with those
who care, it is the best gift I could have ever received.”

She sat down and immediately he reached out his hand to join with hers. She smiled back
at him and took a deep breath to settle herself.

“It is a pleasure to have you here, my dear.”

He indicated that his son should go next. Jorah rose, “This year has been one of second
chances for me. A second chance at love,” he met her eyes, “and a second chance to be a son. It is
more than I could ever deserve.”

Jeor stood next, “I am blessed to have my family back and for the opportunity to be the
father that my wife always knew I could be.”

When it was Barton’s turn, he simply said he was glad to still be employed given his age
and to be spending the holiday with the people he cared for.

Dinner was a convivial affair with delicious food and light, happy conversation.
Afterward, everyone retired to the sitting room for tea, and later, desert. Soon it came time for the tree
to be lit and everyone gathered around it. Daenerys had never had a Christmas tree growing up and
had only gotten one when she had her own place, although every year it was small and sparsely
decorated. This one was laden with glass baubles in several sizes and shades of green, white and
red. She marveled at how they had managed to fit it in the room, despite its vaulted ceiling. The
father counted down from ten, and when he got to zero, the tree was suddenly awash in twinkling
white lights, like tiny fireflies. Her breath caught and the tree grew blurry as she swallowed roughly
against the lump in her throat. It was a magnificent sight and her chest filled with warmth. She reached out for Jorah’s hand and she saw him look at her out of the corner of her eye. She met his gaze, white light like starbursts shone in his eyes. He smiled at her and she gave him one back, and with a squeeze of her hand, he mouthed, “I love you”, a sentiment she returned enthusiastically. With one last glance at the tree, she mused, this is the way I always dreamed Christmas would be.

***

Later, in their room, they dressed for bed and cuddled under the covers. Jorah rested his arm around her middle, her back pressed against his chest. He could never get over the feel of her dainty feet tangled with his under the warm blankets, a sensation he would never admit he loved for fear of seeming less than manly. He knew she wasn’t asleep, her fingers lightly tracing the slightly raised veins on the back of his hand from memory.

“Daenerys, your brother never celebrated any holiday?”

There was a long pause before she said softly, “No, he said they were just a way to get people to waste money. ‘Rampant commercialization’ was the way he referred to Christmas in particular.”

“I’m sorry, love.”

She turned, lying on her back so she could look at him, “Why are you apologizing?”

Her crinkled brow made him prop his head on his hand and shrug one shoulder, “I don’t know. All of those years with no Christmases or birthdays, it seems entirely unfair to you,” he gave her a soft smile, “I will have to make up for that.”

“It’s not about the money, Jorah,” she said, “You know that.”

“I wasn’t talking about showering you with gifts,” he leaned in close, “I want to give you the experience you should have had, with all of the love and joy these holidays are supposed to bring.”

“Well,” her hand rested against his chest, “You’re already halfway there.”

“Halfway already,” he mused partly to himself, “My, I wasn’t even aware. I guess I don’t know my own abilities then.”

She rolled her eyes, “Arrogance doesn’t suit you, my bear.”

In the midst of his boasting, Jorah didn’t notice her hand disappear under the covers to pinch his bottom, punctuating her soft scolding.

He drew his lip between his teeth in mischief, his hand knowing just where to go on her ribs to have her squirming and laughing for him. The only way she could think to get him to stop was to kiss him and that’s just what she did, her plan working splendidly. Jorah ceased tickling her the instant her tongue snaked into his mouth to caress his own, his arm slipping under her back to pull her against him, her leg curling over his hip to grind herself against his body. He groaned into her mouth and murmured between gentle nibbles of her full lower lip, “I thought I was the one that was supposed to be bringing you joy, not the other way around.”

“It’s not a one-sided holiday, Jorah,” she purred with a roll of her hips that brought a soft moan from his throat, “I plan on bringing you joy too. Many times. I’ve been rather neglectful of my ‘list’ lately.”
Jorah smirked at the prospect of checking off a few of her spectacular fantasies, “I wait on bated breath.”

“Oh, I fully intend to take your breath away,” she waggled her eyebrows suggestively before she said, “But not tonight. After that long drive, I need my sleep,” and with a soft jab of her index finger in his chest she added, “And so do you.”

With a heavy sigh, he loosened his hold on her so she could return to her previous position. Jorah cuddled up behind her, “You are a tease, Sweetheart. But I love that about you.”

He couldn’t see her triumphant smile, but he knew from experience it graced her face anyway. With the fire crackling in the hearth and the warm press of her body against his, it didn’t take Jorah long to join her in sleep.

***

A man in white led the way down a long hall, the walls sterile and blank. Pushing open a door, he gestured to three gurneys. She had been here before and a miasma of antiseptic and something sickly sweet she couldn’t identify overwhelmed her. Suddenly, she was alone under the harsh fluorescent light, the buzzing of it like persistent bees. The glaring white sheets shifted and then fell, the bodies rising from their supine positions. The room went dark as she blinked, impossible, she repeated to herself. The scorched skin of the two corpses cracked when it moved, revealing wet sticky reddened flesh underneath. She backed away; one step became two and then a third, until there was nowhere left to go. Trapped by the wall and the shuffling ungainly movements of the approaching dead, she was frozen, her limbs not responding to her brain’s screams to run. A hand grabbed her upper arm and she turned her face to the bloodied one of her brother, his head sunken on one side, tissue leaking from the fissured skull bone.

Daenerys, they intoned.

She jerked at his hold, but it was no use, his hand like a vice. She was begging now, let me go, but his jaw dropped open at an unnatural angle and a faint gurgling was the only response he offered. The others still advanced; the walls of the room appeared to almost breathe, like they were vibrating. Then she was too, stronger with each passing second, her body still thrashing in a futile attempt to escape.

But it was no longer one hand she felt, it was two and their gentle hold was warm, real and alive.

“Daenerys! Wake up, love.”

She blinked rapidly, the room bathed in low light from a bedside lamp. The walls were not sterile white, they were pale blue. And the man gazing at her was not her brother, it was Jorah and his face was etched with worry. Her body was sweaty and hot and she needed to escape. She twisted in his hold and slipped from the bed to pace by the fireplace like an anxious caged animal. She rubbed hard at her upper arms, muttering something to herself, the muscles of her body twitching involuntarily from residual adrenaline. Jorah came to her and tried to stop her unreasonable pacing, but she pushed him away.

Waiting until she passed him, he wrapped his arms around her, his hands over hers to stop them. Holding her to his chest, she struggled a bit before going limp against him.

“Shh, love, it’s all right. You are all right. You’re safe, I’m right here.”
Her shoulders jerked and she sobbed. He wasn’t sure how long he held her or how many times he repeated the soothing words softly to her. He only stopped when she shivered against him, the unconscious movement not born of fear. He walked her to the bed, but she resisted when they got closer. She pushed her feet into the floor, “No, please, I can’t.”

Her frightened whimper squeezed his heart and he reached over to grab the blankets from the bed in one hand, pulling them to the floor near the fire. He drew her down amongst them, pulling one around her shoulders, his hands rubbing over her arms to get her warm again. She sat there motionless, save for her eyes, which shifted about the room, looking to see if her nightmare lurked nearby.

“Daenerys, sweetheart, look at me.”

Her eyes snapped to his, her pupils nearly back to normal.

“Jorah,” her voice was unsteady, “I’m sor-”

He took her fidgeting hands in his, they were like ice, “Don’t you dare apologize, love. It was a nightmare, but it is over now.” He squeezed them gently, “This is real and you are safe with me.”

He moved his palms and fingers over her skin, working his profuse warmth into her hands until they were as warm as his own.

“I’ve had that nightmare before,” She worried her bottom lip, “But this was different.”

“Different?”

“There were three bodies instead of just one.”

He took a deep breath, remembering what she had told him so many months ago about how her parents died and the night she ID’ed her brother’s body.

“How many times have you had this nightmare?”

She sniffled. “It was every night for a week after I saw his body. As time passed, it was less often, maybe once or twice every few months.” She met his eyes, “But I haven’t had one since I moved in with you.”

Jorah gave her a small smile, “Nightmares appear to be afraid of big protective bears.”
The tenor of the room changed when the corner of her lips upturned, “Yeah, I think you’re right.” Then they fell, “But why did it come back now?”

“The mind is complicated; memories affect the subconscious in strange ways. You were thinking about your parents and brother quite a bit today.”

She nodded slowly, “That’s true.” Looking past him at the bed, her gaze grew panicked again, “I can’t go back there tonight.”

His fingers under her chin brought her eyes back to his, “So we won’t. We’ll sleep right here, I’ll just get the pillows from the bed.”

She let go of his hands reluctantly and he stood; moving to grab them along with spare blankets from the chest at the foot of the bed. He then set to making a pallet out of the bed clothes, piling them on top of one another so they would be comfortable. He put another log on the fire and rejoined her on the floor, getting himself settled. She cuddled close to his side, her fingers curled in his shirt over the steady beat of his heart. Her body was not completely lax against his like it usually was, so he decided to get her thinking about something else.

“Do you remember that night we went ice skating at Canary Wharf?”

He felt and heard her soft giggle, “Yeah.”

“And how you had never been skating before, so I told you to hold on to me until you got the hang of it. Everything was going all right until my skate caught a small divot in the ice and we both fell. You landed on top of me, so you were fine. My pants, on the other hand, did not survive. You had to walk behind me the whole way to the car, blocking people’s view of the large split in the backside.”

Now she was laughing and so was he, tears coming to his eyes at the memory.

She sighed. “I also remember someone wolf-whistled at you.”

“Ah yes, that cheeky woman.”

“I don’t fault her one bit; I would have done the same thing.”

“Oh, would you now? Saucy little minx.”

He pulled her tighter against him, kissing the top of her head. She nuzzled his pectoral and he felt the tension had finally slipped away. Soon she was totally relaxed against him and he allowed himself to close his eyes, hoping her dreams would be sweet.
The ache in his shoulder succeeded in waking him long before the overcast early morning light did. Daenerys’ head rested there, her soft even breathing told him she had gone through the remainder of the night without any further bad dreams. The slight pain was worth it to him if it meant that she rested easy.

She stirred, rubbing her face against his bicep and meeting his gaze with drowsy eyes, “Good morning, Sweetheart.”

“Morning,” she said through a yawn.

“How do you feel?”

Resting her chin on his chest, she met his eyes, “Better, I didn’t dream about anything actually.”

“I’m glad to hear it,” some loose hair clung to her cheek and he tucked it behind her ear, “If I had it in my power, I would make it so you never had that nightmare again.”

“I know, Jorah. Just so you know, what you did last night was exactly what I needed: you made me feel safe and warm.”

“That’s what big protective bears are for.”

The allusion to his earlier comment made her smile. “Do we have to get up? If I had my way, I’d stay right here, curled up on you, where it’s comfortable.”

He shifted and rolled his shoulder, “I think we would have to change positions at some
“Oh, sorry,” she winced, “I’m sure your shoulder must be killing you.”

“It hurts a bit, but it’ll be all right later. To answer your question, we do have to get up eventually. Apparently, my father has plans for us today.”

“Plans? For what exactly?”

“I have no idea,” he rolled his eyes; “He said it was a surprise.”

“Well, maybe it won’t be too bad.”

He pressed a quick kiss to her cheek before he turned on his side and propped his head on his hand, “Perhaps you’re right.”

She glanced at the clock on the nightstand and then looked back to him, “It’s only 6:30am. Do we have time to cuddle a while longer before we have to face the day?”

“Well, breakfast is at 9, so we should be showered and dressed by 8:45. So that’s a tentative yes.”

“Tentative?”

“Yes, I know how you get when we cuddle,” he smirked, “You end up falling asleep.”

She shrugged a shoulder, “Can you blame me? You’re so warm and huggable.” He smiled, watching her turn over, her back to him now, “I figure spooning will be better for you. At least I won’t be lying on your shoulder again.”

“Good point,” he said, curling his arm around her middle and pulling her flush against his chest. She sighed and snuggled closer, her arm resting over his. Wrapped up in his warm embrace and covered in thick blankets, her eyelids felt like lead and she told herself she would only close them for a minute to enjoy the peace of the moment.

When she opened them again and looked back at him, she found him propped on his elbow, one eyebrow raised, “Have a nice nap, Daenerys?”

She left out a nervous laugh, “I fell asleep, didn’t I?”

“I knew you would,” he sighed, “But, then again, I slept too.”

“What time is it?”

He glanced at the clock, “8:15.”

“Oh good, we have plenty of time to get ready.”

She tossed back the covers and bounded to her overnight bag in search of clothes to wear. Having made her choice, she tossed him a smile over her shoulder and disappeared behind the bathroom door. With a shake of his head, he got up too, although he did so with far less spring in his step, his shoulder bothering him more than he had expected. Sleeping on the floor was something he had not done in many years and he was paying for his decision now, his muscles aching in ways that reminded him of a strenuous football match. Jorah opened the bathroom door, warm steam and the sight of Daenerys’ slightly out-of-focus nude form through the frosted glass of the shower door making him forget all about his pain. His own hot shower would do the trick, the pelting water the
perfect remedy.

Breakfast was a laid-back affair, and after the dishes were cleared, Jeor gathered everyone in the foyer. With a small smile, he watched Barton hand Daenerys and Jorah each a folded pile of white clothes. He told them to meet him out on the south lawn in fifteen minutes.

She waited until they were alone before she turned to Jorah saying, “What are these for?”

He gave her a sheepish look and rubbed the back of his neck, “A tradition my father started when I was fifteen.”

“Well, I know it’s not tennis season, so we aren’t going to Wimbledon.”

“No, it’s something decidedly less exciting,” he sighed, “Lawn bowling.”

“Lawn bowling?” He nodded, “Ok, I know what that is, but I have no idea how to play.”

He took hold of her hand and led her down the hallway to the small bathroom so they could change. “I have only played a few times myself,” Jorah admitted.

“So we make a great team then.”

He chuckled. “Personally, I wish we were playing cricket or croquet. Then we could give my father a run for his money.”

“I’m sure he has loads of experience. And Barton too.”

“Probably close to 75 years between them.”

“Wow,” she made a whistling sound like a bomb falling through the air before she made the explosion with her hands, “That’s going to be us, I think.”

“We won’t crash and burn,” he shrugged, “Or maybe we will. But at least I’m playing with you.”

They started off down the hall before he stopped and surveyed their appearance in the hallway mirror, “You have to admit, we make a handsome couple in white.”

She did have to give him that. And now that she thought about it, Jorah was right about something else too. She was playing with him, and win or lose, it would at least be fun.

Taking her hand again, Jorah showed her the way to the south lawn. The sky was full of dark angry clouds and he hoped that it wouldn’t rain until they had played at least one game.

They found Jeor and Barton deep in whispered discussion, seemingly planning their game strategy. She gave Jorah a hopeful look and he winked at her in return. His father asked Daenerys if she had ever played and she said no. So he proceeded with explaining the rules of the game, and to her, it actually sounded pretty simple. Perhaps we won’t do so badly after all, she thought. Since the combined ages of Jeor and Barton were greater than hers and Jorah’s, they went first. ‘Age before beauty,’ his father teased.

Jeor set the mat and rolled the jack to the other end of the rink to act as a target. With the jack now acting as the center of the playing field, the teams took turns rolling their bowls to build up something Jeor called ‘the head’. They each had four bowls and once all of them had been delivered,
the distance from the jack was measured. The two closest shots were awarded points and they lost the first end 2-0.

“One down, twenty to go,” Jeor said, resetting for the next end.

‘Twenty’ Daenerys mouthed at Jorah and he nodded grimly.

She exhaled hard through pursed lips and rolled her first bowl of the second end. On it went for nineteen more ends. The lead changed hands several times, and in the twenty-first end, they found themselves tied. Jorah was shocked to say the least; he had never done so well at this game in his life. Perhaps it was all due to the smiling, laughing woman at his side. Her whispered jokes and gentle teasing had him so relaxed, he wondered if that was the secret to succeeding at it all along. The teams took their turns and Daenerys had the lucky spot of rolling last. Sizing up her bowl, she let it go, stepping back to watch its sweeping arc come to a stop just behind one of Jeor’s. They all walked forward for the measurement and Daenerys saw the smile spread slowly across Jorah’s face before he whispered in her ear, “I think we actually won.”

She glanced at him and he shrugged hopefully. After what seemed like forever, Jeor stood and leveled his gaze at Jorah, “Well done, the both of you. You’ve unseated the champions.”

Daenerys let out a squeal and gave him a high five.

“That was beginner’s luck,” Jeor said, “We have another match to go.”

It was then that Daenerys felt it, a heavy cold wet drop on her cheek. She barely had time to look skyward before the heavens opened and the downpour began. The rain came down in sheets and they ran for shelter, her hand clased in Jorah’s. He decided at the last second to make for the greenhouse as it was closer. Jorah knew they could wait out the storm there; clear blue sky peeked at the edge of the storm clouds. He pulled open the door and she ran inside, squeezing the water from her braid as he closed it behind them. Ruffling his hair, Jorah caught her eye, and after a moment, they burst into laughter. Daenerys hugged herself, leaning back against the wooden shelf, her sides aching. Jorah, with his hands on his knees, shook with the force of his amusement before standing and sighing heavily, “I think Mother Nature just saved us from a rematch.”

“I think so,” she agreed.

Her eyes moved over her surroundings, “Huh, that’s so weird.”

“What is?”

“I had a dream about this place. I mean, it’s exactly the same. Wow, total déjà vu.”

Taking a couple of hand towels off the shelf, he stood by her side, handing her one, “What did you dream about?”

“I’m not so sure you want to know,” she gave him a flirtatious glance while she dried her hair.

Drying his own, he tossed the towel onto the counter behind her and bracketed her with his arms, “Too late, you’ve piqued my interest.”

“Well, if you must know, we were dressed in early 1920’s clothes and you had no beard.”

“Is that so?” he paused, “Would this by chance have anything to do with you binge-watching *Downton Abbey*?”
She giggled. “It might. You do look an awful lot like Sir Richard.”

“Wait, he’s the newspaper chap that Mary treated like dirt, right?”

“Oh, this coming from the man who said he wasn’t interested as he sat next to me on the couch reading the same page of his book for over an hour? Liar, you were watching,” she teased.

He shrugged, “Well, I got involved, hoping that Mary would pull her head out her arse and choose him. You know,” he tapped his finger against his lip, “I think I’m better looking than Sir Richard.”

Daenerys crossed her arms slowly, and with a tilt of her head, said, “Pray tell, what makes you say that?”

His smile was smug. “It’s the scruff, Sweetheart. You love it.”

She squinted at him and Jorah knew she was picturing him without his facial hair. With a heavy sigh, she conceded, “You’ve got me there.”

Bringing her fingers to his jaw, she toyed with his short whiskers, “I could shave it off if you like.”

“Don’t you dare,” she said forcefully, “I love the way it feels.”

He leaned in closer, his lips inches from hers, “I know. You like the way it feels on the edge of your lips when I kiss you.”

And he did, his arm wrapping around her waist to pull her close. It started out tender, but with one tease of his tongue against her lip, the heat grew and threatened to consume her. She yielded to the delirious intoxication he created in her with his kiss, her arms round his shoulders, her fingers curling in his damp tresses. She swore her legs had turned to jelly, unable to hold her weight and she leaned on him for support. Jorah’s hands grabbed her waist and lifted her onto the countertop. She was now at his height and her legs went around his waist, her teeth nipping softly at his bottom lip.

He tore his lips from hers and followed the line of her jaw to the space just below her ear. His soft suckle of the sensitive skin there had her arching into him, drawing breathless soft sighs from her lips before her hands pulled his mouth back to hers, their tongues tasting and stroking urgently.

They were soon breathless, Jorah’s voice hoarse with desire, “I’d like to see Sir Richard try and kiss you better than that.”

“I think you’ve got him well and truly beat in that category, Sir Jorah.”

“So it’s Sir now? Not ‘my bear’,” he pouted in mock sadness, “I miss it already.”

“No,” her gaze softly serious, “you’ll always be my bear, Jorah.”

This time, when he kissed her, it was sweet from the first touch of their lips until they parted once more. He rested his forehead against hers, “Now, I think you were about to tell me your dream, yes?”

“Right, so it was dusk and-”

A sharp rap on the glass drew their attention to the door, “Young Master, Ms. Targaryen,
“Are you in there?”

Daenerys stifled her giggle as Jorah called back, “Yes, Barton, we’re fine.”

“Ah yes, well, I have been sent to fetch you both. There is a fire in the hearth and tea has just been served in the sitting room. May I enter or shall I…”

Daenerys’ snickering grew louder and Jorah couldn’t help it anymore, his cheeks aching from his wide smile, “You can enter Barton, we’re decent.”

The glass swung open and the butler stood in the doorway, a blush rising on his cheeks as he took in the scene before him: Daenerys’ arms and legs wrapped around Jorah’s body, clearly caught mid-intimate encounter. He helped her off the counter, Barton averting his eyes in the process.

Walking toward the exit, Daenerys heard him clear his throat behind her. She threw him a glance over her shoulder, “What’s wrong?”

“Oh, you’ve just got dirt all over the seat of your pants.”

She stopped in her tracks, twisting and turning to see how bad the stain was, rubbing frantically to try and remove it. With a playful smack on his arm in an attempt to quiet his chuckling, she faced him, “Since this is so funny to you, guess who gets to walk right behind me all the way to the house?”

“What a horrible punishment,” he smiled devilishly, “Lead the way, love.”

As it turns out, having Jorah nearly pressed against her back while they shared an umbrella was the furthest thing from horrible. In fact, the low rumbling groan Daenerys heard from him confirmed he was enjoying it a bit too much and so was she.

Once inside the house, they went to their room to change into dry, warm clothes. While Daenerys rebraided her hair, Jorah sat on the edge of the bed, “You never did get to finish telling me your dream.”

She met his eyes in the mirror, “What else do I do in my dreams with you, hmm?”

“Ah, it was one of those dreams,” Jorah smirked, “Well, as you know; I’m always keen to make them a reality.”

Daenerys rolled her eyes at his waggling eyebrows, “Do you know how embarrassed I would have been had Barton walked up to the greenhouse while you were pleasuring me?”

“Quite. But answer me this, love,” she started at his breath now ghosting over her ear, “Would you have enjoyed yourself before he showed up?”

The fine hairs on the back of her neck stood on end, her head falling back against his shoulder, “You know I would have.”

Drawing his arms tighter around her middle, he rested his chin gently on the crown of her head, “I almost don’t want to go back downstairs.”

“Me neither,” she sighed.

She wanted nothing more in that moment than to take him to bed and snuggle up by his
side for a nap, the sound of pouring rain and the warmth of his embrace lulling her into drowsiness. But desire still hummed in her veins, the kiss in the greenhouse and the memory of her dream only adding to the sensation. Little did Jorah know, but Daenerys had plans for him later. An early present if you will, the feel of the tantalizing garment already palpable on her skin. She smiled to herself, Christmas was tomorrow, but this gift was for Jorah’s eyes only and she couldn’t wait to give it to him.

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They spent the rest of the afternoon playing games in the sitting room. Barton informed them that Jeor had gone to visit a friend of his, but would be back in time for dinner. And he was, the meal relaxed, full of laughter and stories. The evening was spent playing The Game, a diversion somewhat like Charades that Jorah’s father seemingly resurrected from the old days. But Daenerys discovered that she and Jorah were quite good at it, knowing what the other meant with very little comic pantomime. There was no winner in this game, but in secret, they declared themselves victorious nonetheless. Near the end, Daenerys’ mind started to wander; thinking about what awaited them upstairs. Jorah noticed she kept glancing at the clock, and when he fixed her with a questioning look, all she did was smile and wink. He knew what that meant, his past experiences with her giving him all the information he needed to realize she had one thing on her mind right then. And now, it was all he could think about too.

It was nearly midnight when they finally found themselves in their room. Daenerys told Jorah to get comfortable, then she disappeared into the bathroom with a tightly wrapped bundle of clothes. He lay in bed reading or so he tried to, studying the same sentence for the fiftieth time, waiting anxiously for Daenerys to join him. She had been in the bathroom for quite some time and he was beginning to wonder what was taking her so long. He was just about to get up and check on her when the door opened and she leaned against the doorjamb in a short red silk robe, the belt tied loosely around her waist.

“Happy Christmas, Jorah.”

He realized it must be after midnight now and a smile spread across his face as he watched her walk toward the bed, the movement of her body tempting him. She stopped, undoing the tie slowly, and letting the robe fall open slightly before she eased it from her shoulders and let it drop at her feet.

“Happy Christmas indeed. My god, love, you look ravishing.”

“You like it?” She could hear his pleasured groan as she modeled the matching red lace bra and barely-there panties for him, his bottom lip firmly between his teeth at the sight.

“Oh yes, very much.”

“I thought you might.”

She crawled across the bed, looking every bit like a naughty kitten, until she was perched over him on her hands and knees. She took the forgotten novel from his hand and set it on the nightstand. Running her hand down his body and cupping him through his sleep pants, she was unsurprised to find him almost completely hard. She stroked him, his groan swallowed up by her mouth, her tongue snaking between his lips to taste him. She nibbled at his bottom lip before she continued kissing him. His hand slipped into her silky tresses just as his tongue slipped into her mouth this time, his kiss matching her urgency and passion.

“I thought you didn’t want to do this with my father right down the hallway,” he
whispered between gentle nibbles and licks of his tongue along her arched neck.

“It’s Christmas,” she sighed, her grip around his cock tightening when he found that particular place on her neck and she struggled to find her voice, “Besides, he already knows about us and you’re an adult, so you can do whatever you want in your room.”

He hummed, “Yes I can. And that includes making love to my beautiful,” he gasped, her fingers finding the sensitive underside of his hardness, “insatiable girlfriend.”

“You’re damn right.”

She rose, her hands going behind her to unhook her bra. Jorah sat up and placed his hand in the center of her chest, “No, Sweetheart, let me.”

He knelt on the bed, his fingers threading through her hair, his eyes never leaving hers, “You are a gift to me every day. Only this time, I get to unwrap you.”

She bit her lip at his sweet admission, but her head fell back with a soft moan as he mouthed her breast, his tongue teasing her hard nipple through the sheer fabric. She held his head to her, his hands reaching around her to undo the closure, the garment now slack against her body. He slipped it down her arms and tossed it aside, his mouth back on her breast before she had a chance to take a breath. Her eyes were riveted on his tongue licking over her nipple in a broad sweep before flicking it with just the tip. He drew the turgid flesh between his lips, suckling rhythmically at her before finishing with a soft scrape of his teeth. He did the same to the other breast before he wrapped his arm around her waist and turned them, laying her back on the sheets.

His mouth trailed down the center of her body as he moved, coming to his knees at her feet. He gently pressed her legs wider apart, the lace darkened by her abundant arousal. He mouthed her there too, the heady scent of her readily apparent, his tongue licking her through the flimsy material. She clutched at his head and whimpered, her hips pressing into the mattress. “Jorah, please, I don’t want to wait.”

He looked over her body at her, his finger almost a whisper over where her clit was and she rewarded him with a shudder. “These panties are so soft,” he smirked, “and so very wet.”

“Take them off,” she gestured at him, “And take off your clothes too, you are so overdressed for what I have in mind.”

He undressed quickly and then rejoined her on the bed to pull her underwear down her legs and off. Before he had a chance to react, she was on him, pushing him onto his back and straddling him. He loved her eagerness, the voracious appetite she had for him made Jorah feel every bit like a man should. She grasped him around the base and slid him through her slick folds, teasing them both in the process. He hissed and she mewled, the head rubbing against her in just the right way. She teased her clit a bit longer, the hardness of him the perfect pressure, her abundant wetness coating his arousal. She guided him inside her until he was sheathed to the hilt. She clenched her muscles around him, her body rocking and her hands coming to rest on his chest, her eyes closed, enjoying the feel of him. When she opened them and met his gaze again, her look was wild. Jorah knew he was in for it, but he didn’t care. He wanted her to be satisfied and he would do whatever she needed him to, even if it meant letting her be in complete control.

She drew his hands above his head, holding them down with her own. She knew he could overpower her in a second if he wanted to, but he submitted willingly to her and her desire. And it wasn’t like he wouldn’t enjoy it. Everything they did in bed together, as well as in a myriad other places, was the best he had ever had.
“Keep your hands there.”

He lifted his head and sucked at the nipple that was so tantalizingly close to his mouth and her body jerked against him. She chuckled at his smug look and let his hands go, running her own over his arms, down his chest and stomach, her hips rolling as she rose and fell once.

She succeeded in wiping the look off of his face, his eyes slipping shut for a moment, his hands clenching above his head. She knew he wanted to touch her, the way his eyes moved over her body when they opened again certainly made her feel like he was. His moan mingled with her sigh, his neck arching at the feel of being engulfed by her wet heat. She leaned down and nipped at the strong column of it before licking at the hollow at the base of his throat, his taste faintly salty on her tongue. A figure-eight swirl of her hips brought his hands up from the bed, nearly grasping her hips before she intercepted them, pressing them back down.

“Tsk, tsk Jorah,” she shook her head, “I told you to keep your hands there.”

He growled softly and lifted his hips under her, “How can I not touch you when you move your body like that?”

Her smile was wicked, “What, like this?”

She did it again and he swallowed roughly, “Daenerys, you keep that up and I won’t last.”

“We can’t have that now can we?”

She let go of his hands and he didn’t move them this time. She bit her lip, her own now bracing against his chest. She rolled her hips, letting him nearly slip from her completely before sliding back down the length of him agonizingly slow. She did this a few more times, his hands tight fists as he struggled to reign in his desire. She could see his control slipping and it thrilled her to know she had this power over him, this strong, commanding man submitting to her every whim.

She was a vision astride him and he desperately wanted to touch her; to cup and knead her breasts, to gently pinch her nipples between his callused fingers, to take her hips in his strong grip and guide her as she rode him, and finally at the height of her pleasure, to slip his thumb to where they were joined to stroke over her. Her thighs flexed and she sped up a bit, her hips undulating over him. But Daenerys slowed once more, teasing him in the best way. She moved in a figure-eight again and his jaw clenched, his hands reaching back to curl around the wooden headboard. She knew he was holding back for her benefit, wanting her to enjoy herself. But the look he gave her when she moved her body in a circle while he was buried deep within her, one of dark desire, sent a shiver of heat through her center and she almost wanted to give in and let him have his way. But not yet anyway, she wanted to torture him a while longer. Reaching behind her, she grazed her nails gently over the skin of his scrotum and his eyes flashed with lust in response, his hips lifting from the bed. She took her time now, finding just the right angle. When she tilted hers just so and rolled herself serpentine-like as she moved up and down his length, the ridge of his glans rubbed over that special place, she moaned, her eyes slipping shut.

“That’s it, love, ride me,” he growled, “Watching you like this, wanton in your pleasure, makes me want to have my way with you. Take you hard, show you just how desperately I need you.”

She gasped and fixed him with wide eyes, Jorah had never talked to her like that before. She did like he said and took him hard, her hands pressed against his pectorals for leverage, giving them both what they wanted. The sound of their coupling was loud and punctuated by the creaking of the wooden bedframe under the strain.
“Oh god, Jorah,” she moaned, her movements faltering a little in her pursuit of her orgasm that was just out of reach.

His eyes raked over her to center on where he rapidly disappeared within her, his voice urgently pleading, “Fuck, I want to touch you. Daenerys, please…”

“Touch my clit,” her voice breathed out the words as she leaned back, her hands resting on his legs.

He wasted no time in giving her what she needed, licking the pad of his thumb and bringing it to rub her sensitive flesh with the right pressure and speed. Her whole body quaked and her head tipped back, her breasts swaying in synchronization to her rapid rhythm, “Jorah…baby…I’m gonna come.”

“Do it, Sweetheart, let me feel you throb for me.”

His lusty words did it for her, her nails digging into the skin of his thighs, her mind going blank with one of the strongest peaks he had given her in some time. She couldn’t even say his name, her heart hammering in her chest and her lungs greedy for air. She pulsed around his cock, her body unable to move with the strength of her bliss, so Jorah took over, his hips moving in opposition of the way hers had, hoping it was what she needed. It seemed to be, her eyes meeting his briefly before they slipped shut again and she whispered, “Just like that.”

He smiled to himself and he couldn’t help the pride that swelled his chest at what he had just given her, the occasional soft flutter all that was left now of her pleasure. He kept doing it, his cock still rock hard inside her and aching for its own release. Slumping forward, she whimpered and took his hand away before fixing him with a lazy yet naughty smile, “Show me how desperately you need me, Jorah.”

Willing to give her anything she desired, he rose to wrap his arm around her and turn them, laying her back on the bed. With her legs resting in the crooks of his elbows, he bracketed her shoulders with his hands and spread her, her knees nearly touching her chest. With his cock poised at her entrance, their eyes were riveted on her shamelessly displayed sex. Then he was looking at her and she was breathless at the hunger in his eyes, “When I come this time, I want you with me.”

His gravely order barely had time to register before he was buried inside her on one hard deep thrust that drew her back from the bed and a shuddering moan from her lips. His pace was quick and he was doing just what he said he would: having his way with her. But she wanted, no yearned, for this from him. Jorah always gave, never took, from her. His tender, generous side was what she always saw, but she wanted the rough, wild side of him now. That was what he offered her, his hips thrusting eagerly in search of his own release.

“Touch yourself, Daenerys,” he panted, “Come with me.”

She reached down to stroke her clit, and despite the fact that it was still sensitive, her body was greedy for pleasure.

“Oh fuck, love,” Jorah rasped through gritted teeth, “watching you do that…”

He couldn’t finish his thought, the sensation of her walls beginning to clench around him, the sight of her long, elegant fingers, tipped with crimson painted nails moving quick over her slick swollen nub, had him reeling. His cock glistened in the light, the tingling fire of his release coalescing in the base of his spine and threatening to pull him completely under. The nails of her other hand raked through the fur of his chest before dropping to her breast, her fingers teasing the rosy nipple. But it was the heavy-lidded desire of her eyes, captivated by his face and his own fiery gaze, watching him take her that drove Jorah to the brink.
The pleasure she got this time would be less than before, but still enough. It didn’t take much more
for Daenerys, her panted whimper of his name shattered Jorah’s control and he growled, his hips
stilling. She felt the hard throb of him deep within her, each pulse drawing a hoarse moan from his
chest and a soft sigh from her at the aftershocks it set off within her. His arms shook and his head
hung as he rode the last waves of release with tiny jerking thrusts. When he met her eyes again, his
chest heaving to draw breath, his gaze was full of concern, “Are you all right, love?”

He didn’t wait for an answer, easing from her body as gently as he could before collapsing to her
side and pulling her to him. He smoothed the hair from her forehead, his voice tender and sweet, “I
wasn’t too rough with you, was I?”

She gave him a satisfied smile, her hand resting on his cheek, “No, Jorah, it was wonderful.”

“You’ve got that right,” he murmured in agreement and that drew a soft laugh from her.

She shivered a bit and he drew the blanket over them, her face nuzzling his chest as she
snuggled against him, “I take it you liked your early Christmas present.”

He chuckled. “Whatever gave you that impression?”

“The fact that it brought out the wild bear in you,” she purred against his neck before
placing a kiss there.

He didn’t respond at first and she lifted her head to find him staring off into the distance
before he met her gaze, “I always worry that I go too far with you.”

“Believe me, Jorah,” she said softly, her hand drawing his face down to look at her, “I
would tell you if I didn’t want something.” She paused, “Besides, even in your wildness, you’re still
considerate of me.”

“And that’s the way it will always be,” he whispered into her hair as she settled against his
chest again.

She hummed in contentment and drew her leg across his body in order to get closer. His
hand came to rest on her hip and he closed his eyes, enjoying the feel of her in his arms.
Jorah and Daenerys receive unexpected Christmas gifts, Jorah gets embarrassed and Daenerys discovers what's (not) under a man's kilt.

Chapter Notes

Check the tags, there are new ones!

The thought of Jorah in a kilt was just too good to pass up. Enjoy!

Sometime in the night their positions shifted, Jorah’s chest now pressed against her back, their legs tangled like vines. Her eyes opened lazily, but she knew he was still asleep by his breathing. Daenerys tried to stretch without moving too much, but it was no use, his arm tightening around her, his voice husky with sleep, “I may not be twenty anymore, but if you keep wiggling your bottom against me like that, you might just turn back the hands of time.”

She snickered and couldn’t resist the urge to do it again, his rumbling groan accompanied by a nip of his teeth against her bare shoulder, “You are a naughty woman, love.”

After last night, she knew this probably wasn’t going anywhere. But she was all right with that, her need now was the quiet intimacy of early morning kisses and lazy caresses, to cement the bond between them, not arouse each other.

After a time, she nuzzled his nose and whispered, “I have a gift for you.”

“I thought you already gave it to me,” he said softly against her ear.

“Well, yes,” she sighed, his lips brushing against her jaw, “But I wanted to give you one of your ‘real’ gifts now, when it’s just the two of us.”

She slipped from his arms and went to her overnight bag, taking something small from inside. She sat cross-legged next to him and handed him the box. Jorah smiled and sat up, unwrapping it and opening the lid to find a silver tie bar. He took it from the box, and upon closer inspection, he noticed the outline of a bear etched into the metal. He looked up to find her staring expectantly at him, “Do you like it?”

“I love it, Sweetheart, thank you.” He gave her a quick kiss and placed her gift on the nightstand, “Now I have something for you.”

He went over to his luggage and took out his gift before returning and handing it to her. It was so exquisitely wrapped, its red and gold paper sparkling; she almost didn’t want to ruin it by opening it. She undid the white ribbon and carefully removed the paper to find a white box. Lifting
the lid revealed a pair of silver drop earrings in the shape of small geckos, their backs inlaid with lustrous emeralds.

“Oh my god, they’re beautiful.” She found him smiling at her and she asked, “Where did you find them?”

“At a jewelers downtown, but they only had the gold pair in store. So these were a custom order.”

She loved how he went out of his way for her, knowing her preference for silver jewelry. She knelt and pressed her lips softly to his. It was intended to be a short kiss, but the brief touch was all the encouragement their desire needed. His hand cupped her cheek and his arm wound around her waist, his tongue slipping between her lips as he drew her into his lap.

“I swear, Jorah, we’ll never leave this bed if you keep that up,” she said urgently between kisses.

He sighed, she was right. Jorah knew his father probably wouldn’t appreciate them staying locked up in their room on Christmas Day. They had a gift exchange later and a service to attend, all before dinner. This could wait, as much as he hated putting it off. With one final lingering kiss, he let her slip from his arms to change and get ready, her perfect nude body tempting him on her way to the bathroom. He fell back on the bed with a groan, a certain organ lodging a protest with his mind on the matter of being made to wait.

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After breakfast, they all gathered in the sitting room to open gifts. Barton loved his; the definitive works of Shakespeare with its gilded pages and leather cover a particularly popular one. Jeor was equally pleased with Jorah’s gift to him, a new set of pricey graphite golf clubs. He promised his son a round of golf at the Merlin Golf Club sometime soon, seeing as he was eager to give them a try. Jeor then handed them each a shirt box, inside were cashmere sweaters in emerald and cranberry, the material so soft, Daenerys swore it had to be very expensive.

But it was the next gift he handed Jorah next, a small box, which had them exchanging glances.

“It is time you had this,” he said with a smile.

Now Jorah was even more curious, so he opened it and shot a quick look at his father before he tilted the box to Daenerys so she could see it better, “Father, I-”

“You are truly a Mormont, Jorah,” he said with a nod, “I waited too long to pass this on to you.”

She knew the ring in the box had great significance by the look on Jorah’s face. It had some sort of symbol on it, but she couldn’t decipher it just then.

“Thank you, Father,” Jorah said in a voice tinged with constrained emotion, unwilling to let his father truly see how this gift affected him.

The box he handed Daenerys next was about the same size and she undid the wrapping to find a mother of pearl rose pendant on a silver chain, its iridescent petals shimmering in the light. In the center was a lone round cut diamond, small but glittering beautifully. It looked to be very old and she realized that this must have once belonged to Jeor’s wife.
“Jeor, I…” she looked to Jorah then his father, “I don’t know what to say.”

“My wife was my winter rose,” his usually gruff voice softer, catching a bit at his words, “And you are Jorah’s. She would have wanted you to have that.”

There was such warmth in the older man’s eyes that Daenerys felt the tears begin to well in her own. She turned her head to look at Jorah and he was smiling in a way she had never seen before, a look that spoke of commitment and love. When she blinked, the tears fell and she wiped them away with a shaky hand. Jorah helped her fasten the clasp of the necklace around her neck, the weight of happy memories resting on her chest in all its stunning glory.

Jeor’s only response was a small smile, his gaze falling on their clasped hands.

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Daenerys sat down heavily on the bed, “Jorah, these gifts…I-”

He paced in front of her, his hand in his pocket, the other threading idly through his hair, “I know what you mean, love.” His voice had a far-off quality to it and it seemed like his mind was a thousand miles away too. He stopped and faced her, “That ring has been in my family for who knows how long. It belonged to him and now he’s given it to me.”

His brow was crinkled and he seemed preoccupied by something, a question evident in his eyes.

“What is it, Jorah,” she asked gently.

He gave her a tight-lipped smile and sat next to her, his hand reaching out for hers, “You heard what he said, right? Or was I hearing things?”

“I heard him,” she laughed quietly, nudging him with her shoulder.

He let out a breathless chuckle and looked at her, “I hadn’t expected that.”

“I didn’t expect my gift either,” she worried her lip, “It’s too much.”

“How is it too much?”

He looked at her with mild shock and she quickly answered, “I mean, the significance of it. The memories it must hold for him. How can he just give that to me?”

“It’s a gift, Daenerys. Perhaps my mother would have wanted it that way, not sitting in a drawer somewhere gathering dust. But to be worn by someone important and worthy.”

“Am I your winter rose like he said,” she smirked at him before she continued, “I think that’s so sweet.”

“Yes you are,” he said with a smile. He gave her a quick kiss, then glanced at his watch, “Let’s have lunch and then find something to do until it’s time to leave for the service.”

“Sure.”

A black garment bag hung from the back of the door and Daenerys hadn’t remembered seeing it there before. She got up and went over to it, taking a hold of the zipper to open it. Just then, Jorah’s hand came to rest over hers, “What’s in there is a surprise.” She looked at him and he winked, “You’ll see later.”
Daenerys sat on the edge of the bed, having already changed into her dress for the early evening church service. She knew Jorah wasn’t a religious man and she had not been raised in any particular faith, as Viserys had so often uttered: ‘religion is a security blanket for the weak’. The Mormont family attended the candlelight Christmas service every year dressed in the family colors. They hailed from Northern Scotland and it was a tradition dating back generations. She had never seen the tartan of their clan, but she was eagerly anticipating the unveiling. Just as she was picking a piece of lint from her dress, she heard the bathroom door open and her jaw nearly hit the floor. Her eyes raked over his form, so debonair in his traditional Scottish dress. From the smartly tailored black barathea jacket with its gleaming silver buttons and matching waistcoat, the crisp white shirt with a perfectly done black bow tie to the kilt of dark green plaid with thin red lines; Daenerys thought she might faint at the sight of him. Words escaped her and all she could do was wolf-whistle. He grinned at her as she stood and walked toward him, her hands running over the soft fabric of his jacket, “My, don’t you look handsome.”

“Why thank you, love.” His fingers caressed her bare arms, a shiver running through her in response, “You are gorgeous as always.”

She gave him a soft smile before she tilted her head, “No, you know what, I was wrong.”

He gave her a confused look, “Wrong? About what?”

“You.”

He seemed taken aback, but all was made clear when she said, “Handsome is the wrong word. You look downright sexy in this.”

What he said next made her burst into laughter, “I’m dead sexy!”

She smacked his arm, trying to catch her breath, “Jorah, you are so not Fat Bastard!”

“But you just said I was sexy!”

It wasn’t hard to admit she found the way he spoke pretty damn hot too, even if he was exaggerating his faint Scottish accent. “I’ve never heard your full accent before.”

“Yes, you have.”

She racked her brain, “When?”

He leaned in and whispered against her ear, “Oh fuck, love.”

A loud pant left her lips, the words conjuring a memory of what caused them in the first place. Now that she thought about it, when Jorah was at the height of his arousal, his accent did make an appearance. However, she was too far gone to realize it during those times, lost in the pleasure he bestowed upon her.

“Now I remember,” she squeaked, swallowing audibly.

He smirked and offered her his arm, “Shall we, my lady?”

“Well yes, good sir.”

They met his father and Barton in the foyer, seeing all of the men dressed so smartly in
their traditional clothes practically begged for a picture. But Jeor beat her to it; he had his camera at
the ready. She offered to take the snapshot, but he insisted she join them in it. He set the camera on
the tripod and set the timer. Everyone gathered close, Jorah’s arm around her waist, and they all
smiled just before the flash went off. Everyone looked at the LCD screen; his father was quick to
assert that it was most definitely one for the photo album. And that made everyone grin all over
again.

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They took Jeor’s car to the village church, an old stone building with stunning stained
glass windows. The inside was beautiful too, with its dark wood pews and large pipe organ situated
behind the altar. Tall stands of white pillar candles ringed the space at strategic intervals and small
pots of winter flowers sat at the ends of the aisles. While she may not have been spiritual, she still felt
something sacred there, and what with the place packed with people, a sense of community and
belonging too. This was all so new to her, but with his fingers entwined with hers, she decided that
this was how things were supposed to be. Not the lonely absence of celebration that she had
experienced growing up or even the meager festivities of her time living on her own. No, it was
about being with the people you care about and who care for you in return.

She followed Jorah’s lead through the service, reading along in the hymn book for she
didn’t know any of the goings on. She found she didn’t care, especially when she heard him sing. He
seemed to know the songs and his voice was wonderful, deep and rich. It wasn’t that she hadn’t
heard him singing before; modern tunes sung in the shower or in the car didn’t count, it was the
difference of it all that made it a unique experience. Afterward, they chatted with some of the other
parishioners before going to the car and heading home.

Supper was a much more lax affair than the previous night; they ate leftovers with a side of
merriment and light conversation. They didn’t eat in the large dining room either; rather a smaller
table had been set up in another room just off the kitchen, which allowed everyone to sit much closer
than usual. Jeor rose to get another bottle of wine, his cheeks rosy from laughter and drink.

“I have a story for you, Daenerys,” he said in a voice full of amusement when he reentered
the room. He topped off everyone’s glass before he sat and took a drink, “It involves my son and a
rather irate mother cow.”

She heard Jorah groan next to her, his hand rubbing at his cheek, “Honestly, Father, must
you tell everyone this story?”

He wagged his finger, “Now, Jorah, this is the first time I am sharing it with someone who
isn’t family.”

A strange feeling came over her at his words and she realized that his ex-wife had never
heard it. She felt almost triumphant at the thought and couldn’t wait to hear what he had to say.

“One summer, when Jorah was eight, I took him to my sister’s farm in Warwick.
Naturally, he was a curious lad and wanted to see the new calves that had been born. I told him not
to enter the pasture, but he was head-strong like his mother, doing it anyway against my command. I
watched him climb over the wooden fence and walk across the grass. I wanted to stop him, but
Maege rested her hand on my arm and said ‘let him see what happens and he’ll learn’. He walked up
to a newborn and petted its head. Well, the mother would have none of that, and she charged him,
snorting and bellowing.” He imitated the cow’s calls and Daenerys sides hurt from laughing and he
continued, “He ran as fast as his little legs could carry him and made it under the fence just in time.”

His face was red and tears shone in his eyes as he barked with laughter, “ Needless to say,
he never went in there again.”

Jorah’s face was red too, but for an entirely different reason. While the story was hilarious, she did feel for his embarrassment, so she decided to take his mind off his father’s teasing. They sat quite close together, his leg pressed against hers under the table. She closed the short gap and placed her hand on his knee before she met his eyes out of the corner of her own, slipping her hand under his kilt to graze her fingers over his thigh. He sat up straight with a start and cleared his throat, reaching for his wine glass to hide his soft groan, her nails tracing a nonsense pattern on his skin, her touch going higher on his leg with each pass. Jorah glanced around the table, but no one seemed to notice what she was doing, too wrapped up in storytelling. She turned to him then, a smile on her face just before she gave him a cheeky wink and turned back to respond to something his father said. The room suddenly felt much hotter, his fingers tucking under the collar of his shirt in a vain attempt to cool down. Jorah made up his mind right then that he would find a way to drive her crazy later.

Finally recognizing the lateness of the hour, Jeor stood and carried his plate into the kitchen. Everyone else followed suit and Jorah waited with her until everyone else had said their goodnights and left. Once he was certain they were alone, he stepped behind her and pressed her to the counter’s edge, his arms bracketing her as he kissed the curve of her neck, “What possessed you to do that, love?”

She knew instantly he wasn’t upset with her, his voice laced with desire. The beginnings of his erection were plainly evident even through the thick fabric of his kilt and she ground herself against him, a groan rising from deep in his chest. “I was just trying to distract you from your father’s story.”

“And what a marvelous diversion it was.”

She turned her head and he met her lips hungrily, there was no sweetness in this kiss. He moved his hand over her belly to her breast, cupping and kneading the flesh, rubbing his hardness against the swell of her bottom. The way he thrust and rolled his hips into her felt like he may as well have been making love to her right through their clothes and she responded eagerly. Her hand gripped the back of his head, his fingers teasing the hard peak of her breast, the whimpers she made distorted by his tongue in her mouth. She loved when he let a bit of the wildness in him escape. His tenderness with her was something she always cherished, but when he let himself take from her, she gave all too willingly, trusting in his temperance to not let things go too far. And they never did, for he cared and respected her too much to exploit that enthusiasm for his own selfish desires.

Grasping the hem of her dress, Jorah drew one side up enough so he could reach between her legs, which she spread a bit to aid in his quest. He found the lace of her panties drenched, “My God, love.”

The rough rasp of his voice sent a shiver down her spine. His hand slipped under the waistband and he rolled her clit between his slick fingers, bringing a breathy moan from her lips. Using the counter as leverage, she pressed back, moving her hips against his now obvious hardness. All the while, he licked and kissed her neck and the exposed part of her upper back, his hot breath dampening her skin. He moved deftly over her sensitive bundle, her brows drawing together, the heavenly shock of a rapidly approaching orgasm catching her off guard.

The gasping little whimper spoke volumes and her head fell back against his shoulder. He knew she was close and just as he felt the first shudder that always heralded her impeding release; he stopped, abruptly removing his hand and stepping back from her.

Her eyes snapped open, the sensations ebbing away and she turned to him, a near growl of frustration came from her throat while she struggled to find the words as well as her breath, “Jorah… why did…what…”
“Simply repaying the favor, Sweetheart, tit for tat.” He stepped to her, his whisper full of heat, “Didn’t anyone ever tell you not to tease the bear?”

His gaze moved over her features: her wide pupils, her kiss-swollen lips, her flushed cheeks.

_Two can play at that game_, she mused, and a predatory smile spread across her face, “I was never one to follow rules.”

He was close enough that her hand grasped him before he knew it, stroking his length through the coarse fabric, “I have always wondered if the myth about men in kilts is true.”

A strangled groan was the only warning she got before he stilled her hand, “Let’s go back to our room and you can find out for yourself.”

The trip was punctuated by frequent stops for messy kisses and impatient gropes. He shushed her giggling through his own quiet laughter; he actually couldn’t have cared less who heard them. He had a one-track mind and Daenerys was most certainly on that lust train with him, headed on a one-way trip straight to Blissville. The bedroom door barely closed before they began divesting themselves of their clothes in haste. She stopped him when he got to his kilt, wanting to make the discovery on her own. The garment fell to his feet and she gave him a wicked grin, the myth was spectacularly confirmed. The evidence: his weeping hard cock bared to her hungering eyes. He picked her up and they fell onto the bed together, a tangle of limbs and laughter. She pushed on his shoulders and he rolled onto his back. She shimmied down his body, her hand wasting no time as she gripped the base and stroked to the tip in one long swirling motion. He groaned, his hand resting on her head when her mouth poised over him, “No, love, let’s share this pleasure.”

Quizzically, she waited a beat and his next words made her walls clench, “If you are going to do that, I want to pleasure you with my mouth.”

A wild glint sparked in their eyes and she turned, positioning herself until her center was poised over his mouth. A hand curled around the top of each thigh, drawing her closer to him. With a deep breath of her scent, a rough utterance of _Fuck_ followed; the warmth of the profanity ghosting over her. She leaned forward a bit, her elbow supporting her weight, her mouth so close to his hardened manhood she could smell the masculine scent of him there. She licked the head once, her hand gripping him before he pulled her to his eager mouth and she felt him latch onto her clit and suckle, his tongue pressing hard against it. She whimpered; her desire for him at a fever pitch ever since he rudely ceased his digital exploration of her in the kitchen. She knew it would not take long with that wicked tongue of his to send her tumbling into ecstasy. Drawing the head of him between her lips and circling it with her tongue, she let him slowly slip in further. Her hand moved in counterpoint as she took as much of him as she could into her mouth, which was no small feat. She added a slight twist to the motion of her long sure strokes. His tongue was slow against her, swirling and flicking; the angle with which he licked from the base of her clit to the tip, so different from the way he usually pleased her, made her need rise quickly, his sounds of satisfaction muffled by her flesh in his mouth. He caressed his hands over the backs of her thighs to her hips and lower back before he grasped the gentle swell of her bottom in his hands, spreading and drawing her more fully against his tongue. She moaned around his manhood, increasing the speed of her motions, her orgasm swiftly approaching. He took her between his lips and flicked at her fast, the motion he had learned that would make her peak for him, his own release tingling at the base of his cock. Her hips jerked against his mouth and the sounds she made were unintelligible, her essence coating his lips and tongue. He saw for the first time her climax, her sex throbbing in rhythm to her lusty cries around him. The sight sent him over the edge, his hips lurching from the bed suddenly, the tightness in his groin snapping, his copious release pulsing into her mouth in toe-curling spurts. His moans of pleasure against her sensitive clit caused her to pull away, whimpering at the now too intense
sensations. She slowed her motions, easing the last waves of bliss from him before licking the head softly one last time.

She collapsed to his side, panting, her body still floating. His fingers traced lazily over her ankle bone, “Perhaps you can tell me why we haven’t done it that way before.”

Something between a breathless chuckle and a laugh filled the air, “With so many magnificent ways to pleasure your body, Daenerys, I suppose one or two are bound to slip through the cracks.”

Jorah found himself face-to-face with her, “You said we had done ‘most everything’ from that sex book you have on the shelf,” she bit her lip softly, “Let’s go through it and find out what we haven’t done yet.”

“Right now?”

“Not necessarily,” she thought a moment, “We could take it with us when we leave.”

He drew her leg over his hips, “It might be best to start at page one, you know, just so we can say we’ve been thorough.”

A giggle passed her lips, her head resting on his shoulder, “I do so love your attention to detail.”

“Oh, you don’t know the half of it, love,” he rolled her onto her back, nuzzling her neck and snuffling like a bear against her skin, drawing peals of laughter from her. She tried to push him away, but it was no use, his tall body too strong for her. He slipped his hand between her legs and the merriment ceased in a shaky gasp, her hands now drawing him to her in earnest. And for the next two hours, he proceeded to show her just how thorough he could be.

Chapter End Notes

The story about the cow and her baby is true...happened to my father in Northern Ireland when he was a wee lad. My Grandmother tells the story better than I do though.
Thoughts and Discoveries

Chapter Summary

Daenerys and Jorah get lost in their thoughts, Jorah and Jeor spend some father-son time together, and a song inspires our couple to truly give in.

Chapter Notes

First off, thank you for all the comments/kudos/reads! My readers are lovely, wonderful people who deserve great big bear hugs (pun intended).

The song on Daenerys' iPod is "Feelin' Love" by Paula Cole. Give it a listen, but do so with headphones or alone. It's...steamy.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The early morning sun filtering through the curtains woke Daenerys little by little. Turning to her side, she was greeted by a handsome sleeping face. Jorah looked boyish in his sleep, hair tousled, his lips slightly parted, a hint of drool at one corner of his mouth. That fact alone made her smile, he's so cute when he sleeps, she mused. His left arm was curled under the pillow and he snored softly. It was in these early dawn moments that Daenerys daydreamed about silly girlish things and lately she had begun to think about her life with Jorah, specifically, if he would ask her to marry him. She knew it was probably way too soon to be thinking about that, but she couldn’t help it. In her mind, she would picture him on one knee, his eyes full of affection but also a tinge of anxiety while he waited for her answer. He wouldn’t have to wait long; she knew he wouldn’t even finish asking before she would respond with an emphatic yes. Daenerys wondered if Jorah knew just how much he meant to her; how he had given her the happy life she had always dreamed about but never thought she would have. She wanted to lay there and watch him a bit longer, but the urge to use the toilet could not be ignored anymore. Slipping from the bed as quietly as possible, she said silent thanks for the blessing of not having to leave their room to take care of business.

Once finished, she paused in the doorway, stifling a giggle at the mess that had formerly been a well-made bed. The comforter half-hung off it, the top sheet askew and barely covering Jorah’s naked backside as he lay nearly spread-eagle on his stomach. To say that they had been active the night before would have been a gross understatement. Sometimes she marveled at his stamina, her other lovers that had been closer to her age would have gladly given their right arm to have what he possessed. She guessed it must be experience coupled with tender care and love that made him able to go on for hours, always seeing to her gratification long before his own. And several times to boot. Shivering slightly at the chill of the room, she crawled back into bed. Stirring but not waking, he rubbed his face into the pillow, his body shifting under the sheet to reveal the pale musculature of one butt cheek. As much as she wanted to pinch it, she let him continue sleeping. After last night, he needs it, she thought, drawing the sheet up his body and snuggling up to his side, closing her eyes hoping to catch a short nap.

Jorah blinked his eyes slowly, a heavenly face gradually coming into focus on the pillow next to his.
Beautiful and adorable, he thought, a smile tugging at the corners of his mouth. With her left hand tucked under her chin, Daenerys looked so serene in her slumber he dared not wake her just yet. Watching her peaceful, even breathing, a sensation Jorah had never felt before tightened his chest. He wanted this with her every day for the rest of his life and not just the way things were now, living under the same roof together. No, Jorah wanted everything and he saw it in his mind: a shining silver band around her currently bare ring finger, building their own little world together as husband and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Mormont. Even children if she wanted them. With the rings his father had given him artfully hidden back at their loft, he knew he couldn’t ask her now. But that didn’t mean the thought of proposing wasn’t in the back of his mind. He loved her so strongly and more deeply than he had ever loved any other woman before her. She was his whole world, the Queen of his heart. He reached out, his fingers whispering over her soft cheek, a sleepy, happy sound resonating in her throat. She slept on though, her face nestling deeper into the pillow. He got up from the bed as quietly as possible and drew the comforter over her curled up body to keep her warm. Jorah pressed a tender kiss to her temple and crept off to shower.

She awoke a short while later, the duvet drawn over her. The soft strains of Jorah singing the first verse of “Good King Wenceslas” floated out of the bathroom while he showered. She closed her eyes and listened, his singing voice always made her smile. He sung beautifully, even those horrid modern pop songs they would hear on the radio sounded infinitely better coming from him. Unfortunately, she and Jorah didn’t have the day all to themselves. Jeor wanted to spend time with Jorah one on one, but that left her the opportunity to explore part of the enormous house, something she had wanted to do since they arrived. She rose and slipped through the partial open bathroom door, grinning at the sight that greeted her before joining him in the shower.

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“Blast, that’s three games in a row,” Jeor grumbled as Jorah retrieved the balls from the pockets, “When did you become so proficient at billiards?”

Jorah smirked. “One word, Father: University. I had to pass the time on weekends somehow.”

“I see,” he replied simply, “You must still be playing though to retain that level of ability.”

Jorah racked the balls for the next game, “I actually haven’t played in months. Perhaps I should ask Daenerys if she’d like to go with me next time and learn the game herself. She’s always keen to pick up new things.”

“Your mother was that way about many things, including billiards, although the games always evolved into something else entirely when we played.”

Jorah caught his father’s meaning right away, “I really didn’t need to hear that, Father.”

Jeor’s shoulders shook with mirth at the disgusted look on his son’s face, “Well, the two of you aren’t exactly quiet, you know.”

He hadn’t expected his father to bring up his and Daenerys’ sexual activities. If he was being honest, they were quite vocal and it was only a matter of time before Jeor heard them. A blush rose on Jorah’s cheeks and he rubbed at the back of his neck, “Yeah, about that, -”

“I didn’t say that to rain on your parade,” he said with a dismissive wave of his hand, “You two are young and madly in love, it’s the way it should be.”

On some level, Jorah appreciated his understanding, realizing that his parents had likely
been that way too, a fact that made him uncomfortable to consider for too long. He set the cue ball, gesturing for his father to break. With one sure stroke, the older man scattered the balls, sending them clattering against one another and bouncing off the rails, a solid finding its home in a corner pocket.

“Speaking of Daenerys,” Jeor asked, “Where is she? I didn’t see her after breakfast.”

“She said she wanted to explore the house while we had ‘father-son’ time.”

His father smiled, “She has a very inquisitive mind. I would wager she also loves to read, doesn’t she?”

“Yes, she could spend hours curled up with a good book if I let her.”

There was a lull in the conversation while the men took their shots, Jorah sinking two in a row and his father missing his next one only by a hair. Jorah missed his next one too and he muttered something under his breath as he stood and leaned on his cue.

“I had been meaning to ask, but I felt it might be inappropriate to enquire with her directly,” Jeor said, pausing to attempt his next shot, but failing to sink it, “She mentioned never knowing her parents and her brother never celebrating any holidays. That can’t possibly be true, can it?”

“Unfortunately, it is. Daenerys has had a very hard life, her parents dying in a fire when she was very young and the cruel treatment she received at the hands of her brother growing up,” Jorah answered before sinking his own shot, “But she is a fighter if I have ever seen one, managing to retain her gentle heart despite it all.”

“Not to mention that nasty business with her brother’s murder,” Jeor sighed, “No one should have to suffer those misfortunes.”

“No, and that is precisely why I plan to make to her as happy as I can.”

“You both seem to be, but especially you,” he patted his son on the shoulder in passing to line up his next shot, “In fact, it’s the happiest I have ever seen you.”

“I certainly feel that way.”

“Not to dredge up old memories, but the last time you came here for the holidays, I’d never seen you so miserable. The difference is like night and day.”

“The memory of that Christmas still makes me ill,” Jorah shuddered visibly, “Lynn made it hell for everyone here, including Barton. That poor man, she ordered him around as if he was her personal servant. Nothing any of us did was good enough for her; all she could do was whine about missing her family Christmases in that tony seaside village she was from. I can’t even remember the name of it.”

“Sadly, I remember that all too well,” Jeor rolled his eyes, “I don’t think Daenerys has asked for one thing since you two arrived. I was right about her, she is nothing like Lynn.”

“She certainly isn’t. Sometimes I look at her and I can’t believe that she’s in love with me or that she’s real.”

“I felt that way about your mother,” Jeor’s gaze was wistful, “What in heavens name possessed her to fall for me, I’ll never know. But I thank the gods she did.”
“How did the two of you meet?”

“Her father was a colleague of my father. We had a gathering at the estate and she came,” he chuckled to himself, “She wasn’t even interested in me when we were first introduced. She was attracted to my best friend. But when he saw how smitten I was, he talked me up to her. By the end of the party, I had successfully persuaded her to go horseback riding with me. It didn’t go so well at first, but by the end of our first ‘date’, we were laughing and talking like we had known one another for ages. The rest is history.”

The game was now long forgotten, the two men standing across the table from each other, “I wish I had known her.”

“I wish you had too. She would have been very proud of the man you’ve become.”

Jorah felt his chest swell at his father’s words; all he had ever wanted was make his father proud. Now, the thought that his mother would have been too made Jorah ache for the memories he should have made with her, but never had the chance to.

“You know,” Jeor laughed, “She called you her “little cub” when you were a baby.”

“It seems neither of us could escape the bear nicknames,” Jorah said with a slow shake of his head.

“Apparently, you still are one.”

Jorah’s brow wrinkled, “Wait, how do you know-,” then it dawned on him, “This morning at breakfast. You must have overheard Daenerys.”

“The way she looked at you when she called you “my bear” nearly made me smile. The more time I spend around the two of you, the more it reminds me of my wife and me. I know I’ve said it before, but it bears repeating: the women in our lives worked wonders on us, made the best parts of ourselves shine.”

“I don’t know what I’d do without Daenerys. Probably be a slave to the grind of work, toiling away at my desk, flush with money, but bitterly alone.”

Just then a mobile rang, causing both men to reach into their pockets. It was Jorah’s and he groaned at the name on the screen, “Speaking of work, I have to take this.”

“Of course, I’ll go see about lunch,” Jeor said, leaving his son to his phone call.

After having checked on how lunch was coming along, he walked back to the room he had just come from, and still hearing Jorah deep in conversation, he went off to pass the time until he was done.

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Daenerys had gone through the library on several occasions, but had never actually stopped and looked at anything. But, since Jorah was playing pool with his father down the hall, it gave her a chance to finally check things out. The shelves were lined with books, nearly all hardcovers. Scanning the titles, she began to see a trend: business and law. Fascinating, she thought, and continued on. But she was in luck, tucked away on the bottom shelf and nearly hidden between two tomes on financial law principles, was an old paperback. The edges of its pages were yellowed with age and the spine cracked from frequent reading, but its title seemed promising: A Knight’s Promise. Based on the cover image, it certainly wasn’t a book about law. She tucked it under her arm and
went on further exploration. The library yielded nothing else of interest, so she decided to go upstairs and investigate the rooms on either side of theirs. One was a storage room, the other former guest quarters. Just as she was closing the door, something on a table caught her eye. She went to it and opened the cover of the leather bound book to find a familiar face smiling back at her. A quick perusal of the other pages made her smile widen and she hefted the album onto her arm so she could look at the ones underneath. These photos were older, so she left them behind and went back down to the library to read and go through the pictures.

Halfway through the fifth chapter of the book, the door to the library opened and Jeor entered, but stopped when he noticed her, “My apologies, dear. I wasn’t aware the library was occupied.”

“It’s all right,” she smiled, hastily shoving the book between the cushion and the arm of the chair, “Come in.”

He walked to the couch near her and sat down, “I hope I didn’t disturb your reading.”

“Oh, no, it’s fine. How did the pool game go?”

“Jorah always was quite good,” he mused, “I could never beat him.”

There was a pause of silence before she said, “Your Christmas gift, Jeor, I still can’t…”

He chuckled. “You are a part this family now, Daenerys. How could I not gift it to you?”

“I don’t know, I just…It was unexpected, I guess.”

He leaned forward, his elbows on his knees, “You remind me of her in subtle ways. Your kind heart. Your infectious laughter. Your love of books,” he finished with a tilt of his chin to the novel she had hidden.

“I wish I could have met her,” she stated with a sad smile.

“I wish you could have too,” a small dimple appearing on his cheek that she had never seen before, “She would have loved you.”

His admission made her eyes sting and they darted away before meeting his again. He saw how his words had affected her and he rose, walking toward her slowly. He took her hand in his very large one, “Seeing my son happy, not to mention how happy he has made you, brings back such fond memories. This Christmas has been more joyous for me than it has been in many long years. I have you both to thank for that,” his other hand coming to rest over their clasped ones, giving it a gentle squeeze.

She stood and pressed a kiss to his cheek, “I have never had a Christmas like this in my entire life, so thank you for that.”

She couldn’t be sure, but she thought Jeor’s mildly shocked face was faintly blushed. But that expression changed quickly to a grin, “You are quite welcome, my dear.”

The door to the library opened and Jorah peeked his head in, “Ah, there you are,” he entered, “Barton is looking for you, you have a phone call.”

With a parting pat to her hand, he walked from the room. Now she and Jorah were alone and they sat next to one another on the couch. She looked somewhat dazed and he asked, “Something my father said?”
“He told me that I remind him of his wife in small ways,” she laughed to herself, “Your mother was right.”

“How about what?”

“Your father may be all serious on the outside, but he is a bigger teddy bear on the inside than even you are.”

Jorah laughed at that. “I’ll have to work to reclaim my title then.”

“Your father also said he always loses to you at pool.”

“That’s right, the lone past time where I have the advantage.”

“A titan of mergers, a handsome man and a pool shark,” she said, climbing into his lap, his hands resting on her shoulder blades to draw her down closer to his face, “How did I ever get so lucky?”

They drifted downward to tuck into the back pockets of her jeans and grasp her bottom, “You forgot one, love.”

“And which would that be?”

“A spectacular lover,” he whispered against her lips before claiming them in a passionate kiss.

When they parted breathlessly moments later, she smacked his arm, “You arrogant, egotis-”

He cut her off with another kiss, but they were both laughing through it.

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Jeor eventually returned, but by then, Daenerys had extricated herself from Jorah’s grasp, albeit reluctantly. The phone call had been from a man Jeor had purchased a car from, a classic that was extremely rare. He asked Jorah to join him in the garage as it was about to be delivered, and once again, Daenerys found herself alone. She stowed the album on the shelf for later and took her book back to their room. Fishing through her overnight bag, she found her iPod and put the headphones in, shuffling through her playlist to find just the right track. When she found it, she picked up her book and started reading again. The Knight in the story reminded her vaguely of Jorah, but he was far too chivalrous for her taste. That was not to say that Jorah wasn’t, he simply had the right balance of gallant and naughty. She finished chapter six and was just starting the next one when a familiar song came on, its beat and lyrics bringing a smile to her face. Book long forgotten, she stood and stretched, her body beginning to move as she started to dance, closing her eyes and feeling the music. Her mind started to wander with the words:

I would open the door and I’d be all wet/with my tits soaking through this tiny little t-shirt that I’m wearing and you would open the door and tie me up to the bed.

She could see Jorah standing in her doorway, a green t-shirt so fitted to his chest it threatened to rip if he moved the wrong way, his jeans clinging as tightly to his sculpted rear as her hands would be when he’d press her roughly against the wall, his mouth all over her breasts before he’d toss her onto the bed, crawling over her body to bind her hands to the headboard and have his wicked way with her. Daenerys’ mind was a fertile playground, she and Jorah did things there that she had yet to tell him about, but seeing as they had sex so often, she didn’t doubt they would get to those fantasies soon. The way the woman sang reminded her of the noises Jorah elicited from her and she could
feel herself slipping into arousal’s heated embrace.

Jorah opened the door to their room to a very sexy sight, Daenerys’ body swaying to what must be a sultry beat, her hips shifting back and forth in a way that made him want to touch her. He closed the door and approached her slowly, but she still didn’t hear him. When his hands came to rest on her waist, she jumped and yelped, turning toward him while taking one of her headphones out. Realization dawned in her eyes and she smiled; a wicked one that Jorah returned. He took the earpiece from her and put it in his own ear, his eyes closing briefly as he recognized the song from some movie he had seen a time ago. His hand slid under her sweater and held her lower body against his, their eyes locked on one another, his body getting hers moving again with his own to the throbbing bass of the track. Their hips rocked and swung side to side, his lips descending on hers at the same time his other hand slipped under her sweater to knead her breast, pinching her turgid nipple a bit harder than usual between his thumb and forefinger. She dipped and ground her bottom up along the length of hishardening cock, his throaty groan bringing a flush of wet to her already slick sex. He nipped at her ear lobe, his lips dropping to her neck and ravishing the skin there, her head falling back against him in offering. He took it without hesitation, his teeth and tongue joining in. She was uninhibited in his arms, greedy for sensation. His fingers hastily undid her jeans before slipping inside, his growled declaration of **So wet for me** was an understatement, but it wove its way into the fabric of the song anyway, a seamless fit. She couldn’t get enough of the feel of his cock against her and she needed him inside her desperately.

With the song now long over, she ripped the earbuds from their ears and tossed her iPod onto the chair before turning and dropping to her knees, her hands caressing his thick hardness through his slacks. She undid his clothes in a hurry, pulling them roughly down his legs before grasping his dripping cock and taking him deep into her mouth all at once, drawing a low hard groan from him. His fingers tightened in her hair and she moaned around him, her hand, tongue and mouth working him over in perfect harmony. His balls tightened and he swore he was going to come already, his body responding to her far too quickly for his liking. He had other things in mind and he stepped back, bending slightly to help her up.

She followed his lead, pulling her sweater over her head as he took off his. Her bra came next, tossed quickly to the side. She made for her jeans, but he stopped her, dropping them roughly down his knees now. He pulled them, and her panties, off in much the same way she undressed him. He turned her with a push of his hands on her hips, his gravelly order made her sex clench, “Bend over for me, Daenerys.”

She did, arching her back to display herself to him. She looked over her shoulder to find his hand wrapped around his cock, idly stroking as he stared unabashedly at her sex, his chest rising and falling faster than usual. She gasped at the sight and his eyes met hers, “That singer sounds a bit like you in your pleasure. But I think I would rather make you moan for me.”

And she did when he licked her clit in a long hard stripe, her jaw dropping, her legs already trembling. He didn’t stop either, his tongue relentless in its pursuit of her pleasure. Her head dropped heavily to her hands wrapped tight around the footboard of the bed, her knees threatening to buckle under the intense sensations. Her sex began to flutter, her orgasm nearly there, but she didn’t want it to end this way, even though the feel of his hands parting the cheeks of her bottom so he could fully wrap his lips around her clit and feast on her made her ache for release. She wanted him inside her.

“Jorah,” she begged, “Take me now!”

He wasted no time, standing and grasping her hips firmly, guiding her back onto his cock. He was sheathed to hilt in one stroke, buried deep in her quivering sex.

“God, love,” he leaned down and nipped at her neck, “Throbbing for me already? Tell me what you
want and it is yours.”

Her head tipped back, her voice husky, “Jorah, take me hard,” she met his gaze, their eyes nearly black with lust, “Show me the animal in you.”

He growled at her plea and gave her what she begged for. Each hard fast snap of his hips made her cry out in pleasure, her head falling back on her shoulders in surrender. This is what she wanted from him sometimes, not gentleness, but fierce, hungry need. She had it in her and that meant it must reside in him too. He always wanted to be tender with her and there were times when she swore he was holding back, keeping the bear in its cage. But not now; he set it free, his fingers tight around her, his sac hitting her clit deliciously with each thrust. She pushed back against him, his moan of God, do that again made her chuckle darkly and she did it willingly.

She looked at him over her shoulder and he was an erotic vision, his muscles flexing, a slight sheen of sweat to his skin, his lips nearly drawn back in a snarl. She clenched involuntarily around him, her body instinctively responding to his. A litany of jumbled words fell breathlessly from her lips, short oaths of ‘yes’ and ‘Oh God’ as well as appeals of ‘give to me harder’ and ‘take me faster’ made them both wild. Her clit tingled, his balls no longer providing the stimulation it needed as they had drawn tight to his body in anticipation of blissful release.

They truly were like animals now, giving into their baser instincts. The wooden footboard creaked and groaned under the force of their coupling, the wet sound of their rapidly meeting flesh the most profane yet sacred sound in existence. He moaned low and long, a signal to her that he was at the edge. She was grateful as she was too, unwilling and unable to hold back any longer. Her hand moved between her legs to join him in his climax.

They were both panting now, her legs shaking, his grip tightening. Her fingers circled her slick nub fast, brushing against his tight sac, soaking wet with her arousal, each time his body met hers. The blossoming heat in her belly spread like wildfire, her orgasm catching her unawares. His name was more sound than voice, utterly alien to her ears, her mind and body filled with only him. She pulsed around his cock, his hips pounding her twice more before he stilled deep, his own moan of her name guttural and wildly primal. His release, thick and heavy inside her, brought tiny throbs to her sex, her walls desperate for him to stay deep within her. His head dropped to her shoulder as they both struggled to catch their breath, their hearts thundering in their chests.

He let go of her hips, his hands caressing her body tenderly, gentle kisses being softly pressed to her upper back and shoulders. She stretched in satisfaction under him, a groan of residual desire leaving his lips.

“Sweetheart,” he whispered, his voice breathless but sweet, “Are you all right?”

She giggled, her sex tightening around his softening cock, “Oh my sweet bear, you were perfection.”

His chest rumbled against her back, his beard tickling her skin, “We were quite…vigorous, to say the least.”

He slipped wetly from her body and left her only briefly, returning with two damp facecloths, one to clean their combined release from her leg, the other to cool her heated skin. She sighed and smiled at his care of her, even after what they had just done. He took them to the bathroom and came back to her, leading her to their bed and drawing her under the covers with him.

“I need that from you sometimes, Jorah,” lying face to face so they could talk, “I’m not made of glass, you know. It’s ok to let go once and a while.”
“I know, love,” his fingers brushing through the hair at her temple, “I guess I just need time to adjust.”

“You were never like this before?”

It was both a statement and a question. He sighed, “I’ve never desired someone as passionately as I do you.”

A question hung in her eyes a moment before she asked it, “You told me that you and Lynn were ‘hot and heavy’ together. Isn’t that ‘desiring someone passionately’?”

“What Lynn and I had is nothing like what we have together,” his brow tight, “I don’t mean to be crude, but it was like scratching an itch, a battle for dominance in its rawest form. Suffice it to say, it was lust without emotion.”

Daenerys thought about what he said, trying to imagine a relationship where two people could be like that. She couldn’t picture Jorah that way, but then, she only knew him the way he was with her. Lynn, on the other hand, was self-centered, spiteful, and manipulative. These things she gathered from her brief encounter and details Jorah had told her about his marriage to her. Daenerys supposed it was possible for one person to rub off on another or for them to change to fit the relationship. Or perhaps it was simply that they were not well matched to one another, something they would have discovered had they dated longer.

“You don’t have to answer this if you don’t want to, but why did you get married in the first place?”

Jorah looked ashamed, “I was drunk when I proposed. Well, it was a combination of things really. Our company rugby team had just beaten a rival company’s squad at an annual get-together and we were celebrating at the pub. So it was alcohol and the thrill of victory, a very bad combination.”

“Oh,” was all Daenerys could say.

“I’m not proud of that, and if I had the chance, I would go back and do it differently.”

“If you had, you might not have met me. You could have ended up happily married to someone else by now.”

“Well, in that case, all the heartache and struggle was so very worth it to be with you,” he smiled, his hand drawing her face to his for a kiss.

She excused herself to the bathroom; his eyes glued to her retreating form before he lay back and stretched, his body completely loose and tension-free. He got up and went to the foot of the bed, bending to collect their haphazardly strewn clothes, the memory of their interlude made Jorah’s eyes close and brought a small smile to his lips.

“Thinking about what we just did, my bear,” she teased, happiness dancing in her eyes when he opened his and found her looking at him.

His eyes swept over her and the clothes he held fell to the floor once more, “I can’t get the sight of you out of my mind,” he drew her to him suddenly, her excited yelp giving way to tittering laughter, “Or the sound,” his voice dropping in tone, his hands exploring the silky skin of her back down to cup her bottom and lift her into his arms, “nor the feel of you.”

She cradled his face in her hands, her lower body wiggling against his growing erection, “Again, Jorah? You are insatiable today.”
“Not just today, I could make love to you every day and never tire of it.”

“Do we have the time? Your father…” her thought trailed off with a sigh, his lips caressing the arched column of her throat.

“He’ll be busy with that old car for a good long while,” Jorah whispered into her ear between soft kisses, “Certainly long enough for me to take my time with you as I am always want to do.”

With her fierce need already satisfied, she wanted tenderness this time, slow and sweet, the way Jorah expressed his love to her with his body on most every other occasion. They fell onto the bed laughing, their amusement giving way to bliss.

Chapter End Notes

The next chapter will be very heavy on the sentimental feels. Just a heads-up.
Fire and Ice

Chapter Summary

A meeting of fire and ice in the rain results in a scintillating experience, a trip down memory lane brings laughter and tears, and a Mormont heirloom brings regret as well as a revelation.

Chapter Notes

This chapter was originally a little different, it started out as 100% sentimental feels. It read heavy and full of opportunities for tears and not much else. The second revision had less tears, a dash of funny and a hint of sexy. But as it says in Goldilocks, this one is just right.

Some NSFW to start, then the combination of happy and sad feels. I'm happy with it, I'll set it free into the fandom wild now (hehe).

“I thought it wasn’t supposed to rain today,” Daenerys exclaimed, following behind Jorah’s swift stride as best she could. The grassy slopes were slippery now, her footing slightly unsure. He stopped beneath an arch in the beige stone wall, the last dry place for some distance before they could reach the house. She ran in after him a moment after, her jacket drawn over her head. The cobblestone floor was smooth and she realized too late that it offered no traction. She tumbled into him, his arms already poised to catch her when he saw her foot slip.

“Whoa there, I got you,” Jorah chuckled, her hands braced on his biceps, relying on him to hold her until she steadied herself.

Daenerys was laughing too, her fingers pushing back the wet strands of hair that had managed to escape her elaborate braid. Their leisurely stroll around the property was cut short by this sudden torrential downpour, a weather event that hadn’t been mentioned in the forecast. Jorah shook the water from his long wool coat, grateful for the fact that it was waterproof. Daenerys, unfortunately, did not have a similar feature to her outerwear and she trembled a bit, the mist of her warm breath hanging in the air between them. He gathered her to him, drawing the sides of his coat tight around her frame, a happy sigh passing between her lips when she wound her arms around his back and snuggled closer.

“I swear you really are a bear,” she murmured, her head tipping back to smile at him.

“Or perhaps the heat of my love is so great, my body cannot contain it.”

“Were you reading that medieval romance novel I found in the library,” she smirked, “Because you sure sound an awful lot like the Knight in that story.”

“The only way you would know that is if you were reading it too.”
She glanced away, unable to let him see that he had caught her.

“Ah, I was right. You were reading it.”

Daenerys was not about to reward his deduction with any sort of acknowledgement, but the gentle insistence of his body to get her to walk backward couldn’t go unquestioned, “Jorah, what are you doing?”

“Just how much of that book did you read,” he ignored her query, guiding her until they were both ensconced in the alcove behind her, shielded from the cold and anyone who happened to wander by. What light managed to make it in to where they were hidden gave the air a clandestine feel, like two people stealing a secret passionate moment.

“Only a few chapters.”

He hmmed against her lips, “Did you read chapter ten by any chance?”

“I didn’t get that far,” she spoke softly between lazy kisses, her body now considerably warmer, given the press of him and their arousing activities.

“The Queen’s Knight was not so chivalrous,” his lips now ghosting over her jaw, the heat of his breath melting her even more against him. His hands, which had been resting on her waist, skimmed up her sides to her breasts, cupping them in their large expanse.

“What was he-” she gasped, his thumbs passing over where her nipples stood hard from their peaks, her hips drawn to his like a magnet to its opposite.

Jorah knew her body so well, even through her thick cable knit sweater, he knew precisely where to touch her. With whisper soft kisses to the shell of her ear, he told her in a low voice, “Unable to contain his need for her, he spirited her away to a hidden part of the castle. They shared several passionate kisses, and when his hand finally slipped beneath her gown, he found her slick with desire.”

Her hands gripped his shoulder blades under the heavy weight of his coat, the wool slightly scratchy against her skin. Tipping her head back more in hopes that he would get the message, “What did he do to her then?”

Jorah smiled against the delicate skin of her neck, the breathy intonation of her words told him she was just as aroused as he was, “He knelt at her feet, bore her gown above her hips and pleasures her with his mouth.”

“Oh my god,” her body rolling against his in response, “Damn this rain! If only you could take me back to the house right now, I’d happily be your Queen, my handsome Knight.”

His chuckle rumbled through her, “Who says we have to go back?”

What he said snapped her back to reality, “You’re joking, right? We can’t do that here.”

“We don’t have to reenact their amorous act exactly, love,” his open-mouth kisses growing more urgent to closer he got to the collar of her sweater, her resolve and embarrassment chipping away with each sweep of his tongue along her collarbone beneath her clothing. But when his mouth found that particular place at the base of her neck, she couldn’t help but moan; her hands drawing around to his chest, clutching at his shirt for support. All the while, his hands were busy too, caressing her breasts and sides. She loved how big they were, and when he splayed them across her back, they left no part of her untouched. One of them slid down and around her hip to the button of
her jeans, easily undoing it before unzipping them.

“God, your hand’s cold,” she yelped, starting at the press of his fingers against her heated, slippery flesh.

“Sorry, love,” he said apologetically, his hand beginning to pull back.

Her own wrapped around his wrist, stopping his leave. He tilted his head quizzically, to which she responded, “You know, it was shocking at first, but now it just feels...good. The extreme difference in temperature is strangely exhilarating.”

“Like fire and ice.”

His gravelly declaration couldn’t have been more accurate, their eyes both ablaze with need. She let go of his shirt and threaded her fingers through his hair, drawing him down into a feverish kiss, their tongues seeking and exploring one another’s. Two of his fingers pressed and circled her clit perfectly, using her own wetness to make it even better. The cold threatened to seep into her and quench her flame, but his ice was ultimately no match. It only succeeded in making her nerves tingle in an exhilarating new way and she tucked away the idea of an alternative use for ice cubes for another time. A sudden slow roll of her clit brought her back to the moment; the enticing swirl of it between his slick digits had her gasping. Perhaps it was the thrill of doing this outside or of being caught, but her desire was building so quickly she didn’t even have time to feel shame. She only knew she wanted more of everything: his wondrous touch, his zealous kisses, the occasional rhythmic slow grind of his pelvis against her. It was the feel of him there, hard and insistant, that had her heart pounding and suggestive thoughts whizzing through her mind.

She bit her lip to stop a loud moan from escaping, two of his fingers easing into her, his thumb resuming their previous activity, “Daenerys, you are like fire.”

His growl into her mouth made her boneless, her body sagging against the strength of his arm around her waist, her legs barely supporting her weight. At times only their tongues touched, her panted breath damping his lips, her arms thrown around his shoulders. She felt wanton like this, boldly riding his hand, seeking her release. Her muffled sounds of pleasure brought his eyes to hers, “Don’t hold back, love, be loud for me.”

A delicious shiver spread through her at his rasped entreaty, his thumb thrumming her clit with increasing speed, the obscene sound of his fingers thrusting into her nearly masked by the heavy rain. Her whole being shuddered and he groaned, “That’s it, you’re going to come for me, aren’t you Sweetheart?”

“Don’t...stop...and...I will,” she stumbled over her words, the precursor to her climax had her inner walls erratically clutching at him.

“Oh, I have no intention of doing that. Not when the only thing I want to feel is the magnificent throb of your body around my fingers.”

“Jorah, please,” the pitch of her voice high and needy, “That place...touch me there.”

He growled, knowing full well what she meant. Jorah found it with practiced ease, the imperceptibly ridged part of her that had her writhing; the come-hither stroke of his fingers drew a cry of “yes” from her before her head fell against his shoulder.

The undulation of her body was wild now, her orgasm close. She clung tightly to him, “Daenerys, look at me,” she met his gaze, “Let go for me, love, give in to your pleasure.”
His deep voice, thick with desire, was the final bit that she needed. Captive in his lust-filled blue eyes, she tensed then shuddered hard as her orgasm swept over her, pulling her under into its dizzying, swirling depths. She moaned his name loudly again and again between hasty gulps of air; the echo of it in their secret recessed cocoon was sweet music to Jorah’s ears. His fingers slowed, drawing out her bliss for as long as he could. Finally, with a whimper, she sagged against the rough stone behind her, legs wobbly, her fingers extricating themselves from his hair, her eyes blinking lazily at him.

Her lips parted and she gasped, “Too much,” her hand pushing at his arm with a soft laugh.

Jorah took care in slipping from her body before bringing the slick digits to his mouth and sucking them clean, making a noise of satisfaction low in his throat. Even after all this time, she still blushed at his naughty display and that made Jorah smirk. Taking a hold of his shirt, she pulled him to her for a kiss, this one slow and sweet. Using it as a distraction, her other hand drifted down between them and cupped him through his pants. He jumped a bit at the suddenness of it before he groaned at the intense sensations she elicited from him, her fingers exploring the silhouette of his cock.

“Did chapter ten mention anything about what the Queen did for her Knight,” she purred.

“No,” Jorah gasped, her nails scraping delicately over the head, “He only served at her pleasure.”

“Now that seems very unfair,” she arched an eyebrow at him, “Don’t you think, my handsome Knight?”

Her flirtatious manner had him chuckling as much as her actions had him panting and groaning. Giving Daenerys pleasure was something he loved to do; feeling, hearing, and seeing how good he made her feel always increased his own desire tenfold. Now, with the memory of her ecstasy still fresh in mind, he gave himself over to her impulses, allowing her to do with him whatever she wished, “Who am I to deny my Queen?”

Her eyes flicked to his groin, and with a wicked smile, she unzipped his pants and reached inside to ease him free of his boxer briefs.

The cold air did little to chaste his desire, the coolness of her hand stroking his cock had him hissing and gasping. Licking her lips at the sight of him, Daenerys crouched and looked up at his somewhat shocked face, the softness of his navy wool trousers allowing her palm to glide easily to its destination. But his eyes were blazing, the heat nearly palpable, watching her cradle his straining cock in a tender grip. She leaned forward, running the flat of her tongue along the underside and over the glans. His head fell back with a soft sigh and he felt her do it again.

He groaned when she suddenly took the head into her hot mouth. The sight of her lips slipping slowly down the shaft, her tongue moving against the silky flesh brought his hand to rest on her head. Jorah never pushed or directed her, he knew that some men did that sort of thing and he found it demeaning. Yet he still wanted her to know how spectacularly good she made him feel. A slow start steadily built to a faster pace and she followed the cues of his body in her eagerness to bring him pleasure just as he had done for her.

“Oh god, Daenerys,” his faint Scottish brogue growing deeper by the second, the husky inflection of his voice making her clit tingle with renewed yearning.

His body spoke too, the twitching of his thigh muscles and the further hardening of his cock in her hand were the silent hints of his impeding peak. Jorah’s chest rose and fell rapidly, his eyes threatening to close even though he desperately wanted to watch her. Through fluttering eyelids, he saw the sultry smile dancing in her eyes, and combined with her sinfully perfect tongue, the tight
slick slide of her hand, and the taut ring of her rosy lips, Jorah was utterly lost. The nerves in his
groin sparked like lightning and the searing rush of his orgasm finally drew his eyes shut tight.

With a rough, gasping curse and his fingers tensed in her hair, he came, pulsing his thick release into
her mouth, her hum of satisfaction drawing out the blissful sensations until he could take no more
and begged her to stop.

Feeling vaguely lightheaded, Jorah braced his hand against the wall and stared at her with a dazed
expression while he caught his breath. She stood and eased his softening cock back into his pants
before refastening them.

“Heavens, love, I would have thought you wouldn’t want to do that where we could be seen.”

She drew her lip between her teeth, a faint blush coloring her cheeks, “What can I say, I was caught
up in the moment,” a cold wind swept through the archway then and she felt it against the skin of her
abdomen. Looking down, she noticed her pants were still undone and she redid them before fixing
him with a teasing smirk, “I blame you for that. Then again, we did cross something off my list just
now.”

He hadn’t intended for what had just transpired to happen, it just did as was often the case
with their desire. Being with her reminded him of his wild youth in some ways, but it was the deep in
his bones love he felt for her that made it vastly different too. Jorah had never known a woman like
her, everything about the way they were together was new and yet so wondrous he knew he would
never want for another for the rest of his days. Wrapping his arm around her waist, he cupped her
jaw with his hand. The way he looked at her crinkled her brow, Jorah was the first man to ever speak
to her heart with the words in his eyes. And it seemed as if he wanted to say or ask her something,
but he must have changed his mind for he blinked quickly and leaned in to kiss her instead, his
tongue sweeping into her mouth to taste and tangle with her own. As much as Daenerys loved
Jorah’s sweet slow kisses, sometimes his passionate ones were just what she needed. Intuitively, he
seemed to know just which one to bestow on her at the right time. This one was heady mix of
passion and tenderness, his thumb caressing her cheek when he ended their kiss and rested his
forehead against hers.

The rain had lessened considerably and they were able to make a break for the house,
rushing side by side across the grass. He held the door for her and followed in after, letting it shut
behind them. Once back in their room, they changed and returned to the study, a fire burning
cheerfully in the hearth. Daenerys went over to a bookcase and pulled a large leather bound album
from the shelf. She sat on the floor by the fireplace, drawing the blanket she had brought tight around
her shoulders. Jorah joined her, sitting cross-legged by her side. Jeor had gone to visit a friend in the
village and so they had a chance to do something on their own before dinner.

“I found this in my exploration of the house yesterday while you and your father played
pool.”

Opening the cover, Jorah was greeted by a pair of familiar faces. He leaned in close and
realized just what he was seeing, “My god, that’s my parent’s wedding photo.”

She gave him a smile, “I thought you might like this.”

The beaming couple stood close to each other, his mother’s hand resting on the lapel of his
father’s suit jacket, his hands resting on her waist. The slim silhouette dress was white as snow; the
long sleeves fashioned entirely of intricate delicate lace, the veil fell to her mid-back and composed
of the same material. The small bouquet of white roses she held made Jorah think of the garden and
he smiled. He wished his father had told him more about the life he had with his mother before he
was born, but this photograph would have to do until then. Maege had been right though; his mother was beautiful and he recognized a bit of himself in her golden ginger hair and smiling blue eyes.

“They look happy together.”

Her voice brought him back from his thoughts and he nodded in agreement, turning the page to the next picture, one that made him roar with laughter, “I remember that day.”

It was Jorah; knees scraped and clothes muddy, sporting a broad grin with his two front teeth missing. He looked to be about seven or eight and he held a puppy in his arms, the dog’s fur equally caked with dirt, its tongue lolling out the side of its mouth. She thought he was adorable and she looked at him, seeing a bit of the boy in him now, the heel of his hand wiping away a tear of happiness.

“What happened?”

“Maege’s Border Collie, Lady, had given birth to a litter of puppies. She thought it would be a good way for me to learn responsibility, so she gave me one. I remember that she took me aside and suggested I name it Bear, seeing as it was the biggest of the litter. At my young age, I didn’t understand the look on my father’s face nor the reason why my aunt laughed until she nearly cried,” he chuckled, “But I do now.”

They continued through the pages, passing by photos of Jorah in his boarding school uniform looking decidedly unhappy next to his stern faced father and one of them standing next to a restored silver Aston Martin DB5. Those images brought a sadness to Jorah’s eyes, the memories of his teenage and early adult years were not like the happy ones of his early childhood. There were pictures of Jorah at his graduation from university, looking very smart in his gown with the white silk hood lined in lilac, signifying his Master in Business Administration. Those were followed by several of him on horseback, one in particular made her whistle low. It must have been some medieval reenactment event or renaissance faire because he wore a golden yellow tunic that clung to his leanly muscled chest, his ginger curls thick and tousled by an apparent wind. The ties that should have been knotted dangled from the deep V and it gave her a clear view of the chest hair she loved so much. She told him that he had been ‘really cute’ as a young man, but that she thought he was ‘gorgeous’ now. He winked at her admiration of his good looks, however, the smile slowly disappeared when she turned to the last page. It was a snapshot, probably taken by Barton or a family member, one edge wrinkled from frequent handling. One glance told her the reason why this picture affected him so much. It was a sunny day, a large green checkered picnic blanket laid out on a patch of grass, a portion of the house visible to one side. Jeor, looking much younger and very happy, his hair and beard reddish-blond, sitting close to Jorah’s mother, her shoulder resting against his chest. She was pointing at the camera, and whoever had taken the picture, had caught her in mid-laugh. Her hair was done in a long braid and it rested over one shoulder, the emerald of her sweater made her porcelain skin luminescent. But it was the chubby baby seated in her lap that made Daenerys’ eyes sting, the top of his head covered in fine, mostly blonde, curls. His tiny fingers clutched one of Jeor’s thick digits, his mouth open in a toothless grin. Jorah had a dimple even then and it was on full display on his pudgy, pale cheek.

“So this is the memory I have of her. It’s real after all,” Jorah said quietly, a tear slipping down his cheek.

She reached for his hand and he held hers tightly. They sat in silence, the pop and crackle of the fire an oddly perfect accompaniment to the moment.

Jorah sniffled loudly, wiping the wetness from his face with the back of his free hand. “Thank you for finding this, Daenerys,” he turned to her, “It means a great deal to me.”
“Of course, I’m glad I found it too. I had always wanted to learn more about your life before me, to see you and your family over the years. You should ask your father to borrow these and have copies made. That way, you can have your own.”

“I will,” he agreed, “Where did you find this?”

“In one of the upstairs bedrooms, down the hall from our own. There were quite a few others, but most of them weren’t of you or your parents. I think they must have been your grandparents.”

“You’ll have to show me, I’d like to see them.”

“Sure, let’s go.”

Closing the album, she led the way to the room where she had made the discovery, and for the next hour, they flipped through the pages, picture after picture putting leaves on Jorah’s family tree. Some of these people he had never met before, and in a few cases, he had never heard mention of them. She noticed a family resemblance in some of the men, similar striking cheekbones, strong jawlines, and piercing blue eyes. When they got to the last page of the final album, Jorah closed it with a sigh, “Now that was a trip through the past. Some of those photos date back to the early 1900’s.”

He turned and surveyed the room, furniture covered in drop clothes that had once been white but had yellowed in the sun and covered in a fine layer of gray dust. There were rooms in this house he had never been in and this was one of them.

She must have been wondering the same thing, “Was this a guest room?”

“It would seem so, but it hasn’t been for years.”

“Just how many rooms does this house have?”

“You know, I have no idea,” he said with a laugh.

They left the room just like they found it and took his family album back to their bedroom. There, she suggested they take a tour of the rest of the house and Jorah though that was a splendid idea. The north wing, where they currently were, was more guest bedrooms with covered old furniture. The south wing was more interesting. They found what had to have been his mother’s craft room, the sewing machine and supplies still exactly where she must have left them, draped in crisp white sheets for protection. It was different from the other rooms, those coverings were dingy and old, but these looked freshly laundered. Jorah thought about how his father must visit this room often in order for those linens to look that clean. Then he found himself wondering if Jeor ever let his emotions go on those trips here, remembering his wife and the time he spent with her. His father was never prone to outward displays of great sentiment, but perhaps he did once he was alone.

The next door revealed a much smaller version of the library downstairs, the books residing on the shelves classic Elizabethan and Victorian literature, the authors ranging from Spenser and Lyly to Brontë and Browning. The titles did not look like something his father would read, so Jorah assumed this must have been his mother’s reading room. He started to believe that this entire part of the house had been hers, but the room at the end of the hall disproved that assumption. This was his father’s study, a big mahogany desk sat in front of the expansive picture window, the floor covered in ornately patterned dark green carpet. The family crest, a large snarling black bear standing on its hind legs, was embroidered on a heavy white fabric bordered with green trim. It hung on the far wall next to a large portrait of a man Jorah recognized from the photo album. It was his
grandfather, dressed in a fine suit circa early 1900’s, his thumb tucked in the pocket of his waistcoat. But it was the item prominently displayed above the fireplace that brought a flare of regret and melancholy to Jorah’s chest and he approached it slowly. Its blade gleamed in the light, the silver of it shining and bright. No nicks or cracks marred the edges; it had been kept in impeccable condition. But it was the pommel that held his eyes, the white growling head of a bear showed almost no signs of wear despite its old age and the intense battles it had no doubt been a part of.

“That’s quite a weapon,” Daenerys said with awe, “Does it have a name? All of the great swords do.”

Her words drew him from his thoughts and he looked at her, “Yes, Longclaw. It has been in my family for generations, going back to before the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. My father thinks it may even be from the fifteenth century, forged by master blacksmiths in such a way that it is nearly indestructible, although that part may just be legend.”

“So much history,” she stepped closer, “I wonder how many Mormonts wielded that mighty sword in battle.”

“I’m not even sure,” he sighed and looked away in shame, “But it will never be mine.”

“What do you mean?”

“My father said I dishonored the family name when I sold that company. He told me I would never inherit it, saying he would rather see it in the hands of any other more honorable man than me.”

“That can’t be true now, Jeor forgave you. Things must be different. Not to mention the ring he gave you for Christmas.”

Daenerys stood before him, his brow knotted with sadness and she rested her hand against his cheek softly. She noted the shimmering of tears in the corners of his eyes as he struggled to stifle his emotions.

“I wish it was that simple, but it isn’t.”

“You are more than worthy, Jorah. You’ve proven that by what you have done for the company in the time it has been in your hands. Jeor said it himself, you have made the business flourish in ways he never could.”

“Yes, you are right on that account. But there is more to it than a successful business, it is about honor,” he replied.

“But you did the right thing by admitting your fault and learning from it.”

He couldn’t meet her eyes, “He didn’t find out from me, Daenerys. He read it in the paper first.”

Jorah had never revealed that part of the story to her and she felt the sting of only now learning this concealed piece of information. It begged only one question, “Why?”

“I was ashamed, embarrassed by the fact that I had allowed myself to be duped by a pretty face, deceived by Lynn’s fictitious love for me into giving her whatever she wanted, spiraling into a debt I couldn’t repay,” he shook his head, “I even thought about running away from my problems and never facing my father.”
Daenerys didn’t think Jorah was a perfect man, but this was a part of him she had never expected to find. The man she knew was noble and honest, not someone who shirked his responsibilities and kept secrets. It confirmed her words for her; Jorah had redeemed himself, for the man he once was wasn’t the man that stood before her now.

“I think you’re wrong. You are a man of honor, Jorah. And if Jeor can’t see that you have repented and changed, then he doesn’t see you the way I do.”

She felt the hot wetness of a tear under her fingers and saw the faint jerk of his shoulders. She wrapped her arms around him without further hesitation, allowing him to let go of the sadness and guilt that he still seemed to be holding within him. All she heard was the quiet tick of the grandfather clock until Jorah sniffled and lifted his head from the crook of her neck. His eyes were slightly red, but the smile he gave her was warm, “I’m sorry.”

“What for?”

“That,” he answered simply.

She shook her head softly, “A real man shows a range of emotions, in the right measures and at the appropriate times. I would have been more worried if you had started laughing or something like that.”

“Well, I definitely wouldn’t have done that.”

He took a deep breath and let it out slowly. She knew it wasn’t possible, but he seemed to be standing taller to her now, like a great weight had been lifted from his shoulders.

“Let’s explore some more, shall we,” he asked, taking her hand. He walked to the door and opened it, giving the sword one last glance before switching off the light and closing the door behind them.
Daenerys walked along the cobblestone streets of the village, following the directions Jorah had given her. At first, he offered to drive her to the shop, but seeing as the weather was dry, she declined, saying the short jaunt would do her good. It was only 3 blocks away after all, the nearly deserted roads peaceful on this early afternoon. The sky was cloudy, but there was no rain forecasted. There was only a slight chill to the air and her cheeks were rosy from it.

The used book shop was easy to find, a large wooden sign hanging above the door. Once inside, she nearly gasped. Almost floor to ceiling were books, hardcovers and paperbacks in neat stacks, the narrow aisles with their shelves full. The store had an old-world feel to it, the scent of aging paper a comforting memory to her. A spiral staircase in the corner led to a small reading loft above and the elderly man behind the counter greeted her with a hearty hello. She knew she could spend all day in here if given the opportunity, but she started at the beginning of the aisle marked ‘Fantasy’, her eyes scanning over familiar titles. By the end of it, she had a small handful of books, ones that she loved and had to buy. The next aisle over was labeled ‘History’ and just then Daenerys remembered something. She scanned the spines on the shelf, hoping that she would find the one she had been looking for, a book so elusive she swore Jorah had been joking about its existence. According to her online research, it really was rare, but based on what Jorah had told her about it, its scarcity was directly related to what an engrossing read it was. Yet, much to Daenerys’ amazement, on a low shelf, sat the book. It had clearly been read many times, its dust jacket torn at the corners and heavily scuffed. But it was still in fairly good condition and she knew she had to buy it for him. The next aisle over was labeled ‘History’ and just then Daenerys remembered something. She scanned the spines on the shelf, hoping that she would find the one she had been looking for, a book so elusive she swore Jorah had been joking about its existence. According to her online research, it really was rare, but based on what Jorah had told her about it, its scarcity was directly related to what an engrossing read it was. Yet, much to Daenerys’ amazement, on a low shelf, sat the book. It had clearly been read many times, its dust jacket torn at the corners and heavily scuffed. But it was still in fairly good condition and she knew she had to buy it for him, seeing as he had been searching for it too. Carrying the heavy hardback to the counter, Daenerys paid for it before she realized that it might not fit in her purse. She shifted things around inside and put her wallet in her jacket pocket, making just enough room for it and then went back to the last ‘Fantasy’ aisle to continue her shopping.

Jorah knew exactly where to find her because whenever they went to any book shop, she always went to the fantasy aisle first. He understood perfectly well why she had a great fondness for such stories; they had been her refuge for so many years. She could escape amongst their pages, leaving her life behind to live a new one in her mind. There, she could be anything and have all the power, ride dragons and be loved by handsome knights. The aisles of this shop were long and he
spotted her at the back of the store, absorbed in a book, totally oblivious to the world around her. Walking down the aisle, a pale purple dust jacket caught his eye, the small hardcover standing out a bit from the other books on the shelf. He stopped and eased it free from the tightly packed row, a smile breaking across his face at the title. He glanced up to find she still hadn’t noticed him and he turned around, walking back to make the purchase before she found out. Once paid for, he tucked it into the large interior pocket of his coat, fully intending to surprise her with it later.

By the end of the aisle, Daenerys had a small stack of paperbacks to buy and was deeply engrossed in a copy of *The Mists of Avalon*. She didn’t hear Jorah come up behind her, “Good book?”

She nearly jumped a mile, a startled yelp leaving her before she wheeled around and smacked his arm, “I really think you enjoy doing that.”

All he did was smile and she shook her head, then looked past him, “Where’s your father?”

Jorah leaned against the shelves, “An old friend from the North came into the pub and they got to talking. They hadn’t seen one another in years, so they’ll be catching up for a good long while.”

She noticed the tiny water droplets in his hair, “Don’t tell me it’s raining out there?”

“It was only a mist and it has passed already. But, sadly, there are more rain clouds on the horizon.”

She let out an exasperated sigh, “That’s just great; I had an idea for something we could do together.”

“Oh really?”

She arched an eyebrow at his eager response, “I was going to say we should have a picnic lunch somewhere nice and quiet, then you could show me some of your old haunts, places you used to go as a teenager.”

“We can still do that,” his dimple showing from his broad smile, “And I know just the place to take you to.”

After she paid for her books, they crossed the street on their way to a café Jorah knew nearby. They passed several other shops: a clothing boutique, gift shop and a bakery. It was the one at the end of the row where something in the window caught his eye, but he didn’t let on that he had seen anything. They kept walking until they reached their destination, then Jorah made a show of checking his pockets like he had forgotten something, “Damn, I left it in the car.”

“What?”

“My wallet,” he shook his head, “Go inside and wait for me, I’ll be right back.”

“I make money, Jorah,” she smiled, “I can pay too, you know.”

“I realize that, I just…I want to treat you.”

Daenerys’ eyes narrowed, Jorah was flustered and that meant he was up to something. But she decided to let it go, “All right then.”

He gave her a quick parting kiss and set off back the way they came. He waited until he
had crossed the street again before he stole a glance over his shoulder and found she had gone inside. He opened the door to the shop and went inside.

With his purchase safely in the pocket of his coat, he met her at the café and purchased their lunch: sandwiches with sliced apples and two bottles of water. They got back in the car and drove off down the main street out of town. They went on for some time before turning off onto a narrow dirt road, the surface a bit bumpy and uneven. He steered the car toward a thick copse of trees in the distance, nothing but long expanses of grass on either side. He parked off the make-shift lane under a tree and they walked a short distance to have their lunch. Sitting between Jorah’s legs, her back against him, Daenerys enjoyed the simplicity of their outdoor dining. Under the trees on a picnic blanket, a soft breeze ruffling the leaves, the air crisp and cool, a small part of her wished everyday could be like this. No responsibilities, no stress, just her and him, loving one another.

“Is this the place you used to come to?”

“Actually, what I want to show you is through those trees,” he replied, collecting the trash from their lunch.

“What is it?”

“If I told you, then it wouldn’t be a surprise.”

“You’re no fun,” Daenerys said with a pout, but her eyes were laughing.

“Well, in that case, perhaps I won’t show you.”

Jorah’s mock smug expression was beginning to crack, the corners of his mouth struggling to hold their hard line. She closed the distance between them in a flash, tackling him back on the blanket, their laughter combining. She tried to tickle him, but he grabbed her hands in one of his own and rolled until she lay half under him, his other now going straight for the places he knew that made her squeal and wriggle.

“Jorah, stop,” she wheezed, a fresh peal of laughter rising in her when his fingers teased her belly under her sweater. The skin of her cheeks and neck flushed prettily, happy tears clinging to the corners of her closed eyes. Jorah had never seen her dimple so pronounced before and he stopped tickling her, suddenly overwhelmed by her unguarded beauty. Lying beneath him on the blanket, she looked utterly carefree in that moment and he tried to memorize that look, wanting to hold the memory of it forever.

“What is it,” she blinked at him, her question breathless from laughing.

“You are so beautiful.”

His rich voice had a similar quality to it, but this was for an entirely different reason than hers. The sincerity and affection in his intense gaze had her smiling softly, her hands now free to do as she wished. She cradled his cheek and he leaned into her touch, his eyelids drawing closed. When he opened them again, Daenerys saw something familiar in them, something she had seen just yesterday. Jorah clearly wanted to say something, but he was holding back. She wasn’t sure why, he never stopped when it came to telling or asking her anything before. And just like yesterday, Jorah blinked rapidly before leaning in to kiss her. While she didn’t mind in the slightest having Jorah’s lips worshipping her own, she wondered what it was that had him hesitating. But then, thinking became impossible; his hand grasping her leg to draw it up tighter against his hip, her fingers drifting down his cheek to tangle in his sweater before her palm came to rest over where his heart beat at a somewhat faster than usual rhythm. She didn’t stop there long before her arm curled around his side
to his back, drawing him more fully over her. There was something so comforting and safe about the feel of his body on hers, the weight of him just heavy enough but never so much that she would feel trapped or crushed under him. Their kisses slowed until they became nothing more than gentle brushes of their lips against one another’s.

“I have something for you,” he whispered into her ear, grinning at the shudder it brought to her body. She always did that when he spoke softly against her there and Jorah knew it was not simply the tenor of his voice, but the combination of his breath, warm and soft, and the subtle brush of his lips against her skin. “Do you want it now or shall I continue our current activity?”

She shuddered all the harder, a panted breath passing over his ear. Daenerys tilted her head more toward him, “I want it now.”

Gooseflesh rose on his neck and he finally understood why she loved that so much, his body responding to the sweet whisper of her voice. Jorah wasn’t sure if she meant the gift or him, but he surmised that the fact they were no longer kissing was a sign that the former was what she wanted.

He sat back, “Close your eyes.”

Daenerys sat up with a sigh, hesitating but finally closing them. For a second, Jorah considered the smaller box in his pocket, but instead, he reached inside his coat and took out the book, “Hold out your hands.”

She did as he asked, then he placed it gently on her outstretched palms. Her eyes snapped open before going wide, “I love this book!” She opened it at once, flipping through the pages, a grin breaking across her face, “It’s the illustrated one. How did you find this?”

“I saw it on the shelf at the shop, sitting out a bit from the other books,” he winked, “It must have been a sign.”

She knelt and hugged him tight, “Thank you, Jorah,” then leaned back and looked at him, “You’re so very sweet to me.”

“You deserve every bit of it, love.”

Daenerys couldn’t stop smiling, “I have something for you too.”

She knelt on her hands and knees to reach across the blanket for her purse, her eyes drawn to his over her shoulder at the sound of his pleasured groan. His gaze followed the line of her curves, his bottom lip firmly between his teeth. She shook her head, “You’re incorrigible, Jorah.”

“I can’t help it, Sweetheart,” he sighed, “Your body is gorgeous.”

“Close your eyes, you silly bear.”

He did with a smirk, his ears picking up the sounds of a zipper being undone and then something being pulled free.

“Hold out your hands.”

She rested the heavy book in them and they dipped a bit under the weight. He opened his eyes and looked down at the item he held before he looked to her with amazement, “Where did you get this?”

“The same place you got my book,” she smiled.
Jorah was speechless; his search for “Songs and Histories of the Seven Kingdoms” was finally over. He set the book aside, and without warning, took Daenerys’ face in his hands and kissed her. It seemed endless, but when their lips finally parted, she was greedy for air, “Something tells me he likes it.”

“I’ve been searching for this book for years. I read it once a long time ago and I’ve wanted my own copy ever since. And now, thanks to you, I finally have it. You may think I’m sweet to you, but this is sweet of you.”

“Well, I’ve been on the lookout for it since you mentioned it months ago,” she leaned closer to him, “I still want to know about your other surprise for me though.”

“Right, of course, we got a bit sidetracked,” he stood, holding out his hand to help her up. They collected their belongings and carried them to the car before Jorah led her through the dense grove to a small clearing. On the other side of it, mostly covered in a thick layer of green moss, were the ruins of an ancient castle. She turned to him with wide eyes and grinned before taking off at a jog toward it. Once inside what was left of the stone building, Daenerys stopped and turned in a circle, taking in her surroundings. She walked amongst the low walls, forgetting all about the misting rain that had just begun to fall, her hand running over the cold stones, nearly sensing the history contained in them.

By the time Jorah got there, she was nowhere to be found; only the faint crunch of footfalls alerted him to her location. He followed the sound, coming around a corner to find her inspecting what was left of a flight of stairs. He stood watching her, his eyes captivated by her silver hair and pale skin in this ancient place. She fit right in here; his mind filling in the missing pieces of the edifice, picturing her in a medieval gown, a baby dragon perched on her shoulder, her devoted Knight by her side. He shook his head with a smile, clearly, I’ve been watching too much fantasy TV, he thought.

A twig snapped behind her and she turned to see Jorah walking toward her, his long dark coat resembling a flowing cloak, and for a brief moment in her mind, she saw him in an armour breastplate, a sword fastened at his hip. She gave him a half-smile, “This place is amazing.”

“It is, isn’t it,” he stopped beside her, “I played here with my cousins during summers home from boarding school. Fake swords and armour made of cardboard; it was an awful lot of fun.”

“You played as a Knight here,” she laughed quietly to herself, “How ironic, I was just picturing you in armour.”

His eyebrows rose, “Well, I was picturing you in a medieval dress, so I guess that makes us even.”

“I was wondering if that was the case. You had that happy, dreamy look that you get when you’re thinking about me.”

“I have a look?”

“Oh yes, when I’m on your mind, it’s written all over your face.”

Her arms wound around his neck; her head tilting back to look up at him. “There,” she said, “You’re making it now.”

“How can I not make that face when I look at you, love,” the backs of his fingers soft against her cheek, “You are everything I have ever wanted.”
She sighed at his sweet declaration, but the look in his eyes shifted. A question hung there, his lips parting as if to ask her something. But then it was gone with a short shake of his head, his lips descending on hers for a quick, but passionate, kiss. She had seen that look on his face three different times now and she made up her mind to ask him about it when their lips parted. He rested his forehead against hers, “Jorah, is there something you want to say?”

His smile faltered, “What do you mean?”

“I don’t know. It’s just three times now you seemed like you wanted to say something, but didn’t.”

He started to talk twice, but stopped both times before he finally said, “I think you would get sick of me telling you how beautiful you are all the time.”

Daenerys knew that wasn’t the real reason, but she decided to drop it. Pushing him on it most likely wouldn’t get her any closer to an answer, but then a thought occurred to her. She started piecing together the times when he had looked at her that way, remembering what had happened just before those looks. Daenerys began to connect the dots and one of the few conclusions she drew had her heart beating faster. Could he be trying to propose? She wasn’t sure; his previous hasty proposal might make him hesitant to do that again and they hadn’t talked about marriage at all. Not wanting to dwell on uncertainties, she kissed him again.

“There’s something else I want to show you,” he told her, taking her hand and leading the way deeper into the ruins. At the far corner there was one wall that was still mostly intact, a set of stone steps leading to the remnants of a second floor. He went first, holding out his hand to help her to the top of them. The last step was wider than the others and it allowed them to squat down next to each other.

“What am I looking at,” she asked.

“That cross shaped aperture is called an arrowslit; archers would stand behind that opening and fire their arrows at approaching enemy forces. But that’s not the reason why I brought you up here.”

He wrapped his arm around her shoulder and leaned to his left so she could see what he did. Her jaw dropped, the distant coastline coming into view through the narrow opening, “What a beautiful view!”

“Yes it is,” he said, but his eyes were looking at her.

He helped her back down the stairs, holding both of her hands this time, the rain beginning to fall harder. They ran for the car and drove back to the house.

***

Later that afternoon, Daenerys noticed a door at the end of the long ground floor hallway was ajar. It had been locked every time she had tried it before, making her wonder what was hiding behind the large ornately carved doors. What she saw when she peeked around the doorjamb made her jaw drop: it was a ballroom. And a very elegantly decorated one to boot. She stepped inside, the white marble floor speckled with tiny silver and gold flecks that flashed in the light like twinkling stars. The floor was immaculately clean and her shoes squeaked faintly with each step she took further into the room. The reflection of the twin chandeliers hanging overhead caught her eye and Daenerys looked up, the glittering crystal prisms that hung from their chains caught and dispersed the light in rainbows that shifted their hues across the delicate rose patterned wallpaper. But she realized
when she got closer; the design was actually painted directly onto the wall in painstaking intricate detail. She craned her neck to the ceiling, the mural continuing all the way to the top.

Daenerys closed her eyes, the faint musty smell of a room long closed up still hung in the air, but it didn’t stop her mind from picturing the lavish parties that had most likely occurred here many years ago. She could see couples dancing, the skirts of the ladies dresses flowing as men in dapper suits guided them around the floor. Jeor and his wife probably danced too, although Daenerys couldn’t help but giggle to herself at the thought of Jorah’s father moving on the dancefloor, his body far more bear-like than his son’s.

“I haven’t been in here in years,” Jorah said, pulling her from her thoughts. He stood just inside the double doors, his hands in his pockets, his eyes taking in the room, “And not all of the memories were happy ones.”

“Really,” Daenerys asked, coming to stand in front of him.

“The last time I was in here was with my ex-wife,” he stared off into the distance before shaking his head, “I’d rather not think about that.”

“I can imagine,” her hand reaching out to hold his, “So you do know how to dance, you’ve just been hiding it from me all this time.”

“It was years ago that I took dance lessons.”

“Wait,” her shocked eyes meeting his, “You took dance lessons?!”

“You seem surprised,” he gave her a half smile; “Once again, the ex had a hand in that. She wanted our first dance as husband and wife to be a waltz and so we took lessons together.”

“Do you remember how to do it?”

“I think so, but I’m probably quite rusty,” her excited, expectant expression had him asking, “Do you know how to waltz?”

“I do actually; my friend and I took free lessons after classes in secondary school so I could put off going home to my brother for as long as possible.”

“Somehow I’m not shocked to discover this about you, Daenerys. You’re very graceful.”

She smiled. “Perhaps we’ll have to dance sometime soon.”

“I think that’s a great idea.”

***

All during dinner, Daenerys could tell that Jorah was planning something, the all too familiar glint of mischief obvious in his eyes. It remained there for the rest of the evening, and by the time Jeor left them to go to bed; she was desperate to find out just what he was going to do.

She turned to him once they were alone, “All right, Jorah, out with it.”

“With what?”

“Don’t play dumb with me, my bear,” she teased, “You’re hiding something, I see it in your eyes.”
“I can never hide anything from you, can I,” to which she shook her head, “All right, come on.”

He took her hand and walked down the corridor to the ballroom, one half of the double doors still open. Jorah led her inside and flipped the switch for one of the chandeliers, illuminating a portion of the room in soft pale light. He closed the door quietly then walked over to a console, lifting the lid and thumbing through the records housed inside. He chose one with a smile and set it on the turntable, the beginning strains of soft music floating through the air.

“I love this song.”

“I know, I like it too.” Then, with one hand behind his back and the other out in front of him, palm up, he bowed somewhat at the waist, “May I have this dance?”

Daenerys played along, pantomiming a curtsy, “Why yes, you may.”

She stepped to him and he held her close, his hand resting just below her shoulder blade, the other clasped with hers out from their bodies. Their first few steps, awkward and a bit clumsy, had them laughing, and for Jorah’s part, apologizing for stepping on her toes. It didn’t matter one bit to her once they got the hang of it, their natural turns following invisible couples in a circuit around the room. She couldn’t help but marvel at how good Jorah was at this, his rise and fall quite good by way of technique, his posture as always nearly perfect. They had slow danced together on several occasions, and while swaying together with him was wonderful, this was so much better. Daenerys felt just like a fairy tale princess, or even better, a Queen, dancing the night away in the arms of her dashing Knight. Under his lead, they took the dance slower now, her head resting on his shoulder briefly before she met his eyes, “I can cross this off my list.”

“Waltzing was on your list?”

“Yeah, and I’m so happy I got to have my first one with you.”

His smile fell, “You’ve never waltzed before?!”

“Are you kidding,” she scoffed, “The men I dated before you were definitely not Fred Astaire. Their idea of dancing was more along the lines of nightclub stuff.”

“Ah yes, the bump and grind,” he mused, “That is definitely not my kind of dancing either.”

They were quiet for a while, enjoying the music and one another, their dance less like a waltz now and more like a slow sweep around the floor. With her head resting on his shoulder again, Jorah’s mind started to wander. The item in his pocket was barely noticeable to him, the weight of it so light he knew it was there only because he had gone upstairs after dinner to get it. Daenerys had been chatting with Jeor and so she hadn’t noticed he was gone until he returned, her eyes watching him closely. He figured she probably knew something was up, but he didn’t think she knew all of what he had planned for her. Everything about the moment felt absolutely right and he knew exactly what he was going to say, his heart beating a bit faster only out of anxiousness, not nerves.

“Did you ever think we would have ended up here, happy together after nearly a year?”

“It’s strange, but yeah,” she laughed softly, “I felt such a strong connection to you very early on. I just wanted to know you, I couldn’t explain why.”

“Well, I felt the same way about you. I was drawn to you, and as much as I tried to keep things professional, I couldn’t.”
“I’m so glad you didn’t,” she smiled.

“Me too,” he paused, gazing at her wistfully; “I’ve had a lot of success in my life. A thriving company, good friends, and financial security,” he broke off, deep in thought, “But there was always one aspect of my life that never seemed to work out right.” She stared at him expectantly before he said, “Love. It was one failed relationship after another,” Jorah’s eyes met hers, “Until you came along and turned my whole world upside down.”

“In a good way, I hope.”

“In the best possible way. We have a rhythm I can’t explain and I don’t even want to try to. We just work together. I have everything a man could ask for,” he stopped their dance, “There’s only one thing left to do.”

“What’s that?”

Daenerys gasped as he dropped to one knee before her, her hand coming up to cover her mouth. He reached into his pocket and took out a delicate silver ring, “Daenerys, will you honor me by becoming my wife?”

“Yes.”

Jorah barely finished asking before he got the answer he both knew was coming, but was still worried he might not hear. He couldn’t help that last part, he had learned that anytime you put your heart on the line, there was always a small chance it might not turn out the way you hoped it would. Daenerys was laughing through her tears as he slipped the ring on her finger, and when their eyes met, she saw tears brimming in his. She knelt and hugged him, the force of it sending them tumbling back onto the marble floor. Neither one could stop laughing, her lips peppering his face with kisses.

“That’s what you’ve been trying to do these last two days,” she shoved him playfully, “Silly bear, what took you so long?”

“The moment had to be perfect. Every woman remembers how they were proposed to; I just wanted it to be a memory you’d never forget.”

“It was perfect, Jorah,” her tears starting to fall again, “And the ring is too.”

She held her hand out in front of her, the gleaming silver molded into the shape of a thin lizard, its tail wrapping around to meet its mouth. It was a near perfect fit, just a bit of wiggle room that she knew could be easily fixed by a resizing. Daenerys looked back at him, realization in her eyes, “You bought this earlier today, didn’t you? Saying you forgot your wallet…I know you, Jorah, you don’t forget anything.”

“Guilty as charged. I was trying to be surreptitious about it,” he replied sheepishly, “Obviously I failed miserably.” He interlinked their fingers, his eyes studying the ring, “It’s only temporary, mind you.”

“Temporary? I don’t understand,” her brow tensing.

“No, no, love, I didn’t mean it that way,” he said in a rush, “I mean that the real engagement ring is at home.”

“Oh,” she sighed, looking very relieved, “Wait, you bought me a ring just so you could propose even though we’re going home in less than two days?”
“What can I say,” his eyes soft with affection, his thumb rubbing over the ring gently, “I didn’t want to wait any longer.”

“How long have you been thinking about proposing? You say the real ring is at home, when did you buy it?”

“First off, I didn’t buy it,” she looked at him questioningly, “My father gave it to me when we came here in November.”

“You’ve wanted to propose since November,” Daenerys asked, her voice soft with disbelief.

“I thought about it,” he smiled, “Secondly, the rings my father gave me were my mother’s. He said that they were meant for me to give to the woman I love.”

“Oh my god,” her bottom lip quivering, “Your mother’s rings…Jorah, that is a huge deal.”

“It gets even more sentimental,” Jorah’s voice growing huskier, “My father told me that when my mother gave them to him, she told him that they were to join the woman I fell in love with to the family.”

Daenerys couldn’t respond, she simply buried her face in Jorah’s neck and cried. He held her, his own eyes stinging. After a time, he whispered, “I think I ruined your happy memory.”

Her eyes snapped to his, “No, you didn’t Jorah. You made it even more meaningful. Not only did you give me something I’ve always wanted, to get married, you gave me something even more significant…a family.”

“I know what that means you, Daenerys,” his thumb brushing a tear from her cheek, “And you will never be without one again.”

She leaned into his touch, but after a moment, she smiled, “It must be very uncomfortable lying on the floor like that.”

He chuckled. “To be honest, I hadn’t really noticed until now.” Jorah moved to stand up and he held out his hand to her, grinning, “Let’s go upstairs.”

“That’s a wonderful idea.”

Chapter End Notes

So Jorah did it...finally! We won’t get this in the show, so I decided to give the Jorah/Daenerys fans what they have always wanted to see. A wedding is in their future, but there are a few things yet to happen. Stay tuned!
Chapter Summary

Jorah and Daenerys’ engagement triggers a question and a toast for the happy couple. Then they celebrate New Year's Eve in their own way.

Chapter Notes

I'm very sorry about the long wait. Life has been...interesting, to say the least. The next several chapters will be released on the previous once-a-week schedule (I hope...fingers crossed).

WARNING: this chapter is extremely long (over 7000 words) and has a sex scene that explores the *other* type of female orgasm. I have to be blunt...I don't think there is a delicate way of saying that. If that makes you uncomfortable or if it is something that you simply don't want to read, you'll see it coming (pun totally intended) and can skip over it until it is safe again.

Thank you to my readers for their continued (wonderful) support of this story as well as the kudos and comments. You are awesome!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Lying wrapped in Jorah’s warm embrace, Daenerys didn’t want to get up. She wanted to stay there all morning, her half-open eyes drifting from the partially open drapes to the silver band around her finger. She couldn’t help the sleepy grin that broke across her face for what seemed like the millionth time since he had slipped it on last night, her thumb toying distractedly with it. It would take some getting used to on her part; Daenerys had only worn a ring once, but had lost it somehow during her move to London years ago. Earrings and the occasional necklace were the only ways she usually adorned herself. Her mind drifted to wondering what Jorah’s mother’s rings would look like. Would they be diamonds or some other stone? Would the gem be large and opulent or modest and simple? Would the band be silver or gold? But she soon found that she didn’t really care, the fact that she would be wearing something that held such a deep meaning was more than enough reason to love whatever they might be.

Last night, they had gone upstairs together and Daenerys didn’t want to get up. She wanted to stay there all morning, her half-open eyes drifting from the partially open drapes to the silver band around her finger. She couldn’t help the sleepy grin that broke across her face for what seemed like the millionth time since he had slipped it on last night, her thumb toying distractedly with it. It would take some getting used to on her part; Daenerys had only worn a ring once, but had lost it somehow during her move to London years ago. Earrings and the occasional necklace were the only ways she usually adorned herself. Her mind drifted to wondering what Jorah’s mother’s rings would look like. Would they be diamonds or some other stone? Would the gem be large and opulent or modest and simple? Would the band be silver or gold? But she soon found that she didn’t really care, the fact that she would be wearing something that held such a deep meaning was more than enough reason to love whatever they might be.

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Last night, they had gone upstairs together and Daenerys had fully expected Jorah to make love to her. The tenor of his voice led her to believe that’s what would happen, but she was intrigued to discover that all he wanted to do was cuddle with her under the blankets, his kisses soft and sweet, his hands caressing her body in a manner that, while sensual, wasn’t arousing. They said nothing, but Jorah’s eyes spoke volumes. Sometimes his finger would trace the ring on hers, his gaze following with a tender scrutiny. It was a long while before Jorah finally spoke, his murmur of I can’t wait to marry you making her all warm and fuzzy inside. He had taken her in his arms then, drawing her back against his chest before pressing a kiss to her neck. It had not been long after that for her to fall into a blissful sleep.
Now, in the graying light of a cloudy morning, Daenerys wanted to stay in bed longer, but she felt Jorah begin to stir. She closed her eyes, feigning sleep, because she knew he always checked on her before getting out of bed. The mattress dipped behind her, the soft rustling of sheets reaching her ears then she had the sense that she was being watched. She tried her hardest not to smile or give him any outward sign that she was awake, but she must have failed for Jorah’s sleep-roughened voice had her giggling. “I knew it,” her soft tittering getting louder, “The subtle twitch of those beautiful lips always gives you away.”

Daenerys rolled onto her back to find him staring down at her, his own equally beautiful ones quirked in a half-smile. His hair stood on end and she lifted her hand to run through his sleep mussed coif, his eyes looking up to try to follow her movements. She trailed her fingers down the back of his neck, over the slight rise of his shoulder where he propped himself on his elbow next to her before coming to a stop on his chest, her fingers toying with the fur there. Their eyes met and held, his hand coming to rest on her hip beneath the covers, his fingers dipping under her sleep shirt to delicately brush over her smooth skin. It wasn’t her shirt really; although she claimed it as such after he had worn it under his sweater the day before. It was pale blue, reminding her of the Delphinium they had seen on a trip to the botanical garden one Saturday afternoon months ago. Those flowers also happened to be nearly the same hue as Jorah’s eyes and she had purchased the t-shirt for him for precisely that reason. She told him once that she loved to wear his shirts, the hugeness of them engulfing her reminiscent of his bear-like embrace, the scent of him lingering in the fibers. Jorah wouldn’t admit it openly, but seeing her in his clothes was equal parts adorable and sexy. He loved watching her pad around their loft, the hem of his garment brushing the silky skin of her shapely legs. He pushed those thoughts aside now, her hand against the back of his head, guiding him down for a kiss. They often did this during quiet early mornings if they both happened to be awake, sharing deep, lingering kisses. But when her leg drew over his hip and the length of her body pressed against his, the slow caress of their lips was no longer enough. His hand slid higher under her shirt, palming her breast and drawing a soft moan from her throat. His thumb teased the already hard peak, her body giving an involuntary shudder at the touch, her hips searching for the delicious friction his thigh always provided. Her lips tore from his with a soft cry, her eyelids fluttering at the euphoric sensations building in her body. Her hands eagerly explored the warm skin of his chest and back before latching onto his shoulders for support. It wasn’t long before Jorah was moving with her, his hips pressing down into each rise of her own, a slow feeble mimicry of their lovemaking. His open-mouthed kisses and nearly inaudible groans trailed over her arched neck, her hands now tight in his hair, holding his head just where she needed him, her pleading whispers bathing the skin of Jorah’s temple in heated breath.

The creak of floorboards outside their door drew Daenerys’ attention first, her body going still beneath his. He met her eyes with a question, but then he heard it too. A knock followed soon after, Barton’s polite tone just loud enough to make it through the door, “Young Master, Ms. Targaryen, I hope I have not disturbed your morning, but…” he paused, his words were colored with faint embarrassment, “Your father wishes your presence for breakfast early in order to make preparations for the party.”

“All right,” Jorah answered back, “Thank you Barton.”

There was a brief moment of silence before they heard his retreating footsteps. To Daenerys’ credit, she managed to hold in her snickering laughter until there was no sound coming from the hallway. Her face buried in the crook of Jorah’s neck and her body shook with amusement, which succeeded in drawing a soft chuckle from him as well.

“He totally heard us, Jorah,” her eyes sparkling with mirth, a soft blush on her cheeks.

“I’m sure he did,” his nose coming down to nuzzle hers, “I love how you can’t stay quiet.”
She shook her head at him with a smirk, “Men and your egos.”

“Ego,” his eyebrows rose in mock surprise, “Would you prefer I didn’t make you feel that good?” Daenerys heaved a sigh and glanced away, to which Jorah smiled triumphantly, “I thought not.”

With one last slow kiss, he reluctantly moved to her side, the both of them now seated beside each other, “What did Barton mean by ‘party’?”

“My father mentioned something about a New Year’s Eve celebration when he invited us for Christmas.” Jorah shrugged, “But Barton makes it sound like it is a far bigger affair than he originally let on.”

He pulled back the covers and got out of bed, but Daenerys didn’t follow. He turned to find her with her knees drawn up, her chin resting on one, her arms hugging her bent legs.

“What is it, love?”

“How are we going to tell your father about your proposal,” her worried eyes meeting his, “I don’t want this party to become about our engagement, Jorah. I don’t want to ruin his plans.”

He came to stand by her side of the bed before he sat next to her, “You won’t ruin anything, Daenerys. My father will simply make an announcement and leave it at that. I seriously doubt the party will become entirely about us.”

The reassuring squeeze of his hand on hers, coupled with the gentle smile on his lips, chased away her worry and she returned his expression, “All right, let’s tell him at breakfast.”

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Seated at the smaller dining table in the room off the kitchen, Daenerys and Jorah waited with anticipation for Barton to finally take his seat, since he insisted that he at least serve them tea if none of the other breakfast food. Jeor fixed his son’s profile with narrowed eyes, knowing something was up, the excited glances between his son and girlfriend piquing his interest.

Jorah cleared his throat and all eyes were on him, “Father, I have an announcement to make.” The two men stared and he smiled, her hand clasped in his, “Daenerys and I are getting married.”

Two sets of wide eyes darted between the couple before both men grinned, the biggest smile Daenerys had ever seen currently gracing Jeor’s face. Rising with a speed that belied his age, Barton came around the table and shook Jorah’s hand before drawing him into a hug, exclaiming a hearty congratulations. His attention was then directed to Daenerys, his broad smile and misty eyes had tears prickling her own. He hugged her too, telling her he was so delighted to have her as a permanent part of the family. While she and Barton discussed the ring and Jorah’s proposal, Jeor came and clapped his son on the back then shook his hand. Her heart clenched at the sight of these two men, once at odds and unspeaking, now smiling and talking as if no rift had ever existed between them. The thought occurred to her that she might have had a small hand in their reconciliation and she smiled all the wider.

Then it was Jeor’s turn to congratulate her, his hands taking her left gently in his own. His brow tensed for a brief second, his eyes scrutinizing her ring, but he recovered quickly, his words and smile genuinely glad for her, “Congratulations, my dear. I cannot tell you how happy I am for the both of you.”
“Thank you, Jeor,” Daenerys replied, rising on tip toe to kiss his cheek. She smiled at the blush on the older man’s face; his usually stoic demeanor always seemed to disappear when he was interacting with her.

Breakfast was now cold, but no one seemed to notice or care, too distracted by the joyous news. The room was filled with excited conversation as they all ate, the topic shifting from the engagement to the party planned for that evening. Daenerys leaned back in her chair watching the banter, a hint of sadness shading the cheerfulness within her. All of her life she had wanted this, the simple things: chatter around the breakfast table, laughter, but most of all, the feeling that she belonged and was loved by those around her. She felt it here, with Jorah’s family, and for the first time in her life, there was a peace inside her, a contentment that what she had long searched for was finally hers. She reached for Jorah’s hand under the table, the brush of her fingers against his own had his eyes fixed on her, the love and happiness in them saying more than words ever could.

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“Jorah, may I have a word?”

“Of course,” he replied, pressing a kiss to Daenerys’ cheek as she left the two men to their conversation.

Jeor waited until she disappeared around the corner before he addressed his son, “I couldn’t help but notice Daenerys’ ring.”

Jorah gave him a beat, almost expecting him to say more, but he didn’t. He simply peered at him inscrutably, waiting for an answer. “I had expected you to mention something about that,” he responded, stuffing his hands in his pockets, “I fully intend to give her mother’s ring when we get home.”

His father nodded. “A spur of the moment proposal then,” a smile danced at the corner of his mouth, “I only heard bits and pieces of what Daenerys was telling Barton about it, something about a dance.”

“Daenerys had never waltzed before,” Jorah smiled at the memory, “The ballroom was open, so we shared a dance, and like you told me, I would know when the moment was right. And it was.”

“Taking a page out of your old man’s book, I see,” the older man’s eyes smiling, “Now, I will make an announcement at the party tonight. I hope the two of you are not opposed to a toast?”

“No, that’s fine.”

The two men parted ways and Jorah went in search of Daenerys, hoping to occupy the time in some way until the party that night.

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Jorah was in the parlor long before Daenerys was; his father’s request for liquor recommendations had drawn him from their room early. He remembered seeing her dress lying on the bed, a classy red number with just enough sequins and flash to catch people’s eyes yet still not overpower the room. He had no doubt she would be the star of the party, her personality always captivated everyone she met. It also probably had a bit to do with her exotic looks and he found himself unable to stop thinking about her in that dress. It was new, only in the sense that she had it in the back of their closet and had never worn it. He adjusted the tie bar until it was straight on the
Jorah waited by the bar, discussing the hors d'oeuvres menu with a member of the catering staff when a lull in the conversation caught his attention, the wide eyes of the bartender now focused over his shoulder, his smile appreciative. Jorah turned and did a double take, his gaze sweeping over Daenerys’ stunning form as she paused just in the doorway, looking around the room for him. Their eyes met and their dimples appeared simultaneously, her fingers shyly tucking a nonexistent hair behind her ear. The strapless dress highlighted the perfect bone structure of her shoulders, her pale skin seemingly lit from within against the crimson fabric. It came to just above her knee and hugged her curves just enough to make Jorah ache to touch them. His conversation forgotten, he walked toward her in a happy daze, the din of the room disappearing, their gazes locked.

“You look gorgeous, love.”

The timbre of his voice and the way his eyes took in her body made her blush, which only succeeded in making Jorah’s smile broaden.

“You’re not so bad yourself, sir,” she teased, her eyes moving over him now. Her finger traced the edge of his tie bar, her eyes smiling as they met his, “You’re wearing it.”

“Of course, I wear it proudly.”

The soft kiss he placed on her cheek may have been chaste, but the promise of desire lingered in his eyes and it told her his mind had started to go to other places. Little did he know, the first sight of him had set her mind wandering to the time when they could leave and celebrate on their own.

The party was under way for only a short while before Jeor moved to the front of the room and called for everyone’s attention, “As I am sure most you have already met the wonderful woman with my son this evening, it is my great pleasure to announce their engagement. Let us toast to their happiness.”

Standing next to Jorah’s father, they smiled at the congratulatory clapping then the raised glasses of champagne from the guests. They raised theirs in response, smiling happily at the crowd before them.

With the festivities moving to the ballroom, Jorah decided they would share one dance because frankly that was all he thought he could manage. He hadn’t been able to take his eyes off of her all evening and he knew she was thinking of other things just like he was, the way her own gaze would lock with his during conversations or the soft brush of her fingers over the palm of his hand as she stood by his side. Daenerys couldn’t help but notice that Jorah kept glancing at the clock and she could nearly feel his impatience in every touch, more eager and sensual against her lower back as the time passed. She was about ready to burst out of her skin when his fingers dipped under her hair and gently followed the contours of her neck bones, her lips parting at the warmth his touch imparted.

She met his eyes over the rim of her glass; his were intense and held an assurance of more to come. She figured enough time must have passed by now, the hands of the clock mocking her growing anxiousness to leave. Jorah had gone somewhere, telling her he’d be right back. After a few minutes, she scanned the room, but started at the feel of heated breath against her ear, “Meet me at the guest house in ten minutes.”

She turned; a parting wink was all she got before he disappeared into the crowd again. She drained
her glass and left it on a nearby waiter’s tray, pausing at the hallway bathroom before making the somewhat short walk to the cottage. The night was dark and chilly, heavy clouds obscuring the full moon. Daenerys passed a small group of men having a smoke outside; so engrossed in an animated conversation regarding a recent football match that they didn’t give her more than a passing glance. The grass surrounding the small building was still wet from yesterday’s rain and the cold droplets stung her toes in her strappy heels. Jorah leaned against the wall by the front door, a pair of champagne flutes in one hand, a half full bottle of Bollinger R.D. in the other.

She came to a stop in front of him, his eyes glittering even in the semi-darkness. She tilted her head to the side and arched her eyebrow, “Why, Mr. Bond, if I didn’t know any better, I would say you were trying to seduce me,” she teased, referencing the bottle in his hand.

“Always, love,” he leaned in, his arm winding around her waist to draw her to him, “Seduction is an art lost on the men of today.”

His voice was a rumbling purr and Daenerys couldn’t help but kiss him, their lips soon moving over one another’s hungrily. She pulled back all of a sudden, her words breathless, “Let’s continue this somewhere more private, shall we?”

She opened the door, seeing as his hands were full, and led the way inside. But she stopped short at the sight that greeted her. A fire burned in the hearth, numerous lit candles resting on the mantelpiece and nearby tables, blankets and pillows piled on the floor. Daenerys looked over her shoulder as Jorah closed the door with his foot, “You planned this, didn’t you? Assumed you’d get lucky tonight?”

“I don’t assume anything, Sweetheart,” Jorah answered, setting the glasses on the table and filling them each halfway, “I simply like to set the mood and see where things go. I can’t help that our desire for one another needs very little encouragement.”

He was right after all; it was often a simple kiss, a glance or words spoken in a certain tenor that initiated things between them, a small catalyst that set them ablaze with want. Daenerys had never experienced anything like it before, the strength of their emotions was new, but certainly not unwelcome. She basked in the warmth of Jorah’s affection and his intense need to please her and he no doubt felt the same way.

Jorah picked up the glasses and handed her one, “I know you’re supposed to wait until midnight to toast the New Year, but I think I’d rather do it now. We can toast another way later,” he smirked and she rolled her eyes playfully. He paused a moment, his look growing serious, “Here’s to another amazing year by your side and many more.”

Her eyes grew misty, “I’ll certainly drink to that.”

They clinked glasses and drank, the bubbles in the golden liquid tickling her and she giggled, “Champagne always does that to me!”

Jorah smiled at her crinkled nose, “You look very adorable right now.”

“That’s not quite what I was going for.”

“What were you hoping for?”

She set her glass down, “Beautiful,” she said, taking his away and putting it beside hers, “alluring,” her hands smoothing over the lapels of his suit jacket to the button and unfastening it, “desirable,” then they slipped inside to move over the warm broad expanse of his chest to push the garment over
his shoulders to let it fall to the floor, “and downright sexy.”

“Daenerys, you are all of those things,” his thumb grazing over her full bottom lip, “and so much more.”

Jorah brought his other hand up to cradle her face before drawing her into a gentle kiss. It was slow and sweet, his lips moving almost as if they were learning all over again how she wanted to be kissed. Her arms wound around his neck, rising on tip toe to bring herself closer to him. His hands drifted over her sides to her back, pulling her against him. She arched and he bent her back a bit more, her body yielding to the strength of his arms to hold her. Their kiss had grown in intensity, her hands now buried in his hair, her leg drawing up the outside of his own to curl around his hip, bringing her lower body more fully into contact with his. Daenerys whimpered into his mouth, eager for the feel of his hot hands caressing her bare, and equally feverish, skin. His fingers found the zipper of her dress easily, the rasp of it opening joining with her quiet sounds of pleasure. They parted as he eased the garment from her, dropping to his knees so she could step out of it, her hand resting on his shoulder for balance.

His lips parted as his eyes drifted over her. The sheer blush peach fabric of her skimpy panties hid nothing from his hungry stare, but it was the matching strapless bra that had him floored. The floral lace created a tattoo effect on her pale skin, giving him only artful glimpses of her pebbled areola and hardened nipple. The tiny bow between her breasts was an innocent accent to an otherwise sinful ensemble.

“You are a vision,” Jorah uttered in awe, bringing a soft giggle from her, “Where in heavens name did you get this?”

“Agent Provocateur,” she answered simply, as if he had asked her the weather.

He groaned. “Why have I not been present on these little shopping trips?”

“Because I know you, Jorah,” her eyebrow arched, “You would have me trying on everything you saw and buying far too many matching sets.”

“You can never have too much of this, believe me,” he took a deep breath and let it out slowly, “You’re forgetting the part where I join you in the dressing room for my own private fashion show before I rip the flimsy garment from your body and have my way with you right there.”

She gasped at the image in her mind, “Is this something on your list, Jorah?”

He smirked, but said nothing, his hands dropping now to the buckle of her heels, undoing one then the other before removing them. She flexed and wiggled her toes, happy to be free from the painful footwear. His slow caress over the lean muscles of her calves had her head tipping back, the rough pads of his fingers softly teasing the hollows of her knees. His touch went higher, palming the entire width of the back of her thighs, the prodigious heat seeping into her skin from his hands. When his fingers encountered the bare flesh of her supple bottom, a low rumbling sound issued from his throat and she could have sworn she heard him curse under his breath before he met her eyes, “We would not have lasted five minutes into that party if I had known you were wearing this. We would have spent the rest of it in the coat closet, trying to stay quiet.”

Daenerys drew her lip between her teeth, her fingers carding through his hair, “You are so very naughty tonight, Jorah.”

“What can I say; I have the perfect inspiration right in front of me.”
She rolled her eyes, but couldn’t help a smile. Daenerys knelt, her fingers drawing the tie bar free and setting it aside, then she went about undoing the Windsor knot and pulling the neckwear from his collar. His shirt came next, the cufflinks stopping it from coming off completely. He undid them and took it the rest of the way off. All the while, her hands were busy with his belt, drawing it free of the loops and tossing it aside before undoing his pants. She reached inside, grasping his cock and stroking him seductively, his breath leaving him in a hard pant. His hand wrapped around her wrist gently and he murmured, “Not yet, love, ladies first.”

With his arm around her waist, he laid her back amongst the blankets and pillows, letting her adjust until she found the most comfortable position, only then, did he remove the rest of his clothes and lie beside her. Tucked against his side, she kissed and touched him eagerly, loving the feel of his chest hair against her palms, her nails softly scraping over his flat nipples, a mischievous smile breaking across her face when he hissed, the skin tightening under her stimulation. She lifted her head and laved one with her tongue, a surprised gasp giving way to a quiet groan, his eyes watching her all the while. She used her mouth on him the way he did with her, drawing the small darkened flesh between her lips then gently between her teeth. She blew a stream of air over the wetness left behind by her ministrations before laying back to admire her handiwork. Jorah looked slightly astonished, “I can see why you love my mouth on your nipples. That felt…”

“Good,” she supplied before adding impishly, “You can say it, Jorah, I won’t tell anyone.”

He chuckled. “It’ll be our little secret.”

She didn’t even have a chance to laugh at his cheeky wink, his head dipping to her neck to kiss and lick his way down to the shallow valley of her clavicle, sucking softly at a place he knew all too well. Her response was immediate, her back rising from the floor, her hands in his hair, her gasping whimper accompanying the shivering of her body. She writhed against him, her leg moving over his own to grind herself against his tense thigh muscle. Jorah felt the slick heat of her on his skin, the panties failing to contain her arousal as her clit slid effortlessly along him with each roll of her hips. His lips moved across the swell of one breast, open mouth kisses following the lacy edge, his tongue darting out to taste her. His hand reached under her body to unhook the bra and she rose a bit to pull it off and toss it aside before laying back, stretching her arms above her head and arching toward him. He mimicked her actions from before, leaning over her to bring as much of her breast into contact with his questing lips and tongue as he could. His hand tangled with hers above her head and her leg tightened around him, her soft strangled cry of his name had him meeting her eyes. She tugged at his hand and Jorah realized he was holding hers down, but when he tried to take his away, she grasped it tight.

“I want to try this, just for a little while,” her voice soft.

“All right,” he replied cautiously, “but when you want me to, I’ll let go.”

She nodded with a shy smile, his mouth resuming its previous activity. Jorah hadn’t expected that from her and something told him this would not be the last time they experimented with this. He never wanted to dominate her, but the way she surrendered willingly to his firm grasp, he wondered vaguely if a secret part of her wanted to give up control to him. He wasn’t sure how he felt about it, but if she asked and it didn’t hurt her, he would give her anything. He was mindful of the strength of his grip; just enough to keep her hands in place, but not leave any marks or cause her harm. She squirmed beneath him, but it wasn’t in an effort to escape, she simply couldn’t get enough.

Daenerys was in sensory overload, the feel of his hand holding hers down, the mild domination making her sex clench. It surprised even her, this was a dark desire she held deep in her mind, Jorah the first man to ever know it even existed. She had thought it would feel wrong somehow, but it felt
right with him. She trusted him completely, his guarded agreement to her request confirmed for her that while he wanted to give her what she desired, he would never agree to something he felt went too far or that might hurt her in the slightest.

With a parting kiss to the tips of her nipples, he met her eyes, “I need to move my hand, love, if you want me to go lower.”

Her dimple dotted her cheek, “By all means, my bear.”

Jorah let go and shifted lower to kiss and taste the skin of her belly, breathy giggles combining with short gasps on his way to the top of her panties. He moved to kneel between her legs, his hands caressing them before dipping in to ghost over the sensitive skin of her inner thighs. Her head tipped back and she sighed, “Jorah, please…touch me.”

“Show me where.”

Daenerys guided his hand between her legs, pressing two of his fingers against her clit. She arched and mewled, “Right there.”

“I love when you ache for my touch,” his husky voice the perfect complement to the subtle circling of his digits against her. Her wetness slicked them and he brought the glistening fingertips to his mouth and sucked them clean, groaning at the taste.

He curled his fingers into the waistband of her panties and drew them slowly down her legs, his eyes locked on hers. Only when she was completely naked did he let his gaze trail down her body, stopping at her sex. He bit back a moan at the sight and threaded his fingers through the hair between her legs, “It seems shorter.”

“I trimmed it a bit. They say it makes things more sensitive.”

“Has it so far?”

“A little, but not enough to do it again.”

“In a small way, I’m glad to hear that. While I don’t want to tell you what to do with your body, I would greatly miss this if you got rid of it entirely,” his fingers moving among the shorter curls again, “It’s the way a woman should look, real and feminine.” He lay down on his stomach, his mouth poised over her, “Not to mention, it holds the sweet-spicy scent of you so exquisitely and feels wonderful against my lips.”

She giggled. “Well, I like it too.”

Jorah’s nostrils flared and his eyes shut slowly, “I can’t wait any longer, love.”

His urgent growl, coupled with the need in his darkened blue eyes, brought her hand to his head, her fingers winding into his hair to draw his mouth to her. He pressed a soft kiss to the top of her mons, then his thumbs parted the lips of her sex, exposing Daenerys’ achingly hard nub a little more to his devouring gaze, deep pink and shimmering softly in the light from the fire. The amethyst hue of her irises glittered wildly, watching his every move with enraptured attention. Her eyes pleaded for him to end the torment, the briefness of it seemingly eternal. Suddenly, the tip of his tongue darted out, her musky honey clinging to it as he drew it back into his mouth.

Jorah’s sinfully perfect lips curved into a devilish smile that vanished as he finally closed the distance, his tongue easing between her slick folds but avoiding the place she needed him most. Daenerys’ face disappeared from his view when her neck arched, her long shaky exhale of
appreciation making his eyes shut. Her legs dropped open, offering her sex to him and his extensive knowledge of her. For Jorah, it was the ultimate 4D experience, something that could never be replicated, sight, sound, smell and taste all combining into something not of this world. Daenerys responded to his slow exploration of her nether lips and entrance with utter relinquishment of her body to the pleasure that coursed through it, her mind completely in the moment and focused only on what he gave her.

Jorah had never been with a woman like her, one that didn’t care how she looked or sounded as she enjoyed herself. Her response was genuine and uniquely her, nothing done for show or to stroke his ego. And what she did just then, when his tongue swirled up and over her clit just once, had him pressing his erection into the blankets in search of relief. Her body quaked and arched, her head lifting from the pillow, her brow furrowed, her voice pleading, “God, Jorah, do it again.”

He moaned, his tongue resting against her hard nub and he swore he could feel the rapid tattoo of her heart pulsing through it. Then he did it again and kept doing it, her head falling back limply onto the pillow, her hands in his hair once more. She was a restless being beneath him, the muscles in her legs beginning to twitch, her hips rising to him as if on a wave. Words fell from her mouth in a random breathy mantra, one he knew well, everything about her telling him to give her more. Shifting one hand to keep her lips parted, the heel of it pressing just above her mons, the other teased her entrance before he eased two of his fingers inside, her sex clenching around them in greeting.

“Yes,” she panted, her body undulating in rhythm with the flick of his tongue on her clit and the perfect slight upward pressure of his slow thrusting digits as if she were riding his cock.

Something about this pleasure felt different to Daenerys in a way she couldn’t place, a deeper tingling sensation that spread slower than anything Jorah had ever given her. Its build was sluggish too, the rising warmth like a roiling liquid on low heat, refusing to boil over yet bestowing tiny bursting bubbles of sharp pleasure at unexpected moments that stole her breath and made her body tremble. She only knew that something spectacular was about to happen, but she didn’t know what, her mind unable to give it a name just then. Her entire lower abdomen suddenly felt engorged, and in that instant, she panicked for reasons she didn’t understand, her hands frantically scrabbling against his shoulders, “Jorah, stop, st-”

He ceased immediately and was by her side in an instant, his voice rushed and full of concern, “Daenerys, what’s wrong? Are you all right?”

She couldn’t see his face; her own covered with her hands as she tried to catch her breath. The sensation in her belly was nearly gone and his hand lay there, warm and reassuring. No doubt his brow was etched with worry for her, but she couldn’t look at him, her cheeks hot with embarrassment. His hand came to rest on her wrists, his tone far more calm now, “Love, look at me, tell me what’s wrong.”

Swallowing at her unexpectedly dry throat, her hands slid down her face slowly, his eyes full of genuine concern as he gazed down at her. She looked away quickly, unwilling to let him see her like this.

Jorah was flummoxed; he had never seen her this way before. Her cheeks were deep red, but not from the flush of desire. This was mortification, her nearly inaudible muttering about being so embarrassed and wondering just what the hell was that made him even more confused. She couldn’t even look at him and that had him very worried. Finally, she took a deep breath and met his eyes, but hers were still slightly shy and he didn’t dare say anything for fear that he would break her resolve.

“That…felt really…different,” she said haltingly, like she was trying to find just the right words.
“Different,” he asked gently, “In a bad way? Was I hurting you?”

A tiny smile broke across her lips and he gave her one back, “No, Jorah, it didn’t hurt. It was just… strange…but yet it felt…,” she trailed off, her hand running shakily through her hair.

“Felt how?”

Her eyes darted back and forth before she said in a low voice, “Really good.” His grin had her smiling now, but it was still hesitant, “Really, really good.”

Her laugh was soft and a bit nervous and his next words he chose carefully, “What made you stop me?”

She worried her bottom lip, her body shifting uncomfortably, “Promise me you won’t laugh.”

“Sweetheart, why would I laugh at something that had you that embarrassed?”

“I don’t know,” she sighed, “just promise me.”

“I promise.”

She wet her lips and took a deep breath, her words coming out in a rush, “It felt like I had to pee.”

Her face disappeared behind her hands again and she turned away yet Jorah managed to glimpse the renewed redness on her cheeks before they were hidden from view.

Realization dawned on him, a smile spreading across his face, “Daenerys, I know what almost happened.”

Her hands dropped to her chest and she met his gentle gaze with wide, surprised eyes, “You do? How do you know about that?”

“I read more than National Geographic and history books in my free time,” his eyebrow arched, “Not to mention those women’s magazines you leave lying around the house.”

“You read those?”

“You shouldn’t be surprised; I am voracious when it comes to knowledge of all kinds,” his hand resting on her belly again, “But especially when it comes to learning new ways of giving you pleasure. The big, bold lettering certainly gets your attention too.”

“So you learned about that from a woman’s magazine,” her tone unconvinced.

“Well, no, it merely…expanded my knowledge of it. I heard men boasting about it at work a few years ago, rather crudely I must say, so I decided to look for the information myself. I found this very informative book and I had the thought to try it in the back of my mind ever since.”

“You’ve never done it before,” she exhaled slow, “Could have fooled me.”

He couldn’t help but chuckle, “They say the woman has to be totally relaxed and comfortable with her partner for even the remote possibility of it happening.”

“Well, that’s apparently true of me then.” She was touching him again, just her fingertips through the fur of his chest, “I thought it was just something that they wrote about to sell magazines. I never thought it would almost happen to me.”
“Would you like to try it again,” his question merely hopeful, not forceful.

“Can I ask you something first?”

“Of course.”

“I’ve read how it…happens. Wouldn’t that be…_gross_…for you?”

She had grown nervous again, so he brought his fingers up to tenderly stroke her cheek, “How could that be ‘gross’ for me? It’s _you_, love, a physical expression of your intense pleasure. I don’t want to seem overenthusiastic, but the thought of giving your body that, well…” He took her hand and gently guided it downward, her lips parting in a gasp at the feel of him rock hard, “you get the idea.”

“Seeing as it gets that kind of reaction from you and the fact that it felt really damn good,” she paused, “Yeah, I’d like to try for it again.”

Jorah smiled. “Whenever you wish, Daenerys.”

“How about right now?”

“You body isn’t completely relaxed; I can still see you thinking about it too.”

He was right; she was still puzzling over it in her head, trying to remember when the pleasure shifted in its sensation and how it felt as it built low in her belly. She found she couldn’t, no matter how hard she tried.

“Kinda took the fun out of our evening, didn’t I?”

“Never, love. I could spend the rest of the evening doing whatever you wanted.”

“Really,” Daenerys drew out the word suggestively as she pressed Jorah onto his back, her leg swinging over his hips so she could straddle him, “Whatever I want?”

The glow of the fire danced on her skin and Jorah was transfixed by her beauty for an instant before he realized she had asked him a question. “Yes,” he rose to a sitting position, his fingers trailing softly through her silken tresses, his hands then caressing the skin of her back to her bottom, where he gripped her and ground her slick sex against his straining erection, drawing a gasp from her lips, “I will give you whatever you desire, Daenerys.”

Her hands came up to cradle his scruff-covered jaw, “Then I know the perfect way to ring in the New Year.”

The bright bursts of color against the night sky outside the window were nothing compared to the fireworks they conjured with their passionate kisses or with the intimate rhythm of their bodies. Jorah had never had a New Year’s like this one, but he knew that it would always be this way now that this wonderful woman in his arms was a permanent part of his life.

Chapter End Notes

It can't be all sunshine and roses for our lovely couple. The holidays are over...back to reality. Stay tuned!
An Ill Wind

Chapter Summary

After the blissful escape of the holidays, reality comes back into blinding focus. And things don't look good.

Chapter Notes

A couple of things about these next few chapters (1) they will be shorter only because they deal with heavier issues than the last several did and (2) legal jargon gets boring after a while (believe me, I know).

There will be a mention of a character that will make a bigger appearance later and I'm also introducing another character in this chapter that will be with us for a short while. Please see the tags as well.

Also, this chapter is smut-free (just FYI).

Thank you to my readers for continuing to follow my work. Your comments/kudos very much appreciated!

The drive back from Jeor's manor took longer than usual, traffic on the motorway backed up for several kilometers due to a multi-vehicle accident. The delay gave them a chance to talk about their stay and have a laugh at being seen by Jorah’s father, their attempt at sneaking back into the house that morning an utter failure. He had taken one look at their mussed hair and disheveled clothes from the previous night and smirked, whistling cheerily as he left to have breakfast. They were left in the silence of the hallway for only a moment before they broke into laughter at the absurdity of the situation, and then shrugging, shuffled off to join him.

“I think I’ve had this leg cramp for at least the last fifteen minutes,” Daenerys said, dumping her purse by the door and slumping onto the couch, rubbing at her calf.

Jorah chuckled. “Well, when you sit with your leg tucked under you on a long car trip, it’s bound to happen.” A small throw pillow landed square against his chest and he tossed it back playfully, “Tsk tsk, didn’t anyone ever tell you violence doesn’t solve anything?”

“Apparently, I wasn’t paying attention during that lesson,” Daenerys responded in the same teasing tone as she dodged the soft projectile.

He left the large stack of mail on the coffee table and went to the kitchen to grab a glass of water, asking over his shoulder if she wanted anything. Responding back with a ‘no, thanks Honey’, Daenerys leaned forward and began sifting through the correspondence: bill, bill, subscription renewal notice, bill, party invitation. But the last two envelopes were addressed to her. The first, a letter covered in multiple red rubber stamps (something about ‘undeliverable’ and ‘forwarding address’) from the Royal Mail Service, the return address foreign but the name all too familiar.
Daenerys squealed, which drew Jorah’s attention from the kitchen. She tore into the letter, devouring the words with happy eyes and a spreading bright smile, “Jorah, guess who’s moving back to London later this month?!”

He stepped around the center island, one hand resting on the edge, glass in the other, “Who?”

“Missandei!”

“Who now?”

“Jorah,” she sighed in exasperation, “I know I’ve mentioned her before. We went to school together, she was the only person I had that cared about me,” her gaze distant, her smile faltering for only a second before the brightness returned, “Not to mention, apparently, she’s bringing a boyfriend back with her. I can’t wait for the two of you to meet, she’s gonna love you!”

“Oh, right. Yes, now I remember. Well,” Jorah answered with a chuckle, “I look forward to meeting her too.”

Setting aside the letter and torn envelope, Daenerys reached for the other one. Her brow creased when she noted the crest of the Courts and Tribunals Judiciary embossed in the upper left corner. Flipping it over, she ran her finger under the flap, tearing it open. She pulled out the contents: a single folded piece of paper. With each passing sentence, her heart rate increased dramatically and her palms grew clammy, the happy thoughts of seeing her friend after so many years apart now long gone. She tried to take a deep breath, but it felt like an elephant was sitting on her chest.

“Jorah,” she called, her voice pitching higher on the last syllable.

“What’s wrong?”

“Read this and tell me I’m imagining it.”

He crossed the room and took the paper from her outstretched hand, his eyes speed reading the contents of the page. Jorah sat down next to her, his short beard scuffing his fingers as he rubbed his jaw slowly, “I wish I could say you were. I’m sorry, love, this is very real.”

With her elbows on her knees, she held her head in her hands, “This can’t be happening. What am I going to do, Jorah?”

“Nothing right now,” he replied, setting the document down on the tabletop and turning sideways to face her, “Daenerys, look at me.” Her panicked eyes met his calm ones, “I’ll call my barrister in the morning and we’ll discuss it with him. Then, later tomorrow, we’ll meet with the prosecutor as the letter states. That will give us ten days to plan and work out a strategy.” He took her hand in his, “Everything will be all right. We’ll get through this. Together.”

“I really hope you’re right.”

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Just like he said, Jorah called his barrister first thing the next morning. The man explained that it was fairly straightforward; Jonathan’s legal team wanted her testimony in court, most likely in the hope that she would corroborate something in their defense argument. He advised her to just tell the truth, and if she truly didn’t know anything about her brother’s activities, then she had nothing to worry about. Somehow his words didn’t settle her worried mind as much as Jorah had hoped they would. She hadn’t slept well at all the night before, restless and unable to shut off her mind. Jorah

...
had tried his best to soothe her, his hand rubbing over her back, reminding her that she wasn’t going to go through this alone.

They took a cab downtown for their appointment, only waiting a few moments before the prosecutor gestured for them to step into his office. Shutting the door behind them, he took Jorah’s hand, “Nice to meet you, Mr. –”

“Jorah Mormont.”

“You are not the one here for the appointment. That must mean you are Ms. Targaryen, I’m Petyr Baelish.”

He held out his hand to her now, the faintest hint of a smile tugging at his lips as he shook hers. With a nod of his head to the two chairs close by, he sat down in his own high-backed leather chair, a file folder open on the desk in front of him. Next to it was a large stack of manila envelopes and other paper-clipped and stapled documents. In an effort to take her mind off the situation, Daenerys studied him while he read over some of them. Petyr was a man in his late 40’s and dressed in a flawlessly tailored navy suit; a golden mockingbird pin adorning the left lapel. His dark hair, with not a strand out of place, was only slightly graying at the temples, his facial hair the same shade and perfectly groomed around his thin lips, his sharp cobalt eyes tracking the words on the page.

“As I am sure you read in your summons, you are being asked to testify at the trial of one Jonathan Hawkes, already serving time in prison for money laundering, insider trading and forgery. New evidence has come to light and he is now being tried for a Class 1 offense: murder.” Petyr tented his fingers under his chin, “What do you know about your brother’s death?”

“I only know that I identified his body after the police found him and that they questioned me afterward. I had no idea before the interrogation why my brother had been killed.”

He watched her with an intense gaze, “Mr. Hawkes’ defense counsel is alleging that the evidence identifying him as the murderer was planted and he was therefore framed. They, of course, have not revealed who that might be. Their case is pitiful really, all hearsay and conjecture, no substance.”

“If that’s true, then why do I have to testify?”

“They want to know about the night of Viserys’ murder from your perspective. How he was in the hours leading up to his death, phone calls he may have made, people that may have stopped by your residence, and other simple questions. But you are also vital to our case as you are able to offer us insight into your brother’s personality in a way that will benefit us more so,” He leaned forward, his clasped hands resting on the desk, “I need you to be completely honest with me: did you know anything about what your brother did in relation to anything illegal, not just his interactions with Mr. Hawkes?”

“I tried to ask Viserys once where he went when he left the house, but he threatened to hit me. So I never asked him again. He did make good on his threat once though,” Daenerys replied quietly, her eyes downcast.

Jorah rested his hand over hers on the arm rest, offering his quiet support.

A Cheshire cat grin broke across Petyr’s face, “Ms. Targaryen, do you have any idea the gift you have just given me? Abusive brother threatening his sweet innocent sister…my, my birthday has come early this year.”
“You’re going to exploit the suffering she endured living with Viserys? To what end?”

Daenerys could see Jorah shifting forward in his seat, his voice taking on a defensive edge.

“I am not going to take advantage of her pain, I am merely going to use it to paint Viserys in the most negative light possible. The court and the magistrate need to see that she is entirely beyond reproach, incapable of being party to anything her brother may have been involved with.”

His explanation seemed to calm Jorah and he sat back in his chair, but his hand didn’t leave hers.

“Now, I just have one final question: did you ever have any contact with Mr. Hawkes?”

Daenerys paled, turning to look at Jorah with wide eyes. He gave her a nod and she met Petyr’s questioning gaze, “I had a conversation with him a few months back.”

“Concerning?”

“He threatened me, saying that he would reveal my connection to Viserys and ruin Jorah’s company in the process.”

“I sense there is something more,” Petyr stated, his finger coming to rest against lips.

“He also told me how he killed my brother.”

A pin drop would have sounded like a bomb in the quiet that followed her words. Petyr’s hand slowly dropped from his face, “How did he commit the murder?”

“He bashed his head in with a baseball bat,” she replied softly.

“The gifts just keep on coming. If you testify to that in court, his defense team will have no chance of securing a not guilty verdict.”

“But isn’t that hearsay?”

“No, hearsay is testifying to something you heard from another person. For example, if Mr. Mormont spoke to Mr. Hawkes and he told you the topic of their discussion and you spoke to that in court as if it was your own conversation, that is hearsay. Mr. Hawkes spoke to you directly therefore the information was obtained first-hand, not second-hand, and is thus, admissible.” Petyr smirked, “Besides, his admission of guilt to you substantiates the evidence obtained during his previous trial.”

“Evidence? You mean they found the baseball bat after all these years?”

“The fact that criminals are stupid and careless makes my job so much easier. Murderers often like to keep souvenirs of their deeds and it would appear that Mr. Hawkes is no different. During the evidence collection phase of his first trial, the investigation team discovered a storage unit. Inside was a wealth of data, but tucked away in the back, wrapped in a dark sheet, was a wooden baseball bat. It was cleaned, of course, but nowhere near well enough. Blood traces were found embedded in the wood grain of the barrel and DNA testing of the white blood cells matched those from blood samples in Viserys’ cold murder case. However, there was no other DNA evidence found on the weapon, which lead to our supposition that he wore gloves when he carried out the crime.”

Daenerys was stunned, the massive barrage of information made her brain feel like it was going to explode, “So, wait, why didn’t they try him for murder at his last trial?”
“He agreed to a plea deal for those charges and the evidence against him for murder at that juncture was only circumstantial. Furthermore, DNA testing takes time. The results were only obtained,” he paused to look at a document on his desk, “two weeks ago.”

“Couldn’t they offer him another deal? That way, I wouldn’t have to testify.”

Petyr looked almost apologetic, “I wish it were that simple. Murder carries a mandatory penalty of life in prison and his legal team feels they can prove his innocence.”

Daenerys sighed. “That’s just bloody fantastic.”

“Don’t worry, Ms. Targaryen,” Petyr stood, rebuttoning his suit jacket, “I will have you so well prepared for the witness stand, it will be like a walk in the park.”

She flashed him a skeptical look, “I certainly hope so.”

Taking his proffered hand, he assured her, “We have a little under two weeks until the trial. Let’s make an appointment for next Monday to go over your testimony.”

All she could do was nod and say a quiet “thank you” while he shook Jorah’s hand before moving to the door, opening it for them.

This meeting was supposed to make her feel better, but all it succeeded in doing was twisting the nervous knots in her belly ever tighter.
Let Me Help You

Chapter Summary

Daenerys struggles with her feelings about the upcoming trial, but Jorah is there to help her in more ways than one.

Chapter Notes

The title of this chapter comes from one of my favorite scenes from Season 2.

I tried to keep the legal jargon to a minimum this time, seeing as the next chapter will have quite a bit.

Also, just a head's up, there is smut at the end of this chapter.

Thank you to all of those still reading/leaving comments and kudos. It such a wonderful feeling to know that people enjoy your writing!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“Daenerys, love, you need to eat,” Jorah said softly, his eyes full of concern.

“How can I when all I feel like doing is throwing up?”

He watched her pick at her food before placing a small piece of chicken in her mouth, chewing it slowly with a grimace. She set her fork down and pushed the plate away in disgust, sitting back with her arms crossed. Jorah hated seeing her like this, he wanted nothing more than to take this burden on his shoulders and carry it for her. It had been only a day since their meeting with Petyr, and ever since, she had been like a robot, moving about their loft on autopilot. At first Daenerys stubbornly refused to take time off from work, but when Jorah took her aside and gently told her that she seemed to be going through the motions without her trademark determination and spirit, she tacitly agreed to some sick leave. Her skin looked even paler than usual and the circles under her eyes grew darker, a glassy sheen obscuring the once happy brightness in them. Dry toast and coffee were the only things she seemed to be able to stomach. He loaded the hot beverage down with whole milk, one way that he could be assured she would get some nutrition.

But the most disturbing thing of all was as the days wore on; she began to experience the same debilitating nightmare as the one she suffered at Christmas. She would awaken every night in a panic, screaming and frantically pushing at the covers, her body drenched in sweat. It would take Jorah quite some time to calm her down and it didn’t always work, her body shivering in his arms despite the layers of blankets he drew over her. For three nights, it went on. Finally, in his worry for her, he phoned his concierge physician to make a house call. After speaking with her at length, he prescribed some sleeping pills for her to take. But those had been an utter disaster. Saturday night, Jorah awoke to a loud crash. His search for Daenerys led him to discover that she had sleepwalked her way into the kitchen and had emptied most of the food from the middle shelf of the fridge onto the floor in a mess of spilled milk and splattered Chinese leftovers. He had thrown the prescription
out the very next morning, concerned about the strange side effect. Then, that night, he offered her a small dose of melatonin. Much to his amazement, the over-the-counter herbal remedy seemed to help far more than the pharmaceutical did. She didn’t sleep through the night, but she did get more hours than she had been.

The morning of the appointment dawned sunny and he hoped that going over her testimony would ease her troubled mind. She certainly seemed in a better mood, engaging in chit-chat while they bought her favorite morning beverage at a coffee shop next door to the court building. A small smile tugged at her lips, her eyes meeting his over the rim of the cup, her fingers firmly entwined with his as they rode the elevator to the tenth floor. Petyr’s secretary led them to a large conference room and asked if they would like a croissant or other pastry while they waited. Jorah was surprised to hear Daenerys ask for one of the flaky French treats before taking her seat at the table.

“Is everything all right, love? You seem, dare I say it, down right chipper this morning.”

“You know, Jorah, I realized something last night while I lay there awake staring at the ceiling: I can either let this rule my life or I can take a stand. I decided I won’t be some wilting violet, I choose the latter;” she arched an eyebrow at him, “Your family motto seems to be rubbing off on me. Or maybe that’s just you.”

The secretary returned with a small plate and Daenerys thanked her before she left, tearing off one end and eating it.

He grinned at her, happy to see their playful flirting banter was back with a vengeance, “It’s an unofficial motto really, but we Mormonts have always been the ones left standing even in the worst of crises.” Jorah drew closer, whispering the rest of his thought against her ear, “And rubbing isn’t quite the word I would use to describe what I’d love to do for you later.”

Her body flushed hot at his words and she met his eyes, her dimple clearly evident, “I’ll hold you to that.”

“I’d hoped you’d be holding something else to me later too.”

With a quick glance to the door, Jorah leaned in with the intention to kiss her, but the sound of a cleared throat drew him back, “Prosecutor’s offices are strictly a canoodle-free zone.”

Petyr’s smirk belied the seriousness of his words, taking his seat at the head of the table and laying out his papers, “It is, however, a good sign to see you in much better spirits than the last time you were here, Ms. Targaryen.

“I do feel much better about the whole thing.”

“Wonderful, then let’s begin. The day of Viserys’ murder, what did you do?”

Daenerys thought for a moment then said, “I got up around 9am and made breakfast. My brother wasn’t home; his car was missing from the drive. I walked to the Underground station and took the train to work. I was there until 5pm and then I took the train back. When I got home, Viserys was there. He was reading something in the living room, but he went to his room when he saw me. I heard him leave, but I don’t remember the exact time. It could have been around 7pm though. I do remember when I got the call about his body, that was 11:45pm.”

“You said he was reading something. What was it?

“Um, it was just some papers. Kind of like those,” she pointed to the printed pages on the
“And you didn’t see what was written on them?”

She shook her head, “No, he tilted them away from me when he saw me staring.”

“No phone calls made or answered? No guests?”

“No, it was just us. It was an unusually quiet night.”

“Unusually quiet? How so,” Petyr asked, jotting down notes on his legal pad as she spoke.

“Well, my brother always seemed to have someone over to the house or he was always on the phone with somebody. It was so out of the ordinary that he didn’t.”

“How was your brother’s mood when you saw him?”

“He was his usual self, greeting me with a sneer like he did every day. Although, when he was reading the papers, he looked almost... anxious.”

Petyr’s brow crinkled, “Why do you say that?”

“Whenever Viserys was worried, he used to chew the inside of his cheek. It was the only outward sign he ever showed of his emotions. Well, save for anger or contempt, he was never an emotional person.”

“At this portion of the testimony, I am going to ask you to recount the instance of abuse you mentioned at our previous meeting. However, I won’t ask you to relate it to me now,” to which Daenerys nodded, her lips draw into a grim line. He wrote down a few more notes before he flipped through the files, looking for something specific. Once he found it, he slid the document across the tabletop, “Is this your brother’s signature?”

Bringing it closer to her, she studied it for a moment, “No, that’s not his. My brother always added an embellishment to the ‘V’ in his first name. He called it “the dragon’s tail,” she finished with a roll of her eyes.

“How about this one,” he questioned, sliding another paper to her.

Daenerys only needed a quick glance to confirm that it was, in fact, his signature, “Yes, this one’s his.”

Petyr made a sound of approval before he collected the papers, an enigmatic smile on his lips, “Congratulations, you’ve just shot a portion of their defense argument straight to hell.”

“What were those,” Jorah asked.

“Those were copies of bank statements. The first was for an account at the Bank of London. The other was a wire transfer to Cayman National Bank in Grand Cayman. Mr. Hawkes forged your brother’s signature on the bank account statement, but he obviously didn’t do quite a good enough job. They will ask you to identify them in court. If you say just what you told me now, particularly the part about the embellishment, they will have a difficult time proving it is not a forgery.” While he busied himself with putting those papers away, Petyr continued, “Now, the defense will have their chance to cross-examine you. If they try to badger you, trust me, I won’t stand for one moment of that.”
He sat back in his chair before he continued, “Right now, we are still in the discovery phase of the trial. That means we at the prosecutor’s office and defense counsel share what evidence we have unearthed in our respective investigations. This allows us to ‘see’ what information they have so we can build our argument. As I said before, their defense is shaky. With everything you have told me, they don’t stand a chance. Do you have any questions for me?”

“Will I have to be there for every day of the trial,” Daenerys asked.

“No, you will only have to be present for your testimony, and for the verdict, if you wish but it is not required. The trial starts Thursday and you are set to appear on Friday at 9am.” Petyr stood, reaching out his hand to her, “I believe we are done here. I will see you then.”

She shook it and then waited as he did the same with Jorah. He followed them to the door, holding it open as they exited. With a parting goodbye, he left at a brisk pace down the hall. They strolled to the elevator and waited until the doors opened then entered the empty car. On the short ride down, Jorah glanced at her, “How would you like to go to dinner tonight? Or I could cook for you? Whichever you like is fine by me.”

“Hmm, I think I’d like you to cook me dinner. But I’ll help; it’s more fun that way.”

Jorah smiled. “You’re right, it is.”

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After work that night, standing side by side in the kitchen, they prepared Jorah’s special recipe of Chicken Cordon Bleu. Daenerys prepped the asparagus for grilling by trimming the stems while he pounded the chicken breasts thin. After placing a slice of Swiss cheese and Jorah’s special substitution, prosciutto instead of ham, onto the chicken, they rolled and secured them with toothpicks before putting them in a hot cast iron pan with butter. She monitored the vegetables on the grill, waiting for just the right tenderness before removing them. Then she tended to the wild rice and found it was coming along nicely. She couldn’t help but watch him tilt the pan like a pro, spooning the hot butter over the breasts to keep them flavorful and juicy. The first time he had made this for her she could have sworn she had a mouth orgasm, even though she was sure no such thing existed. It was just that it was so delicious; she could have eaten it every night.

Once the food was ready, he plated it artfully and set it on their table. Pouring them wine, he sat and started eating with her. He loved to cook for her, but he loved cooking with her even more. They made a great team in the kitchen, anticipating each other’s movements in a well-coordinated dance around the space. Sometimes he wondered if they should enter a couple’s cooking contest, something told him they would sweep the floor with the competition.

When the meal was over, they cleared their plates and carried their glasses to the couch. It didn’t take long after he sat down for her to rest her feet on his lap, wiggling her toes expectantly. He smiled at her and set to work, his thumbs pressing just right into the arch of her left foot. Her head fell back against the cushioned arm with a soft moan and lazy smile, “Your hands are like magic, Jorah.”

He chuckled at her breathy tone, a hint of sensuality dancing at the edge of her voice, “If I can get you to make sounds like that and I’m not even touching any of your erogenous zones, then I really am a magician.”

She lifted her head and opened one eye, “Oh, quiet you. Don’t get too full of yourself.”

The only noises for a while were her quiet sounds of pleasure. Jorah paused in his ministrations and she opened her eyes to find him gazing earnestly at her, “I was so worried about you last week,
The sincerity of his words and the concern that colored them brought a soft smile to her face, “To be honest, I was worried about myself too. I felt so weak and tired; I thought I wasn’t going to be able to handle it. But I realized that I couldn’t continue like that, having this trial ruin my life the way it was. Everything you did for me helped more than you know, so thank you, Jorah.”

“Of course. I just wanted you to know that I’m always going to be right there by your side. That’s what love is, holding up the other person when they can’t do it for themselves,” he said with a small smile.

“Sweet and handsome. Boy did I ever win the jackpot in the boyfriend lottery.”

“Well, I’ve got my grand prize right here,” he replied, his hands softly squeezing her feet.

He moved to her right foot then, kneading the sole with a bit more pressure, knowing that for some reason this one always hurt more than the other.

“That’s perfect,” she sighed.

“Although I love your legs in heels, I would much rather see you be comfortable.”

“Jorah, it’s the unfortunate way of the business world. Men wear suits and ties, women wear heels.”

“We seem to have made out the better in that bargain.”

“I don’t know,” she supposed, “That tie looks an awful lot like a noose to me. The way you loosen the knot at the end of the day, it’s almost like you’re stopping a slow strangulation.”

“I must admit, it does become a bit of a nuisance sometimes.”

His hands shifted higher now; gently kneading her calf. This touch felt different, less about working out the stress of the day and more about simply caressing her. The motion was slow and nearly sensual, the warmth in her body feeding off the heat emanating from his large strong hands. It was meant to arouse her and boy was it ever working.

“I think we should move this somewhere else, don’t you,” she suggested.

He held her feet and stood, setting them on the ground and holding out his hand to help her up. Making his way to the bedroom, Daenerys following close behind; he let go of her hand to light the candles at the bedside. The soft flickering glow shone in his eyes while he slowly undressed her, playfully batting her hands away when she tried to do the same for him.

“This is about you tonight. Only you.”

His whisper was sweet and erotic while he eased the hair pin from her elaborate bun, letting the silver waves tumble down her back. Placing it on the night stand, he then took off her dangle earrings, bestowing a kiss to each lobe before setting the jewelry aside.

“Lie down on your stomach, Sweetheart.”

Drawing her lip between her teeth, she took her place on the bed; pillowing her head on her crossed arms so she could watch him undress down to his boxer briefs before he knelt on the bed next to her. He gently gathered her hair and moved it so he could see the pale expanse of her back.
He started at her neck, massaging the muscles that bordered the beginning of her spine. Unable to keep her eyes open any longer, she relaxed into the tender strength of his magic hands. After a time, they moved to her shoulders and she couldn’t stop her groan of contented pleasure.

“Daenerys, you always carry your stress here. These muscles are so tense. I’ll need to take my time,” he said, his voice as soothing as his touch.

And as he was always true to his word, he must have spent a long time there because she realized she had dozed off at some point, awakening to find his hands working the space between her shoulder blades. She blinked slowly, adjusting once more to the low light of the room. His movements were perfection; he seemed to know exactly where all of the kinks and knots were, working them out with just the right pressure and care. It was only when his thumbs pressed into the hollows at the base of her spine, her ‘back dimples’ as he affectionately called them, that the feelings took on a more sensual note, the nerves in her sacrum humming to life, intimately joining with the ones buried deep in her rapidly slickening sex. His fingers splayed wide over the curve of her hips, the gentle grip a faint reminder of how he held her there when he took her from behind. She drew a shaky breath, her mind wandering to that night in New York. He had fulfilled her fantasy without hesitation, giving in completely to her desires. It was always that way with him, ever eager to satisfy her. She wondered briefly if he had been that way with other women in his past, wholly devoted and unselfish, but she banished the thought almost as soon as it arrived. They were together now and that was all that mattered.

His massage shifted lower on her body and Jorah felt the subtle rocking of her hips begin, an obvious indication that she required more from him than what he currently gave. He moved to kneel between her legs, his hands continuing on their path, now kneading the supple flesh of her bottom through the soft lace of her panties. While he adored every inch of her body, her curves here were especially tantalizing. Even from the start, when they first met and he had tried to be professional and respectful, his eyes would not listen to his mind. He would catch himself stealing glances at her rear end, only to mentally slap himself for objectifying her. As time wore on, and especially in those last few weeks before that night in his office, alone in his thoughts, they were desperate for one another, impatient in their exploration of the other’s body. In his fantasies, he would grip her bottom in his hands and lift her against the wall, place her on the edge of his desk, or his personal favorite, carry her to his bed. A familiar stirring began in his groin, his cock becoming engorged with the rush of hot blood at his stimulating thoughts. Traitor, he mused, I’m doing this for her, not for you. If his body could laugh, it would have; the organ thickening and hardening more by the second, a dot of wetness darkening the fabric of his underwear. But when her legs parted a bit more and her pelvis lifted, a soft moan of desire passing over her parted lips, he knew her thoughts had shifted too.

His thumbs dipped down to her inner thighs, kneading the muscles there in ever widening circles, his other fingers working the crease where her legs gave way to her bottom. The muscles under his hands tightened and her moans grew needy, her hips pressing into the mattress. Wanting to be sure that she needed a more pleasurable touch from him, he swept the backs of his fingers between her legs with a gentle pressure that could not be construed as a mistaken slip of his hand. The skin of one knuckle brushed over the damp fabric and he nearly groaned at the heat of it. His caress drew her hips sharply from the bed, her gasp loud and shaky. It was all the confirmation he needed, “Turn over for me, love.”

His voice was thick with passionate strain and she turned, adjusting herself so he could pull the panties from her body, dropping them without another thought onto the bed. Wearing only a soft smile, her legs spread wide for him, the deep pink lips of her sex glistening. He stared unabashedly at her center, liquid arousal slowly seeping from her entrance. Her hooded eyes moved over him, stopping at the prominent tenting of his boxer briefs. Her nostrils flared, her body restless
against the sheets, “Jorah.”

Her amorous whisper brought him back to himself and he moved to lie at her side. He looked into her eyes, his hand beginning the unhurried exploration of the rest of her body. He caressed every inch of her skin, avoiding the straining peaks of her breasts. Kneading, teasing, stroking, touching, fondling. His fingers at times were like soft brushes, painting her skin with love. Yet others, they moved with more purpose as he knew her body like no other. The map in his mind of her was well charted, following familiar pathways, but also discovering new ones that led to fresh pleasures. In particular, the sudden constriction of the muscles in her abdomen when his fingertips skimmed the skin there, a breathy laugh and sweet smile making her eyes sparkle. He couldn’t help but respond in kind, her sounds of pleasure returning when his fingers threaded through her curls in search of the treasure that lay hidden beneath.

Her neck arched when he found it, the tip of his finger delicious friction. Her lips parted and she breathed hard, but slow, savoring the long drawn out contact of his middle finger along the length of her clit until he reached the source of her wetness. There, he dipped gently inside, only to the first knuckle, the easy glide of it made him incapable of containing his groan. Even now, he still marveled at how turned on he made her and he knew that the only explanation was that they were made for one another, the chemistries of their bodies perfectly matched. Every part of her captivated him, and right now, his sole purpose was to make her forget all of the stress and worry of the last week. He wanted her to feel out of this world with bliss and he began with a slow circle of her enlarged nub, her hand darting out to grasp his forearm in her small, but firm, grip.

Their eyes met, and in those dazzling violet depths, he saw need, a need to hear his voice. Often, their passion required no words, only the look in their eyes. But now, it was a compulsion he felt in her zealous touch and saw in the beautiful arch of her body. Every rapturous swirl of his fingers between her legs brought forth a pleasingly soft exhalation of his name into his mouth amid feverish kisses. Jorah could deny her nothing, and in a tone that could only be described as reverence, he told her how he adored her, not solely her body, but her fiery spirit, the sharpness of her mind and the gentleness of her heart. He bathed her lips in praise; letting her know just how good she felt, and in turn, how good he wanted to make her feel. Whimpers were the only replies he received and he couldn’t help the pleased quirk of his lips.

Her bent legs drew together, shifting in her impatience, his words washing over her. His voice was the perfect addition to his touch, like wet velvet over gravel, ratcheting her desire higher. She wanted to respond, but her mind could not form a coherent thought, his slippery caress reduced her to only capable of impassioned noises and heavy breathing. His pace was measured, but they both knew that this was what she needed now.

Two of his fingers slipped down to her entrance to probe her gently, sliding halfway into her. She moved her hips to try to follow him after he withdrew; a short whine of frustration gave way to athroaty moan as he circled her clit a bit faster and with more pressure now.

She mumbled something incoherently, but Jorah managed to make out one word: **mouth**.

“Is that what you need, love?”

Her only response was to frantically nod and he wasted no time in taking his place between her legs. Using his willing tongue, he painted her swollen bud with her own slickness, alternating between sweeping strokes and soft short brushes with just the tip. Jorah took his time and was rewarded with a surge of liquid heat on his tongue. He knew all too well what she needed now. Bringing his fingers to her, he slipped two inside and curled them slowly toward his palm. Her deep moan resonated through the room and he ground his hips into the mattress to ease the ache in his
The fierce rush of sensation stole everything from her, carrying her away on the crashing waves elicited by his mouth. Touch was the first sense to return; her sex hypersensitive now to the slow, gentle licks of his tongue, his soft hair interwoven in her tense grip. Hearing next; the thundering of her heart in her ears subsiding until all she heard was the erotic sound of his fingers still gently moving within her and his soft groans of satisfaction. And, at last, sight, her eyelids fluttering open to find the corners of his striking blue eyes crinkled as he looked up at her from between her legs. She knew he was smiling, but his mouth was currently hidden and wonderfully busy. But it was soon too much and she drew her hips back with a whimper.

She was right; the grin on his face was infectious as he took his place by her side. The desire to kiss him overwhelmed her desperate need for air and she pulled him down to her, locking their lips and tasting herself on his tongue. Daenerys panted when he eased back, slightly lightheaded from the sensations and the lack of oxygen. He soothed his hand over her skin like he always did after her orgasms, knowing she still wanted his touch even if it was not sexual.

“It’s been a while since I rendered you incapable of finishing my name; I almost like hearing just the first syllable. But then again, I can’t have you chanting it like a prayer in that breathy voice I love so much at the office. It might make some people uncomfortable,” Jorah murmured between kisses to her cheek and jaw, curling his arm around her waist and drawing her close.

Daenerys slapped his bicep playfully, but giggled anyway. His hardened flesh pressed against her belly and she made to reach between them to return the favor, but he intercepted her hand, “Now love, what did I say earlier?”

“But, Jorah-”

“No buts. Trust me, he’ll survive.”

“You’re speaking about him as if he’s a real person, you know that, right?”

He laughed with her, leaning down to pull the blanket over them before he held her and rolled onto his back. She sighed and snuggled against him, basking in the warmth that radiated from his body.

“With you, Daenerys, he seems to have a mind of his own.”

“Well, I like the way he thinks,” she mumbled sleepily.

Jorah smiled to himself, the other part of his plan had succeeded. His first goal had been to help her de-stress and he had done just that. But he had also wanted to make her feel good to the point of exhaustion and that had worked out splendidly, her breathing now steady and soft against his chest.

“Sleep and dream sweet, my love,” he whispered into her hair, even though he knew she couldn’t hear him.
*Gazes into the distance* Storm's comin'...
Contretemps

Chapter Summary

Daenerys gives her testimony, but the defense has something up their sleeve. Something that will send shock-waves far beyond the courtroom.

Chapter Notes

Ok, there are a lot of notes for this chapter, but I'll try to keep them concise.

The chapter title was originally 17th century fencing term denoting "a thrust made at an inopportune moment". Trust me, it will make sense when you're done reading...

Someone asked me about how I see Jorah and Daenerys in this story, relating to physical appearance and age. Jorah is 45 and his appearance is Season 1/2 of GoT. Daenerys, on the other hand, is 26/27, and since she looks for the most part unchanged through the course of the show, any season would fit for her.

There is a great deal of medical and legal terminology in this chapter. If I got too technical, I apologize. But I felt it was necessary for the sake of realism. I realize that the American and British legal systems are similar in some respects, but different in others. I tried whenever possible to use British legal terms and such, but when I couldn't, I used the American equivalent. I can just see my law and forensic science professors grinning from ear to ear...

On with the show!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Daenerys paced in the hallway outside the courtroom, her teeth worrying her thumbnail. Her gaze was fixed on some unseen object in the distance and Jorah stood from his seat on the bench, his hands reaching out to gently take hold of her upper arms and stop her fidgeting, “Daenerys, love, look at me.”

“I just want this to be over,” her eyes brimming with an alarming mix of worry and vexation.

She had been the picture of confidence regarding the trial only yesterday, but now concern etched his brow at her startling slip back into the eddy of anxiety that had swirled around her last week. He guided her over to the bench and drew her down to sit with him, his hands wrapping around her twiddling fingers, “Remember what you told me last week about wanting to take a stand?”

“Yeah,” her face softened, “I do.”

His thumb rubbed over her engagement ring and he mentally kicked himself for having not
given her his mother’s ring yet. In all of the commotion, he had forgotten and he promised to remedy the situation once they got home. “Don’t let your brother win. Be the strong woman I know you are. Let me see that fire.” The smile that had only been a hint before grew and he mirrored her. Jorah saw the shift in her eyes with her deeply drawn breath and the square of her shoulders, the resolve growing stronger, “That’s my Daenerys.”

The double doors to the courtroom opened and Petyr poked his head out, looking up and down the corridor before he spotted them sitting by the wall. He walked toward them with purpose, Daenerys’ gaze flashed to Jorah, her brows tensing. “This doesn’t look good.”

He squeezed her hand briefly, then stood with her following shortly after. Petyr stopped in front of them, “Ms. Targaryen, I have some unfortunate news.”

“What is it?”

“Your testimony is being postponed to later this morning,” Daenerys’ face fell, “I am terribly sorry, but it is unavoidable. Our forensic pathologist, Dr. Samwell Tarly, needs to take the stand first; his busy autopsy schedule precludes him from testifying later today.” The court room doors opened again and a man called to Petyr, “Please excuse me, I’m needed inside.”

Daenerys waited until he was gone before she turned to Jorah, “Now I have to wait.”

“It will be over soon, love.” His hand cupped her cheek, “You will get through this with flying colors, I promise.”

Threading her fingers through his, she gave his hand a squeeze, “All right, let’s do this.”

***

“Dr. Tarly,” Petyr addressed the gallery, “Would you please detail for the court your findings in the autopsy of Viserys Targaryen.”

The stout man shifted in his seat, clearing his throat before reaching for his glass of water, taking a sip, collecting his thoughts. “Yes, of course.” He pressed a button on the remote and an image came up on the large television screen at the front of the court, next to the witness box. Those in attendance gasped, some averting their eyes from the gruesomeness of the picture. “My apologies for the graphicness of the following images, but they are necessary to demonstrate the severity of the injuries sustained by Mr. Targaryen.”

Daenerys’ hand trembled where it rested on her knee, her head turned away from the sight. Memories flooded her mind; however, they didn’t look like that. The blood, shattered bone, and loose tissue had been cleaned as much as possible before she had identified him, so this was new to her. She tried to think of other things, but what she had just seen stayed with her, like emulsion burned into photographic paper.

Jorah may have been a strong man, but even he blanched at the picture on the screen. How had the gentle-hearted woman next to him dealt with something so terrible all alone, with no one there to hold her hand or comfort her in her fear and grief? But he was there now and his hand took hold of hers, his eyes conveying his love and support when she finally turned to look at him, her shoulders visibly relaxing.

They both missed the first part of the doctor’s account, but it seemed to not be that important. What he said next was likely damaging to Jonathan’s defense, “The perpetrator struck Mr. Targaryen’s skull with what we surmise as four strong blows with a blunt object here,” his laser
pointer indicating a location on the side of Viserys’ head, “at the suture of the Sphenoid and Temporal bones. And also one strong blow here,” the red light circling the base of the skull, “to the brain stem. We believe that this was the final, and most likely, killing blow. In totality, these caused massive internal injuries to the brain as well as disrupted basic autonomic biological functions necessary for life. Even with immediate medical attention, he would not have survived this attack.”

“Even with the modern advancements of science and medicine,” Petyr asked, knowing full well the response the pathologist would give.

“Yes. The force exerted by the murder weapon embedded fragments of the skull bone so deep into the brain tissue that a neurosurgeon would have had to spend hours removing them all,” his lips set in a grim line, “Some were nearly microscopic. Not to mention the severe damage to the brain tissue itself. Anytime you expose the skull cavity to the outside elements, you are taking grave risks, especially with regard to infection.”

“Were there any other injuries found during your examination?”

“None that were inflicted by the murder weapon,” Sam replied, “However, there were some abrasions in addition to some bruising to Mr. Targaryen’s knees. We concluded that this was caused by the victim falling to the ground after the first strike to his head.”

“So, no defensive wounds? Nothing to indicate that the victim fought back at any point during the altercation?”

“No, the autopsy gave us no indication of that.”

“Thank you,” Petyr said, taking a moment to review the paper in his hand, “You state that the murder was committed with a blunt object. How did you conclude that it was a baseball bat in your initial report before the murder weapon was even found?”

Using his handheld remote, Sam flipped ahead in his slideshow until he came to a picture of an enlarged fragment, minute potions of the foreign object unstained by bodily fluids. Daenerys’ stomach somersaulted and she gritted her teeth at the bile rising in her throat, her brain finally processing what she was seeing. She looked to Jorah, and while his countenance appeared strong, his eyes darted everywhere but at the screen, his eyebrows drawn together. “A sample of this 1.2cm long by 1cm wide sliver was analyzed under an electron microscope, which allowed us to magnify to a greater degree than a standard microscope. The examination concluded that it was composed of plant fibers, specifically wood from a maple tree. We compared it to samples in our database and matched it to a baseball bat.”

“And where exactly was this piece of evidence found?”

Sam swallowed hard. “Lodged in what remained of the victim’s parietal lobe, 1cm from the corpus callosum.”

A murmur passed through the gallery, several individuals’ faces contorting in a grimace.

“Thank you. Dr. Tarly for your illuminating testimony so far,” Petyr said, his eyes holding those of Jonathan’s lead defense counsel, “Did you find any other evidence on the victim’s body or clothing?”

“Yes, we did.” The pathologist went ahead in his slides until he came to a photograph of what appeared to be navy blue strings magnified several times, “These fibers were found on the shirt worn by Mr. Targaryen. We found no such threads of the same type as a part of the victim’s clothing. We
deduced these must have been transferred during some sort of physical contact with the perpetrator.”

“Locard’s Principle, if I am not mistaken,” Petyr smug smile made the lesser members of Jonathan’s defense team shift uncomfortably in their seats.

“That’s correct.” Sam beamed, “A spectral analysis of the fiber was conducted by a trace evidence specialist in our laboratory, however; the results of the test are not in my purview to discuss.”

“Of course,” Baelish responded, one eyebrow cocked, “We will have that specialist’s testimony in due time.” He turned back to Sam, “Those are all of the questions I have for you right now, Dr. Tarly, unless,” he glanced over his shoulder, “the defense wishes to cross-examine you at this juncture.” The lead counsel shook his head once, so Petyr addressed the doctor once more, “Then you may step down.”

Sam gathered his files and exited the witness box to take his seat in the gallery. Daenerys knew it was her turn next and she took a deep calming breath in preparation.

“I call to the stand Ms. Daenerys Targaryen.”

Petyr Baelish’s voice nearly echoed in the quiet of the courtroom. She looked at Jorah, his small smile of encouragement and gentle squeeze of her hand was his parting reassurance as she stood and made her way to the witness box.

Once inside, Daenerys waited for the court officer to approach. She was then asked to repeat after him the affirmation for sworn testimony. Having done so, she sat and waited for Petyr to begin the questioning.

“Ms. Targaryen, do you remember the day in question, one Thursday the nineteenth of May 2011?

“Yes.”

“And do you remember what occurred on that day?”

“Yes.”

“What happened,” Petyr asked, stopping his pacing in front of her.

“I received a phone call from the police that they found a man with my brother’s identification in his wallet. I was asked to come down and ID his body at the morgue.”

“For the sake of thoroughness, let us go back to the beginning of that same day. Can you tell me how your morning started?”

“I got up about 9am and got ready for work.”

“Was your brother at home?”

“No, his car was not in the drive.”

“All right. Please continue.”

“I left the house about thirty minutes later, taking the nearby Underground station to work. I returned about 5:45pm.”

“Was your brother home then?”
“Yes.”

“How was he that evening? His manner and mood.”

“Viserys was like he usually was: decidedly ambivalent about seeing me. He was reading something, a few printed papers in his hand. But as I got closer, he tilted them away from me and went to his room. He seemed anxious when he left.”

Petyr was pacing again as he formulated his next question, “Did you happen to see anything at all of what was contained in those documents? How do you know he was anxious?”

“I could only see that it was typed words, nothing specific. I could tell he was nervous because he was chewing at the inside of his cheek. It was something he always did when he felt that way.”

“What happened the rest of the evening?”

“I went into the kitchen to make dinner and I heard him leave about 7pm. He didn’t come back that night,” Daenerys finished quietly.

“When did you receive the call from the police?”

“11:45pm. I only remember because I was watching the news and the time was displayed in the corner of the screen when I answered the phone.”

“I would like to review in depth the evening in question. Did you receive any other phone calls or have anyone visit the residence?”

“No, and that was unusual for us. My brother often had someone over or always seemed to be making calls.”

“Did you ever overhear any of his phone conversations?”

“His phone calls, no. He always took those in his room.”

“You were aware of Viserys’ criminal activity though,” Petyr stated flatly.

“Sort of, not directly anyway.”

“In what way?”

“We moved around quite a bit. When I was younger, Viserys would lie and tell me it was to escape people who wanted to take me away from him. I believed him because I was little and he was my brother, I thought he would never lie to me. As I got older, I realized that he was, in fact, a proficient liar. There were a couple of times when the police did come to our door and arrest him. But he would always return by the end of the day, angry and full of contempt.”

“Angry at whom? What or who did he have contempt for?”

Daenerys pursed her lips, “Everyone it seemed. He would rail against the police and the government mostly, angry that they had arrested him in the first place. He always claimed innocence, but I knew better.”

“How so?”

“Viserys didn’t know, but there was one time when I overheard some of a conversation he
had with two men. I could only hear what they were saying when they raised their voices. His tone grew whiny as he pleaded for more time to pay them back. They laughed at his weakness, calling him “The Beggar King” for all the times he had borrowed money from them for his ‘get rich quick’ schemes. These men were not good people; some of them had tattoos on their hands and upper chests. I researched it. They were Russian prison tattoos.”

“I see,” Petyr was pacing again, but stopped and asked his next question, “Did you ever ask Viserys what he did or how he acquired the money he had?”

Daenerys knew this question was coming and she took a deep breath before answering, “Yes, just once.”

“What happened?”

“He told me to mind my own business and that if I ever asked him again, he would ‘ruin that beautiful face of yours’.”

Petyr paused. “Were those his exact words?”

“Yes,” she responded quietly, her eyes meeting Jorah’s across the room. In their depths, she saw comfort, but also the protectiveness she loved. She knew what he must be thinking in that moment. In her mind, she pictured Jorah decking her brother in his perfect nose and it made her feel infinitely calmer.

“Did Viserys ever abuse you,” Petyr asked.

The memory of that night brought an icy shiver to her spine, “Yes, once.”

“I know this is hard, but if you would please tell the court about the incident.”

At that moment, the defense counsel stood, a tall older man with a hawkish face and cold blue eyes addressed the magistrate, “My Lord, I fail to see how this line of questioning pertains to the case at hand.”

Petyr turned to the magistrate, “I am establishing Viserys’ personality and how he dealt with stressful situations to show the instability of his state of mind. I am also attempting to demonstrate the fact that Ms. Targaryen was not party to her brother’s criminal activity by Viserys’ threat and use of force against her.”

The magistrate gestured for Petyr to continue and he turned back to Daenerys, “Please tell us what happened.”

“One night, Viserys stormed into the house and I could tell he was extremely angry. He had been gone for two days and we had no food in the fridge. I asked him for money to buy groceries and he yelled at me to ‘leave him the fuck alone’. I said I was hungry and he ignored me. I pressed him and he wheeled around, backhanding me. My vision went white for a second, and when I could see clearly again, he was standing over me. He grabbed my throat, pulling me up from the floor, and shouted ‘that is what happens when you wake the dragon’. I could taste blood in my mouth and I was crying, he sneered as he told me to ‘stop being so weak’, then let me drop to the floor before stalking off to his room. I had a large bruise on my face for several days after that.”

Daenerys could feel the sting of tears prickling the corners of her eyes and she blinked rapidly to clear them. She looked to Jorah again, but this time she saw only the hard set of his jaw. What she couldn’t see were his tightly clenched fists resting in his lap, his short nails leaving red half-moons in his palms.
“I am sorry I had to make you relive that horrible incident, Ms. Targaryen,” Petyr said, his tone one of sincere apology.

She only nodded in response.

“I would like to move on now, to the reason for your summons. I would like to ask you if you ever had any contact or conversations with the defendant, Mr. Hawkes.”

“I did, a few months ago.”

“What was the topic of this conversation?”

“Mr. Hawkes was threatening to expose my connection to Viserys in an attempt to ruin Jorah’s company. He also told me how he murdered my brother.”

A murmur went through those in attendance, the reporters furiously scribbling on their legal pads. Jonathan looked stricken for an instant before he turned to his counsel, the men exchanging a few short words in hushed tones.

“How did Mr. Hawkes say he murdered Viserys?”

“He bashed his head in with a baseball bat.”

Daenerys could see the triumphant smile shining in Petyr’s eyes despite the blankness of the rest of his countenance before he asked, “Did Mr. Hawkes mention any other connection between himself and Viserys?”

“Viserys helped launder money for him.”

Petyr turned and retrieved two flat plastic evidence bags from the wooden table where he had been sitting, “If you would, please tell me if this signature is Viserys’.”

He handed her one and she needed only a moment to come to her answer, “Yes, this is his signature.”

“How can you be sure,” Petyr asked as he took the evidence back from her.

“My brother had a very distinctive way of writing the ‘V’ in his first name, an embellishment he called ‘the dragon’s tail’.”

“Now, how about this signature,” he handed her the next item.

Daenerys looked at it and said, “No, this isn’t his.”

After Petyr collected it from her, he addressed the magistrate, “The following documents are entered into evidence as item 001, ‘statement of wire transfer of funds to Cayman National Bank’ he stated as he held up one bag, “and item 002, ‘bank statement from the Bank of London,’,” holding up the other before handing them both to the court officer.

The man took the documents to the magistrate who reviewed them before saying, “Duly entered. Proceed.”

“I have no further questions for this witness, My Lord,” Petyr said, taking his seat at the table.

“If I may, My Lord, cross-examine the witness.”
An older man rose from his seat at the defense table, the same one who had interrupted Petyr’s questioning before. The magistrate indicated for him to continue, and with each deliberate step he took toward her, the unease she felt at his scrutinizing gaze grew.

“Did Mr. Hawkes actually use the words ‘I murdered Viserys’?”

“No, but-”

“Well, what did he actually say?”

She felt small sitting there with this man looming over her, “He said that wooden baseball bats are a bitch to clean.”

“I see,” the man’s phrasing enigmatic, “So no usage of the word ‘murder’ or ‘kill’?”

“Well, no, but I-”

“You what? Made an assumption about his meaning?”

Daenerys didn’t know how to respond, his style of questioning was so vastly different from Petyr’s that she wasn’t at all prepared for his adversarial tone. As if reading her thoughts or finally noticing the hint of panic in her eyes, Petyr stood, “My Lord, the defense is the one making assumptions about the context of a conversation. I ask that the line of questioning be rephrased.”

The magistrate sat back in his chair, his eyes glancing between the two men, “Watch your tone, defense counsel Lannister. Belligerence will not get you far.”

“My apologies, My Lord,” the man’s smooth tone hid the displeasure Daenerys could see in his hard eyes, “I will move on.” The man turned to her once more and his next question caught her off-guard, “How long have you known Mr. Jorah Mormont?”

After a moment’s hesitation, Daenerys responded, “Almost two years.”

“And for how much of that time have the two of you been intimately acquainted?”

“Ten months,” she answered, inwardly cursing the heat she felt rising on her cheeks.

“You are still employed at his company, correct?”

“Yes.”

“And how well do you know Mr. Mormont?”

His question confused her for a second, “Very well.”

“Does he have a temper?”

Daenerys thought back to all of the times they had fought, remembering his mannerisms and the inflection in his voice, “As much as any person would when they get upset.”

“Has he ever assaulted someone or threatened to do so,” Lannister’s inquiry finally revealing where his line of questioning was headed.

“No,” her response sure and strong.

He walked back to the defense team’s table and picked up an evidence bag similar to the
one Petyr had given her, “Since you seem to be an expert in handwriting analysis, can you identify this signature for me please?”

Handing it to her, she studied it for a long time and couldn’t help the disbelief in her voice when she met the man’s condescendingly patient gaze, “This looks like Jorah’s signature. But it can’t be, he-

“He what, Ms. Targaryen? Couldn’t possibly have signed that storage rental agreement?” a gasp rose from the gallery in the stillness that followed his question, “It would seem that you don’t know him as well as you think you do.”

Petyr stood, “My Lord, this line of questioning was intended for the second day of Ms. Targaryen’s testimony. I have not had the opportunity to consult with my witness regarding this evidence. I request a recess to confer with you on this matter.”

The magistrate leaned forward, his tone harsh, “Granted. You will be joining us as well, Lannister.” Then, he turned to Daenerys, “That is all. You may step down, Ms. Targaryen.”

The magistrate then dismissed the court and people rose to leave. A jumble of excited voices filled the room and she had to weave her way through the small crowd to get back to Jorah. Still sitting, he stared straight ahead, face impassive.

“Jorah.”

She said his name quietly, and when he didn’t respond, she sat and rested her hand over his, attempting to ease the white knuckle grip on his knee. He met her eyes, “That was the secret his defense was hiding,” he sighed before he continued; “They’re trying to pin this on me.”

The emotionless tone of his voice and the mixture of emotions swirling in Jorah’s eyes made it hard to know what to say to make things better. She conceded that nothing could really help this situation, so she said nothing. The court officer approached, informing them that they had to clear the room until further notice. They rose and left through the double doors, taking a seat on a wooden bench against the wall. The sun shone through the windows overhead, but the air about them was gloomy. Daenerys had a million questions swarming in her head, all of them without any concrete answer. There was the matter of that document, however, and she thought back to it now. It looked like his signature, but there were subtle differences. An expert would be able to determine that fact better than she could and back up that assertion with concrete evidence. However, she was certain of one thing: Jorah was innocent.

The tension that rolled off of Jorah’s rigid frame made her anxious too. The waiting seemed to go on forever, the hallway now nearly empty of people. Even though he said nothing, she knew his mind was working overtime, the cogs and mechanisms of thought turning and clicking. A door opened to the side of where they exited and they stood in unison as Petyr came toward them, “Let’s talk in my office.”

They rode the elevator in silence and followed after the prosecutor to his office, where he opened the door for them. Once inside, Jorah’s quiet demeanor snapped, “What the bloody hell happened down there?!”

Petyr blinked at his barely contained outburst for a moment, then removed his court robes and hung them on the coat rack. Adjusting his suit, he said with a smirk, “To be honest, I was wondering the very same thing. Mind you, I couldn’t say it quite the way you just did when I spoke to the magistrate. But the look on his face and the tone of his voice said it all. Apparently, Lannister likes to try and bend the rules in court if he thinks it will even remotely benefit his client. The man is
loathsome and that’s being nice.”

“So all this means what exactly,” Jorah asked, clearly frustrated.

“He was trying to gain the upper hand by revealing that evidence before he should have, giving the jury a ‘preview’, so to speak. As I said downstairs, I had fully intended to relate that information to the court during Daenerys’ second day of testimony, using the time after the trial today to prepare her for the witness stand next Monday.”

“Bloody fantastic,” Jorah muttered under his breath, rubbing at the back of his neck.

Petyr turned to Daenerys, “Now that you’ve seen the document and signature first hand, did it seem authentic to you?”

All eyes were on her now and she hesitated, “I don’t know.”

Hurt and shock warred in Jorah’s eyes, “You don’t know? For god’s sake, Daenerys, you think I did this?”

“No,” she said hurriedly, “I just…I mean, if it’s a forgery, it’s a pretty good one.”

“If?” Jorah scoffed, shaking his head slowly. He walked away from her, his hand in his pocket, the other running through his hair.

It wasn’t what she meant to say at all and Daenerys realized she had stuck her foot in her mouth with her choice of words, “Jorah, I know you didn’t do this,” she turned to Petyr, “I know he didn’t. Jonathan is trying to ruin him.”

“Is this true, Mr. Mormont?”

Jorah turned, “Oh yes. It is no secret that Jonathan and I didn’t get along. We disagreed often, and quite heatedly, during board meetings. He’s despised me for years. He was sure that the CEO position was going to be his, but when my father appointed me, Jonathan was furious. He stormed into my office and vowed that he would make me pay for it somehow,” he exhaled hard; “I guess this is how he plans to do it.”

“Did he say that to you?”

“Yes, during a rather lengthy argument about five years ago. At first I thought it was just the furious ramblings of a bruised ego. It would seem I was wrong.”

“Ms. Targaryen, your answer to the question about intimate contact could hurt Jorah.”

Petyr was looking at her now, her confused gaze darting between him and Jorah, “I don’t see how it would.”

“Companies often have no fraternization policies and the fact that the two of you are in a relationship could make it seem to the jury as if you would be willing to cover for Mr. Mormont.”

“Horseshit,” Jorah uttered with a dismissive wave of his hand, “There are so many intra-office relationships at the company that policy is a moot point.” With a deep breath, he addressed Petyr directly, “What can I do to help this situation?”

“Secure counsel of your own. We will also need an exemplar of your signature for comparison. I’ll set you up with an appointment to have it collected,” Petyr’s face grew solemn,
“There is not much else we can do, I’m afraid. But the document will of course be tested for fingerprints and trace evidence at our forensics laboratory.”

“Can I see the document?”

Petyr moved to his desk and shuffled through the file folders until he found what Jorah asked for. Daenerys watched him studying the signature, his brow wrinkled in concentration. He closed his eyes briefly, either in resignation to its similarity or in thought as to where he had had seen it before. She had noted during the trial that it was slightly different than the way Jorah usually signed things, his middle initial never making an appearance before. He handed it back with a sigh, his hand shoving back into his pocket.

When Jorah didn’t say anything, Daenerys spoke up, “Thank you, Mr. Baelish.”

She shook his hand and found Jorah waiting at the door, anxious to leave. She moved to join him and he turned the handle before making a beeline for the elevator.

Daenerys stopped at the doorway, “I want to apologize for Jorah’s behavior. He’s not usually like that.”

Petyr gave her a half-smile, “It’s all right. If I was being framed for murder, I would feel the same way.” When she hesitated, he added, “Believe me, I understand where he’s coming from, blindsided by an accusation. The most dangerous dagger is the hidden one, pressed to your back by someone you never even see.”

With a nod, she left. Jorah was waiting for her at the lift, having already pressed the down button. Daenerys considered Petyr’s parting words, he was right after all, in his own verbose mysterious way. Jonathan had waited to initiate his revenge, biding his time until Jorah was complacent and would not expect a reprisal. Waiting for just the right time…and, as it was in this case, the arrival of the right person. Her.

The silence was deafening in the elevator and in the car. Jorah’s hands would clench occasionally on the steering wheel as he drove. Even though traffic was light, the ride home seemed to take far longer than usual. Once there, she followed a few steps behind his brisk pace, unsure of whether she should broach the subject or not just yet.

Inside the loft, he pulled off his suit jacket and tossed it over the back of the sofa. He pulled the knot of his tie loose and sat down before toeing off his shoes. Watching him, she took a seat at the end and waited a beat before she said, “Jorah, I-”

“Daenerys, stop. Just…stop. Haven’t you said enough for one day?”

His harsh tone cut at her and she stood, “This is not my fault, Jorah.”

“Oh really? I didn’t see anyone else on that witness stand telling the court and all of those reporters that it was my signature on that rental agreement.”

Daenerys scoffed, her arms crossing, “Just what did you expect me to do? Lie for you?! Say it wasn’t yours?!”

“No,” Jorah stood and faced her, “Of course I would never expect you to lie! But you could have found a better way to-”

She stared at him dumbfounded, exhaling a short bitter laugh, “A better way?! And just how was I supposed to do that, Jorah? I’ve never testified before, I had no idea what to expect when I
went in there. Reviewing things with Petyr was completely different than actually sitting there.”

He shook his head, his fingers threading through his hair in impatience, “Did you see those reporters in the back of the courtroom?” He paused, waiting for her to reply, but she didn’t, “They’ll go home and write their articles tonight and you know what they’ll say, that I signed that agreement, that I planted that evidence to frame Jonathan.”

“That’s not—”

“What will happen,” he finished for her, “The court of public opinion will make their decision after they read that, and if they get even a whiff of presumed guilt, I’ll be ruined. Everything that I have worked so hard to accomplish, everything that is important to me…the company, this” he gestured to the living space around him, trailing off with a heavy sigh.

“But not me.”

“What are you talking about?”

“You think you’ll lose everything that’s important to you,” her voice shaking, but not with anger, “You said nothing about me.”

Large, heavy tears fell from the corners of her eyes and she turned on her heel, walking to the front door, “What are you doing?”

She could hear him following quickly after her, “I need some air,” her trembling hands grabbing her coat and purse from the rack.

Jorah stopped. “Why are you taking your purse?” Then he realized what she was doing and he started moving toward her again, the timbre of his voice softening, “Daenerys, wait a minute, let—”

“No,” she rounded on him, stopping him dead in his tracks at the hard point of her index finger, “I can’t be around you right now, Jorah. If I stay…I’ll say something I’ll regret.”

He noticed she was slipping her ring off, his eyes following its path in horror to where she set it on the small table by the door. She wiped at the tears slipping down her cheeks, her voice breaking, “I need to go.”

“Please wait,” Jorah rushed to the closing door, but it was too late, the deadbolt sliding home. In his panic, his fingers refused to cooperate and he struggled to get it open. When he finally did, he ran down the empty hallway, the light above the lift indicating the car had nearly reached the ground floor. He rapidly pressed the down button, hoping to catch her before she disappeared. He cursed loudly, and unwilling to wait for the other lift to arrive, Jorah hurried for the stairwell, taking the steps two at a time until he reached the lobby. Only the doorman sat at the reception desk, his wide eyes following Jorah as he ran to the glass double doors of the main entrance, shoving one side open and running out onto the wet sidewalk, his head turning left then right but not seeing Daenerys anywhere amongst the people bustling by. Jorah felt like he couldn’t breathe and it wasn’t just from his sprint down the stairs. She’s gone, he realized, my love is gone. He fumbled in his pocket for his mobile, pressing the speed dial number to reach her. He paced while he waited for the call to connect, but it never did, instead, going to voicemail. He tried calling several more times, but the outcome was the same. He tried texting her too, but it also went unreturned. At this late hour, and with only her purse, Jorah reasoned she must have called Missandei to get her or taken a taxi to the young woman’s flat. Daenerys had mentioned where she lived, but for the life of him, he couldn’t remember right now where it was. His mind was reeling, the welling anxiety made him feel sick to his stomach and he realized that there was nothing he could do right now. Even if he went after her,
she wouldn’t want to see him, let alone speak to him. Whenever they fought, which wasn’t all that often, Daenerys always took a while to calm down. She would often go and sit in another part of their loft or stare out the window, composing herself before resolving their argument. Jorah gave her space, knowing it was what she needed to gather her thoughts and calm the fire within her. But now, this time, he was practically frantic to talk to her. She had taken off her temporary engagement ring and he feared the worst: they were over. Daenerys could be a bit impulsive about some things, but her spontaneity had never led to something so distressingly serious or final.

Her decision to go led him here, standing on the busy sidewalk, his tie hanging loose around his neck, his feet bare save for his socks. Jorah didn’t even notice how cold it was; he felt utterly numb, a sensation akin to his blood having been drained from his body. He turned in a daze and went back inside, not even realizing the doorman was talking to him as he crossed the lobby to the lift to go back upstairs. Once in their loft again, Jorah walked to their bedroom and collapsed face first onto the bed. Everything felt odd to him now, as if a giant void had taken up residence in the silent space, sucking all of the happy memories into its infinite emptiness. Just like the one in his chest, an aching abyss of loneliness that threatened to consume him too.

*What have I done*, he thought.

Chapter End Notes

Well, *that* happened. *runs and hides* But I love my OTP too much to see them suffer for too long...stay tuned!

One last note...the scene where Jorah sees the evidence against him. That would never happen as legally he can’t see evidence like that unless he is being indicted (formally charged) with a crime. However, it was a creative concession I had to make for the sake of the story.
To Make Things Right

Chapter Summary

Alone in the fallout of a courtroom bombshell, Jorah receives more shocking news. But a few wise words set him on the path back to the woman he loves.

Chapter Notes

There's far too much happening in this chapter for me to bother you with notes, other than to say a character is mentioned that will appear again later (see the new tag). On with the show!!

Oh, just want say a brief thanks to those still reading and/or leaving kudos/comments. It's greatly appreciated!

Jorah was awake, but he didn’t open his eyes. He refused to, not because he didn’t want to fully wake up, but because he couldn’t face the day. He lacked the drive, the will to even sit up and pull back the covers he had managed to drag over himself sometime in the night. In fact, he wanted nothing more than to pull them over his head and block out everything. The loft was filled with an eerie stillness, a strange sixth sense feeling of something missing. Or, like it was in this case, a certain someone. His heart clenched, her face appearing in his mind. He turned to his side and opened his eyes slowly, knowing full well what he would find. Her side of the bed was still made and his hand drifted under the covers to rest where she usually slept. Cold, so terribly cold, the chill creeping up his arm and into his chest, making it ache all the more. He stayed there for a time he couldn’t quantify, but it felt like an eternity before he lay on his back again. He stared at the ceiling now, trying to force his mind not to replay last night’s events like a sick, twisted carousel of hurt and regret. Jorah wondered vaguely if this was how amputees felt, that phantom limb sensation, knowing it was gone but still feeling like it was there, the peculiar itch or tingle that vanished as quickly as it appeared. The best part of him was gone, but it ached like it was still there.

He glanced at the clock on the nightstand, then forced himself to get up, realizing he couldn’t stay there all day. He flung the covers back with more force than was necessary and something black caught his eye near the foot of the bed. He leaned over to pick it up, the delicate lace soft between his fingers. His vision swam, the memory of how he had pulled these panties down her shapely legs only two nights prior hit him hard, her blissful smile and bright eyes filling his mind with remembrances of happier times, times Jorah was sure he would never have with her again. The tears finally slipped from the corners of his eyes and his head dropped to his hands, the scent of her still faintly clinging to the fabric. He couldn’t bear it and he let them fall to the floor, his shoulders jerking with silent sobs. His whole world was crumbling around him, and with Daenerys gone, Jorah truly had nothing. She was his everything, the most important thing in his life. He couldn’t cry anymore, his body had nothing left to give, so he stood, walking to the bathroom to make himself look presentable enough for the day. After, he opened their shared walk-in closet and was confronted by more of her, his eyes moving over familiar outfits and remembering when she had worn them and how beautiful she had looked. He chose a sweater and jeans quickly, not wanting to linger much
longer, closing the doors quickly behind him. Once dressed, he found he had nothing to do, but he knew he couldn’t stay there; the silence was slowly eating away at him. Everywhere he looked; small touches of her were there: in coffee table books about tropical lizards, in framed photographs of their first Christmas together, and in ornate silver hair clips left forgotten on various surfaces around the loft. Jorah simply couldn’t take it anymore, so he put on his shoes, grabbed his coat and keys, and left.

Outside their building, he started walking, no particular destination in mind, only that he needed the hustle and bustle of the city to distract him from his feelings. He hadn’t even realized where he was going until he looked up and saw that his feet had carried him to her favorite coffee shop. They had been there on so many Saturday mornings that the baristas knew them both by name, not to mention their orders by heart too. Jorah entered and approached the counter; he hadn’t eaten or had his usual coffee before he left the house and the emptiness of his stomach was nearly as cavernous as the hole in his heart.

“Morning, Jorah,” the pig-tailed girl behind the register far too peppy for his melancholy mood, “The usual?” He nodded, her eyes glancing behind him, “Daenerys not with you today?”

“No, she’s…not feeling well.”

“Aww,” the barista pouted, “Tell her I said ‘hi’ and that I hope she feels better soon.”

“Thank you, I’ll let her know.”

“Your order’ll be right up.”

Jorah forced a smile and paid, then stepped aside to wait. The place was crowded like it always was, every seat and table taken, students with their books and computers open, deeply engrossed in their reading. He could never understand how they studied in such a place; the noise coupled with the insipid instrumental music playing softly overhead was surely not conducive to retaining any information. But it succeeded in distracting him just enough from seeing someone coming toward him, her manicured hand reaching out to rest on his shoulder, “Well, fancy seeing you here.”

Jorah half-turned to where the voice came from and closed his eyes briefly when he noticed who it was, “Lynn.”

Anyone but her right now, Jorah thought.

Her smile was cold, “I saw that dreadful story in the paper: the defense implicating you in the cover-up of a murder. I simply don’t believe it.”

Her fake empathy nearly made him roll his eyes; she didn’t have a single sympathetic bone in her body, “I don’t want to talk about this right now and certainly not with you. Excuse me,” he swept past her to collect his coffee from the pick-up counter.

He walked out the door, but he could hear the rapid click of heels following after him. With an exasperated sigh, he stopped suddenly and turned, “Must you always do this?”

“Do what,” her hand resting against her chest in mock surprise.

“Kick me while I’m down? Rub salt in my wounds,” he spat, his hand gesturing between them, “It makes you happy to see me defeated, doesn’t it?”

“Oh Jorah,” she exhaled heavily, “You bring these things on yourself, you know. I’m sure you always wondered why I cheated on you,” she reached out and smoothed down the lapel of his coat,
which made him take a step back, “It wasn’t just that you ignored me emotionally, it was that you
turned out to be less than what I thought you would be. And, as I found out, less than Francisco and
certainly less than Jonathan.”

They both had visceral reactions to her last words, but they were vastly different. Her eyebrows rose
suddenly and she quickly covered her parted lips with her hand, a startled gasp barely audible over
the noise of traffic. Jorah’s eyes narrowed, “What did you say?”

“I-I have to get going,” she stammered, turning to walk away.

Jorah’s long strides cut off her escape, “Wait a minute, you slept with Jonathan, didn’t you,” her eyes
darted around and he raised his voice to get her attention, “didn’t you?”

“Yes,” she glared at him, “a few months before we got divorced. He consoled me after one of our
many fights.”

“Seven fucking hells,” Jorah muttered under his breath, his hand running through his hair, “You’re
more unbelievable than I thought.” It was then that it dawned on him, a realization that nearly
staggered him, “You helped him frame me.”

The accusation hung in the air between them, and based on her lack of response and unwillingness to
meet his stare, Jorah took it as an affirmative. He shook his head slowly, “After everything I gave
you and all of the shit I put up with in our marriage, you had to get one final stab into my back,
didn’t you?”

She still had nothing to say, which was not like her at all. But then she squared her shoulders and
leveled him with her icy blue eyes, “You screwed me over in that divorce, I deserved far more than I
received. Jonathan already hated you for taking what was rightfully his and he needed a way out for
what he had done. You were the obvious choice.”

“I hope you realize what this means for you,” he chuckled mockingly, “You are an accessory after
the fact, you’re just as guilty as he is.”

“You’d never turn me in,” her eyes were clouded with doubt despite the strength of her words.

Jorah said nothing, simply walking away, leaving her standing there in shock.

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Back at the loft, he went straight for the filing cabinet in his home office, placing his cup on the top
and crouching down to pull open the large wide bottom drawer. He thumbed through the folders,
knowing exactly what he was looking for. He drew the thick file from the middle row and stood,
turning to set it on his desk. He flipped through the pages, scanning them quickly in search of
something particular. Then, about halfway down the pile, he stopped, his eyes falling on his
signature at the bottom of his divorce declaration. The one and only time he had ever signed his
name with the inclusion of his middle initial. He sat down heavily in his desk chair, his head falling
against the high back. Jonathan had needed a copy of Jorah’s signature and Lynn had given him that
document, but little did she know, it would come back to haunt her.

Jorah pulled his mobile from his pocket and dialed a number, waiting until they picked up, “Hello.
Yes, Mr. Baelish’s office, please. I have something he needs to see.”

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Between Daenerys leaving and Lynn’s surprising revelation, the last thing Jorah wanted to do was
go to a party, not to mention, having to go to it alone. It was the company’s fiftieth anniversary celebration and it would be awfully strange for the CEO to be absent from the festivities. The dress Daenerys had planned to wear, a strapless jade green mermaid gown, hung in a garment bag on the back of the closet door. Jorah remembered the day she had bought said garment, her frustration mounting at being unable to find just the right dress. That was until Jorah found it, the last one on a rack she had not perused yet. Her eyes lit up instantly and she grabbed it from his hand before scurrying off to the dressing room, mumbling something about having the perfect shoes already at home. She had emerged a few moments later, her hands smoothing over the sides of the dress, her smile so big Jorah thought the muscles of her cheeks must be hurting. She turned in front of the wide tall mirror, surveying it from all angles before looking to him, her eyes asking his opinion. Jorah had smiled softly and said only one word, “Exquisite.” In that moment, she was sold.

Now, it hung there, silently mocking him. He turned away and chose a dress shirt and tie, only bothering to care just enough that the hues were in the same color family. He dressed and left, getting into his car and driving downtown to the fancy hotel where the party was being held. He left his car with the valet and went inside, the place already crowded with people. He glanced at his watch, he wasn’t late, but he wasn’t necessarily on time either. However he couldn’t have cared less right then, even amongst all these people, he felt utterly alone and decidedly off-balance, his better half missing. He went to the bar and ordered his usual drink, Scotch on the rocks, before taking a deep breath and beginning to make the rounds. People enquired after Daenerys and he gave them the polite excuse of her feeling unwell, which seemed to satisfy them enough to drop the subject and move on to other, less intrusive, topics. But, eventually, it got to a point where he couldn’t take the inane chatter anymore and he excused himself, seeking refuge on the outdoor patio. He leaned on the railing and looked out over the city, the heavy clouds overhead and hushed sounds of traffic drifting up from below dragging him deeper into his despondency. Memories of times when he had stood on similar verandas with her came back to him, both of them eager to escape the tedium that most parties ultimately became. They would stand and talk, joking about this and that, his arms wrapped around her from behind, her hands coming to rest on his forearm when she would snuggle back into his warmth. He could nearly feel it now, the specter of her against him much like the missing limb phenomenon he had thought of earlier. He wanted to hold her so desperately now, to beg for her forgiveness, to ask for a chance to prove that his words had been nothing more than an angry outburst, and that they weren’t the slightest bit true. He had his apology planned out in his head, a mental letter of contrition he had written while he paced in their loft that afternoon, needing to do something to keep from running mad. After talking to Petyr, he had tried to call Daenerys again, but each of his ten tries had gone straight to voicemail. His texts had gone unanswered too and he wondered if he would ever have the chance to even speak to her again.

“I hear Daenerys is not well,” a gruff voice made Jorah’s head turn.

Jeor paused on the threshold of the open French doors, his eyes surveying his son. He walked to the railing slowly, his hand coming to rest on it, the other holding a tumbler of the same thing Jorah’s contained. He didn’t really want to see his father right now, but he figured that he had to be at this party as much as he did and Jeor knew he would have run into him at some point during the course of the night. His father stared dead ahead, occasionally sipping from his glass, “I was always able to spot a polite excuse,” Jeor fixed his eyes on Jorah, “What happened?”

“I don’t want to talk about this, Father.”

“Well, that’s too bloody bad, isn’t it? I won’t ask you again…what happened?”

Jeor’s tone left no room for argument, “Daenerys and I had a fight. She left last night to go to her friend’s.”
“Would this have anything to do with the trial?”

Jorah shrugged. “In a way.”

“Son, look at me,” he reluctantly met Jeor’s stern gaze, “Daenerys is the best thing that ever happened to you. I only have two words for you: fix it.”

“Don’t you think I already tried to do that?”

“Let me guess, you called her several times and even sent her some of those text message things. All of them unanswered, am I right,” Jorah looked away and Jeor let out a hard sigh, “Of course she would not respond to that. I wouldn’t.”

All of the emotions from the events of the last 24 hours finally boiled over and Jorah rounded on his father, “What am I supposed to do? Go to where she’s staying and ask to talk to her? And when my request is flat turned down, what then?”

“You won’t know unless you go.”

“Right now?”

“I was making polite excuses long before you were born,” a wry smile tugging at his lips, “I think I can manage to make one for you now.”

Jorah felt a familiar irritation. He hated it when his father was right.

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Daenerys’ friend lived south of downtown, her flat over a Middle Eastern spice shop. Parking was interesting to say the least, he had to circle the block twice before finally finding a spot at the end of it. He walked to the address, pausing to gather his thoughts, the scent of saffron in his nostrils. Jorah noticed that he needed to be buzzed in, but if he did that, he would likely be turned down before he even got inside to try to talk to her. So he waited until someone arrived that had a key and he followed in after them, the man too busy on his mobile to care that he had inadvertently let Jorah in. Climbing the stairs and stopping outside her door, he took a deep breath and knocked. At first, he didn’t hear anything, but then there was the tell-tale scrape of metal on metal. A woman’s face appeared and then the rest of her tall, slender frame, her arms coming to cross over her chest, her weight shifting to one leg, the universal stance of what the hell do you want?

“Hello, you must be Missandei. I’m-”

She held up her hand, “I know who you are…Jorah. Daenerys doesn’t want to talk to you right now.”

His shoulders fell, “I thought she might say that. Will you give her a message for me please?” Her eyebrow arched, but she didn’t move to shut the door, so Jorah continued. “I know that she has to testify again on Monday and even though I know she doesn’t want to see or speak to me, I still want to be there for her, to support her.”

Missandei blinked, her posture relaxing ever so slightly. “I’ll tell her.”

“Thank you,” he gave her a small, polite smile and made to leave, the door starting to close. Then he stopped, his hand coming to rest on the doorjamb before he looked at her. “Wait,” his voice cracking under the emotions that had begun to well within him, “will you tell her something else?”
The young woman’s face softened in response to the change in Jorah’s eyes, the hurt that threatened to spill over nearly made her want to cry too. “Okay.”

“Please tell her that I love her and that I am sorry…so very sorry for what I’ve done.” He swallowed hard, drew a ragged breath and turned away from her quickly as he felt his eyes begin to moisten.

Missandei waited until he disappeared down the stairs before she closed the door. Leaning back against it, she looked at her friend curled up in the corner of her sofa, “Did you hear what he said?”

“Yeah,” Daenerys’ voice broke, her eyes brimming with tears for the umpteenth time that day. She drew the blanket tighter around herself, her hands idly playing with the balled up tissues in her lap.

Missandei took her seat next to her friend before she turned and drew her legs up onto the sofa, tucking them under her body, “You know I love you, Daenerys, and I know you value my honest opinion on things,” to which Daenerys nodded. “I gotta say, I have never seen a man hurting so badly before. The look on his face, his eyes, I can’t even…he was crying.”

“What?” Daenerys gasped, and Missandei nodded.

Now what Daenerys had been holding back came in a flood, her shoulders trembling. Missandei drew her into her arms, letting her cry into her shoulder, her hand soothing over her back. They stayed that way for some time before Daenerys pulled back, taking fresh tissues from the box to blot her cheeks.

She sniffled, “That’s my Jorah, his eyes are always so expressive,” pausing to bring a tissue up to wipe her nose. “God, Missi, what’ve I done?”

She toyed with her nails, watching Daenerys blow her nose before she offered, “It’s nothing you can’t fix if you really want to.”

“I do. I love him, Missi, so much,” her fingers rubbing over where the ring he had given her once resided, “But what he said…it really hurt me.”

“I know and you have every right to be angry at him, but,” she stressed the last part, “I think you should talk to him, hear him out. People say things in the heat of the moment that they don’t mean. I can’t imagine what either of you are going through with this whole trial thing, you having to relive your horrible past with your brother and Jorah having to deal with the idea that a man is trying to frame him for something he didn’t do. You were both on edge and backed into a corner, so you lashed out at each other. But you should really be supporting one another.”

Daenerys thought about her friend’s words. They had talked well into the early morning, hashing out the argument and analyzing what each of them had said. Daenerys had been too upset at the time, but Missandei’s level head and calm disposition had eventually helped her see how impulsively she had acted. Sometimes Missandei admired her for that, but her jaw had dropped and her eyebrows had nearly met her hairline when Daenerys told her she had left Jorah’s temporary engagement ring behind, shocked to discover she was engaged in the first place. It was a rare spontaneous gesture for Missandei whose practiced self-control was necessary in her work. Her job took her all over the world, translating for Middle Eastern royalty and European heads of state, and she had spent the last several years in Dubai. There, she met her boyfriend Grey, a serious and leanly muscled man who rarely spoke, his love for Missandei evident only in his eyes. He had given the ladies a wide berth the night before, leaving to go back to his own flat so they could talk in private.

“You’re right,” Daenerys laughed softly, “When aren’t you?”
Missandei smiled. “I’m not trying to be right; I just want you to be happy. And something tells me that you wouldn’t be this emotional if you didn’t feel so strongly for Jorah.”

“Maybe I should call him.” She worried her bottom lip, rising from the couch to get her phone, only to find it wouldn’t turn on. “Damn, it’s dead.”

“Here,” her friend reaching onto the coffee table to grab hers, “Use mine.”

Daenerys took it and sat down again, dialing Jorah’s number and waiting for the call to connect. “Here goes…”

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Jorah sat on the couch, his tie undone and the top two buttons of his shirt open. That was all he had managed after removing his jacket and collapsing onto its cushioned surface. Shrouded in the near darkness, his mind mulled over what he had said to Missandei, wondering if he could have done or said something more to persuade her to let him talk to Daenerys. It was a moot point now; he could only hope that he had a chance on Monday.

The shrill ring of his mobile snapped the silence and he jumped before frantically digging in his pants pocket to pull out his phone, looking at the screen and not recognizing the number. He answered anyway, “Hello?”

His heart nearly stopped when the person on the other end spoke. “Daenerys…” he said.

She asked if they could talk. “Of course, just tell me where and when.”

She told him tomorrow at ten in the morning and asked if it would be okay if he came to Missandei’s, “Yes, of course, I’ll be there,” then she ended the call.

He stared at the phone until the screen went dark; utterly disbelieving the luck he had just been gifted. Someone up there must really like me, he mused. He had his chance now, the one he so desperately wanted, and he vowed he wouldn’t mess up this opportunity. His father’s voice sounded in his head. Fix it, it said.

***

Jorah barely got any sleep, and what little he did get, was plagued by dreams. In some, Daenerys forgave him, falling into his embrace. But others ended with him alone, his love walking away from him forever. The sky outside their bedroom window was dreary, the rivulets of rain following a haphazard path down the glass. He dressed warm, but comfortable, forgoing his suit and tie for a cable knit sweater and dark wash jeans.

He arrived at her friend’s flat early, and much to his surprise, the parking was much better. He waited in the car until five minutes before the time they were set to meet, not wanting to seem overeager. Using the intercom this time, he was buzzed in and took the stairs to her door. He knocked and waited, Missandei answering this time with a small smile before she stepped aside and let him in. Daenerys wasn’t in the sitting room, but Missandei told him to have a seat, that she’d be right out. Then he was left alone in the cozy space, paintings of sun drenched beaches hanging on the walls, the rugs patterned in a Middle Eastern style. It smelled faintly of incense, a pleasant fragrance that reminded Jorah of the one trip he had taken to India many years ago. His leg jiggled nervously and he rested his hand on it in an attempt to stop its movement. It only managed to work a little, but it didn’t matter now, his eyes falling on Daenerys’ form standing in the doorway that lead into the room. She had changed into some of her friend’s clothes, a flowing green skirt and light cotton
blouse with a lotus flower print, and her hair was done in a braid that appeared slightly damp. Now, faced with his chance to apologize, Jorah stood, unsure of what to say.

“Daenerys, I-” “Jorah, I-”

Their near simultaneous speech had them laughing nervously, her fingers toying with the end of her braid, his hand drawing up to rub at the back of his neck. “Let me go first please, lo– Daenerys.”

He had almost called her ‘love’ and it brought a softness to both of their eyes that nearly had them pulling each other into a forgiving embrace.

She crossed the room and sat on the sofa, Jorah mirroring her, his eyes noticing how she rubbed absentmindedly at her bare ring finger. His chest tightened, the memory of her leaving the ring behind flashed in his mind and he swallowed thickly at the emotions it conjured.

“Daenerys, I’m so sorry. I don’t even know where to begin, the things I said to you, I-” His eyes closed briefly in regret, then met hers again. “There is no excuse, no reason that will ever be good enough for what I said. I’ll never forget how hurt you looked, how your voice sounded…I’ll never be able to forgive myself and I can’t hope to think you’ll forgive me. I don’t deserve it.”

He cursed silently at his failure to hold on to some semblance of strength in her presence, his voice wavering in a way that made him sound weak. But that was just what he was and exactly how he felt, like Samson stripped of his power at the feet of Delilah, his hair clutched in her hand. But it was Jorah’s heart that held his strength, now cradled in her grasp, hers to dash under her heel or hold close to her own. It was her choice whether to forgive him, but his hands yearned to hold hers. And that was just what he did, throwing caution to the wind. She didn’t flinch or pull back. In fact, she slid closer.

“You are my life, Daenerys. You are everything to me. I could lose the company, be left penniless, but as long as I still had you, I would be the wealthiest man in the world. You are what is important to me, and as far as the trial goes, I don’t care what happens anymore.”

Her hands pulled back from his and he feared the worst, bracing himself for rejection. Suddenly, she was in his arms, sobbing against his neck, holding him tight. He froze in shock for a second before he gathered her to him, his own tears falling onto her soft skin. The commotion must have carried into the other room. Daenerys pulled back enough to see Missandei’s self-satisfied smile peeking in at them before she was gone in a swirl of her bohemian skirt. Jorah’s eyes were red-rimmed and slightly bloodshot, but she was sure hers were too. She brought her hands to his face and those gentle blues closed at the feel of her cradling his jaw, “My sweet bear, I forgive you. I’m sorry too, you know.”

His eyes snapped open, “What in heavens name do you have to be sorry for?”

“What I said in court, the things I accused you of during the fight, walking out on you. That last one was really impulsive.”

“You told the truth in court, which is what you’re supposed to do. The things you said during the fight were true, but I will agree with you on the last one,” his tone now mildly teasing, “but that’s just part of your fiery personality, isn’t it?”

She pressed her lips to his in what she intended to be a quick kiss, but one touch was all it took. Jorah was like a man starved, his lips moving over hers as if they had been apart for far longer than a day. He pulled her into his lap and she went willingly, his hands gently cradling her face, her own buried in his hair. An unbidden whimper rose in her throat and in his a breathy oh that mixed joy and
pleasure. A ringtone she didn’t recognize cut through her blissful haze and she rested her forehead against his, desperate for air, “What are we doing, Jorah? We can’t do this here.”

The sound had a sobering effect on him too and he chuckled. “Good point.”

She disentangled herself from his lap and he shifted awkwardly, trying to conceal his growing desire, but failing miserably. He crossed his legs to Daenerys’ giggling and he shot her glance out of the corner of his eye before something dawned on him and he reached into his pocket. He took something out, but she couldn’t see what it was. What he did next brought her hand to her mouth. “This belongs to you…if you’ll still have me.”

This ring was different than the one she had left behind, its silver band thin and delicate, the round cut emerald stone modest, but beautiful in its stunning clarity. The slight patina made it appear to be quite old and Daenerys realized that this must have belonged to his mother. The bright affection in his eyes coupled with the upturned corner of his mouth had her saying “yes”, no hesitation or reservation in her voice. He slipped the ring on her finger, then tilted his head up as she brought hers down to meet his lips.

“Oh my god,” Missandei said through tears of her own, “A proposal in my sitting room.”

They broke their kiss to find her nearly bouncing on the balls of her feet, her hands clapping enthusiastically. “Don’t move,” she nearly ran to the coffee table and picked up her phone, snapping a photo of the happy, but startled, couple, “Aww, you guys look so good together.”

She turned the phone to them so they could see the picture, and they had to agree, they looked very good indeed.

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Between the questions she had for Jorah and the picture taking, it took them half an hour to get out of Missandei’s flat. The drive home was silent, but it was in anticipation of the passionate storm that they knew awaited them. Daenerys squirmed in her seat, a flush rising on her skin and her heart at a quick rhythm in her chest. They couldn’t reach their loft fast enough; even the short elevator ride was torture. But once home, time slowed and stretched in its languid warmth, his eyes speaking to her heart as he had done so many times before. He carried her to their bed, undressing her with infinite care and deliberateness, every inch of her skin a canvas he painted with kisses and soft brushes of his fingers. By the time he found himself on his knees before her, she was positively restless with need and he gave her what she desired, for it was what he desired too. To set her body alight with sensation, to hear his name fall from her lips in sweet breathless abandon, and to sustain himself on the gift of her nectar. But it was not enough, it never was with her nor with him, their fierce desire to be one body, one heart, one soul supreme above all else. His body worshipped hers just as his words did, his gentle whispers of love caressing her as tendering as his hands. The delicacy with which he made love to her was soon inadequate and she pressed him onto his back, her hands bracing on his chest, the movements of her sweat-slick body fevered in their desperation. She gave herself over completely, surrendering to the hunger that enraptured her, her entire being pleading with him to guide her over the edge. He knew well what she craved, and with one touch to where they were joined, he sent her trembling, every inch of her clutching at him, her euphoric moan reaching into the deepest part of him and drawing out his own, their passionate chorus a song of adoration and forgiveness. Spent and sated, she slumped over him, their greedy gasps for air becoming one atmosphere, the storm calming for now. When they were no longer one, disappointment colored her whimper, but his amused yet husky promise of more had her nuzzling his chest, their limps holding one another tight. But more would have to wait, for sleep took hold of the lovers, enfolding them in its dream steeped embrace.
Together...Naturally

Chapter Summary

Daenerys and Jorah spend the day in together.

Chapter Notes

I'll admit this chapter title is a little corny. It came from the song "Say You, Say Me" by Lionel Richie (late night viewing of the film White Nights didn't help matters). The lyrics from the chorus just fit these two though: ("Say you, say me/Say it for always, that's the way it should be/Say you, say me/Say it together, naturally").

This chapter is 100% fluff. Because really, who doesn't love some of that? And, honestly, these two deserve it.

Also many apologies for the long wait. I'll try my best not to let that happen again.

And, again, thank you to my readers. You are amazing!

Through the drawn shades, the grey morning light appeared even duller. A flash of light brightened the sky for an instant and Daenerys counted the seconds behind tightly closed eyes until the distant boom of thunder answered back. Ten kilometers, she calculated, closer than the last one. She had always hated that sound, and when she had been very young, it had sent her running in tears seeking comfort from her brother. But he never gave her what she needed, instead, laughing at her ‘childish’ fear.

“It’s all right, love.”

Daenerys started a bit at Jorah’s whisper and she realized now she had been gripping his forearm rather tightly. Relaxing her hold, she pulled the covers tighter against her, “Viserys told me I was born during a violent storm. I guess that’s why I’ve always hated thunder.”

“Hmm,” he murmured against her bare shoulder, “Daenerys, the Stormborn one.”

He couldn’t see her small smile, but he could hear it in her voice, “That’s cute, but let’s not use it as a new nickname for me, okay?”

There was a lull before Jorah asked, “Where did you go when you left the other night?”

“The coffee shop around the corner. I called Missandei from there to ask if it was all right if I came over, then I caught a cab.”

“Daenerys, I should never have said those things to you.”

She turned over to face him and found his eyes downcast. They shared the same pillow, unwilling to part after the intimacy they shared only a few hours prior, “Jorah, look at me.” Almost
reluctantly, he did, guilt swimming in his blue irises. Even after his apology, Daenerys was not surprised to see it still lingering there. Jorah told her once that he only ever wanted to see her happy and that making her cry pained him. She believed him; his actions spoke louder than words though. Everything he did, from the littlest gestures to the biggest ones, demonstrated that desire. “I’d tell you not to keep beating yourself up over this, but I know you. You’ll still feel guilty about it months from now.”

Daenerys’ assessment of him was accurate. Jorah held on to things for far too long, the guilt festering deep inside him. Even now, months later, whenever something would remind him of their argument regarding their run-in with his ex-wife; he would get this tormented look in his eyes and grow sullen.

“And you’d be right.”

“My silly bear,” her fingers softly caressed his scruffy cheek, “If you’re sincere in your apology, you should let it go. I forgave you.”

He gave her a sad smile, “I wish I could. I never want to hurt you or make you feel anything less than the amazing woman you are.”

She kissed the end of his nose and the lines on his forehead softened. His eyes held a deep contemplation before they fell to her neck and he reached out, resting the pads of his fingers tenderly against her skin there. “In court, when you described what happened that night, in my mind, I could see it: You lying there, terrified and crying, his hand around your throat. God, Daenerys, I…” Jorah shuddered a deep breath, unable to continue.

“It’s hard for me to think about it too,” her hand reaching up to draw his away from her neck so she could intertwine their fingers, “I’ve worked hard to let it go, but I don’t think I ever truly did. It’s always there, hiding and waiting for something to bring it to the surface.”

“You know that I would never lay a hand on you like that, don’t you? No matter how angry I might be, I could never—”


“Not when it comes to sniveling little men like your brother.”

“That’s different. Then you’re my fierce bear.”

The lines at the corners of his eyes deepened, “That’s right, love.”

A faraway look came over her, her eyes taking on a glassy sheen, “My brother wasn’t a man. He was a snake and that’s being generous.”

With a sigh, Jorah drew her to him and she melted into his warmth, “And he’s gone from your life now. If I must say, he was not what he claimed to be. If anything, you are, my little dragon.”

She snickered, “I’ll try not to burn you.”

“I’m afraid you’re too late, you’ve already lit a fire in my heart.”

“The dragon and her bear,” she nuzzled his chest, then met his loving gaze, “quite a formidable couple.”
“Yes we are,” the tenor of his voice sure, “And we will get through this trial together.”

Daenerys sighed heavily, “I don’t even want to think about that today. I just want to stay in and ignore the world.”

“Well, that can certainly be arranged.” At that moment, Daenerys’ stomach decided to growl in protest, “But I believe breakfast is in order first.”

With a sweet parting kiss to her forehead, Jorah got out of bed and she made to follow him, but he rested his hand on hers, “Stay here and keep warm. I’ll cook, then come and get you when it’s ready.”

All she could do was smile in response and snuggle back beneath the covers, less afraid of the thunderstorm that had drawn closer.

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Just after they finished breakfast, Jorah’s mobile rang with a call from the office, a request for a specific document that only he had on his home computer. While she waited, Daenerys refilled her cup with coffee, and cradling it in her hands; she joined him just as he was ending the call. An open file folder on his desk caught her eye and she turned it around so she could read the contents of its pages.

“Jorah,” she asked, leaning against the edge of the desk, “why are your divorce papers out?”

At first he didn’t answer her, only heaving a hard sigh and slumping back in his high-backed chair. Then a sullen, pained expression clouded his features and he finally responded, “Yesterday was a day I hope I never have to repeat.”

“What happened?”

“Well, for starters, I ran into a certain someone at our favorite café.”

Daenerys didn’t need to ask, she already knew, “Lynn. She’s living in London?!”

“Apparently, and she was ever eager to start running me down again.”

“What did she say to you?”

“Oh, her usual litany of insults and barbed comments.”

Now Daenerys was confused, why would running into his ex cause him to take out his divorce papers? Jorah seemed to pick up on her thought, “Something about our encounter got me thinking. Lynn said that I was less than Francisco as well as Jonathan.”

“Wait a minute, ‘less than Jonathan’, she pushed off from the desk to stand straight, her voice taking on a hard edge, “What could she possibly mean—oh my god,” her eyebrows shot up in realization as she finished her sentence with a whisper, “She slept with him.”

Jorah nodded once, his eyes slipping shut in what Daenerys could only label as resignation.

“The bar for decency was already pretty low,” she shook her head, “And she just managed to limbo right under it.”
“Just wait, it gets worse.”

“Worse? What else did she say?”

“The storage rental agreement you saw in court,” he sat forward in his chair, leaning his elbows on the glass desktop, “Do you remember what stood out to you about my signature?”

“Yes, your middle initial. I’ve never seen you sign anything with it before.”

“Precisely. Her admission of sleeping with Jonathan clicked something in my memory, something that had been nagging at me since the day of your testimony. I knew I had signed my name that way once before, but for the life of me, I couldn’t place where or when. Then it hit me standing there with her: the divorce declaration.”

It was still a bit too early in the morning and Daenerys barely had two cups of coffee in her system, so she put together the pieces of information that Jorah had been relating to her a little slower than usual. Then a loud gasp broke the silence, her eyes like saucers, “She gave Jonathan that paper to use against you.” She growled lowly at his nod, her fist clenching at her side, “This is where I wish I could breathe fire, seeing as you think of me as your little dragon now. That bitch…I’d enjoy roasting her alive.”

He smiled softly at how absolutely adorable she looked when she cursed, but also at her fierce defense of him; fully understanding now why she loved that part of his personality so much, “Don’t worry, love, she won’t get away with this. I turned that document over to the authorities. Two men came by the loft yesterday to collect it, stating that they needed to maintain ‘the chain of custody’. When I spoke to Petyr on the phone, he told me he would be sending it to the laboratory for analysis by a handwriting expert. He also mentioned he would be filing an inclusionary motion before court on Monday.”

Daenerys smirked at Jorah, moving closer to his chair, “You sound like an episode of Law & Order, but I never would have thought you spouting law terminology would be so sexy.”

“I had to look up the actual words he used after I got off the phone,” he admitted with a chuckle, his arm winding around her waist to draw her into his lap, “Lawyers and their inside jargon.”

“Well, I still mean what I said,” she whispered against his lips, “Now how should we spend the rest of our day in?”

Jorah slipped his arm under the crook of her knees, held her tight and stood, bringing a startled, but happy yelp from Daenerys, “Perhaps I could continue to woo you with my laughable knowledge of legal lingo. How about I start with something that sounds sexy but most certainly isn’t…corpus delicti.”

The giggle his words drew from her was the most wonderful thing he had heard in the last two days and he stopped walking, his gaze tenderly serious, “I missed the sound of your laughter so much, Daenerys.”

Her eyes stung as she leaned in to meet his lips halfway, their kiss full of all the emotions neither of them could give voice to in that moment. He eased back first, his forehead resting against hers, simply breathing one another in before he continued on to the bedroom.

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Missandei: So did you guys *make up*? ;)

She laughed at her friend’s text and turned her mobile so Jorah could read it, the words making him shake his head, but also giving her a soft chuckle before he returned to his reading.

Daenerys: Uh…no comment ;)

M: Oh come on, I need details.

D: A woman doesn’t kiss and tell…over text message. Lunch Tuesday at noon? We can go shopping after too.

M: Sounds good. We have a lot of catching up to do. See you then.

“Do you ladies always discuss your sex life,” Jorah asked once she had shut off her mobile and set it down on the nightstand, his eyes not lifting from the page.

“Of course.” His head turned quickly toward her and she winked, “but only if it’s spectacularly good or incredibly bad.”

“And which category do I fall into?”

She stared in him in disbelief.

“Well,” he answered after a pause, “it would have been awfully egotistical of me to come right out and say I’m ‘spectacularly good’.” Jorah replaced his bookmark and set the novel aside, now fully turning his body toward her, nearly mirroring her position. “But I think the real answer is we’re spectacularly good together.”

All Daenerys could do was smile. Jorah was right, but it wasn’t just that intimately they were on the same wavelength. It was their personalities too; they melded together in such a way that she had never experienced before. With her head propped on her hand, they simply stared at one another in silence, enjoying the presence of the other person after being apart. Jorah had been honest about spending the day inside, having both lunch and dinner delivered. In between their food breaks, they had talked, read and watched a movie. While they had done all of those things, it had still managed to give her time to think about their separation. Once her anger at him had subsided, Daenerys had realized that she missed him. They never managed to stay mad at one another for long, even if she would sometimes storm off and sulk in a corner for a while. Just as when she stewed in her emotions, a part of her still wanted to be near him. And she had recognized long ago that no other man would ever occupy her heart the way Jorah did, even if they fought now and again.

“I can’t imagine being with anyone else. We’re made for each other, Jorah,” her voice softly earnest. She was also fairly sure that she was stating the obvious.

“I’ve thought so for a long while now,” his brows drawing together, “And that is why yesterday was so dreadfully lonely and miserable without you here. My better half was gone.”

“I was angry and hurt and I’m not sure how long I cried, but I do know that I regretted walking out,” she sniffled and rubbed the heel of her hand over her cheek to catch the tear, “That was immature and unfair, you-”

“Shh, it is behind us now. We have forgiven each other,” his thumb softly brushing away another droplet, “You know, this fight has only made us stronger.” Jorah gave her a small smile, “The Dragon and her Bear can survive anything…together.”
A soft, watery laugh escaped Daenerys, “I know we can.” Then she shifted and laid her head on his chest, listening to the soothing drum of his heart, “I missed this…laying in your arms, hearing the steady beat of your heart.”

“I missed holding you like this,” Jorah whispered, his lips brushing against the crown of her head.

The pair said nothing more after that, nor did they move for some time either. Lulled into a drowsy state by the warm weight of her, Jorah’s eyelids grew heavy. He shifted their position as gently as he could until he laid more comfortably, her body sprawled over his. She snuggled against him, her fingers curling possessively into his t-shirt even in her sleep. He smiled to himself, reaching over to turn off the bedside lamp. They were together again, and in Jorah’s mind, all was right with the world.
Chapter Summary

The court room drama comes to an end, Daenerys makes an important purchase while on a shopping excursion with Missandei, and an important topic of conversation gets brought up over dinner with Jorah.

Chapter Notes

Almost a month since my last update?!? That can't be right...I'm kidding of course. I hadn't even realized it had been that long. Many apologies to my readers, a confluence of events kept me from writing as often as I like to. Thank you for sticking around though - you're all awesome!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The agony of waiting for her second day of testimony to begin was not nearly as gut-wrenching as the first had been. With Jorah’s fingers firmly entwined with hers, their joined hands resting on his thigh, Daenerys felt peace within her, safe in the knowledge that he was there for her regardless of what might transpire in that courtroom later. She glanced at him out of the corner of her eye only to find that he was already looking at her, his eyes holding a soft smile.

“What?”

He said nothing, but the softness in his eyes showed on his lips now too, curling them in a gentle smile.

Turning her body more toward his, she nudged her shoulder into his bicep, her own eyes returning the sentiment.

Leaning against his body, they continued their wait, passing the time by people watching. They whispered commentary to one another, guessing at what was going on in their minds as they bustled by on their way to their own trials or what case they were prosecuting or defending based on their outward confidence or lack thereof. Their occasional gentle laughter helped her forget where they were for a while, but soon Petyr appeared from behind the courtroom doors. Daenerys’ brows knit together in confusion at the wide grin on the prosecutor’s face, one that could only be described as triumphant. Apparently, Jorah was thinking the same thing, his own brow wrinkled. They stood together before Jorah bent a bit to murmur in her ear, “I wonder what has him so happy.”

“Miss Targaryen, Mr. Mormont,” Petyr addressed them as he came to a stop in front of them, his hands coming to clasp behind his back, “It would appear you no longer have to deal with me.” Their confusion deepened, so he clarified his statement, “Mr. Hawkes plead guilty earlier this morning.”

Daenerys and Jorah eyebrows rose in surprised unison, their gazes meeting briefly before fixing on Petyr once more.
“And we have your ex-wife to thank for that.” The surprise was still evident on their faces. “Let me explain. Investigators made contact with Mrs. Hightower Saturday afternoon. It appeared for all intents and purposes that she was attempting to flee the country, as evidenced by the suitcases in the foyer of the home she shares with her husband and the passport they found in her possession when they took her into custody. After bringing her to the precinct for questioning, they left her in an interrogation room for a short time, watching her through the one-way glass. I’m telling you this because in all of their year’s dealing with suspects, they have never seen anyone more anxious than your ex and it is usually a signal to them that someone is guilty. At any rate, once they related the charges against her and the length of time she would be spending behind bars once she was convicted, she sung like a canary.”

“Is that the inside legal definition?”

Daenerys was barely able to suppress the snicker that rose in her at Jorah’s deadpan question, a brief flash of a pleasant memory from the afternoon prior surfacing in her mind.

“Something like that,” Petyr quipped. “Once her wiliness to cooperate with the prosecution and the inclusion of the associated evidence was related to Mr. Hawkes’ defensive council as well as to him, they made the right decision and changed their plea.”

“So that’s it then,” Daenerys stated, although it sounded more like a question to her own ears.

“Yes.” The prosecutor regarded her for a moment, then said, “All that is left is the sentencing, which you are welcome to attend.”

“Oh no, I’ve had enough of courts and trials to last me a lifetime.”

Petyr gave a short laugh. “That is not the first time I have heard someone say that and it surely will not be the last.” He held out his hand out to her, “Ms. Targaryen, I hope that this will bring a sense of closure to you. I know that there was no love lost between you and your brother, but perhaps bringing his murderer to justice will allow you to finally close that chapter of your life.”

“I hope so,” she shook his hand, “thank you.”

Petyr then did the same with Jorah before striding off back the way he came. Once he was gone, Daenerys turned to him, “You know, Jorah, he’s right. At least somewhat.” Looping her arm through his, they walked a ways down the courthouse hall before she finished her thought, “I mean, I always wondered who killed my brother and why. Now that I know, it means I can finally put him out of my mind, and essentially, out of my life for good.”

Jorah knew that was something easier said than done. As much as he wished to forget everything about his previous marriage to Lynn, thoughts and remembrances still surfaced at odd times. But, he reasoned too, that everyone is different and perhaps Daenerys was someone who could do just as she suggested. “I hope so, love.”

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“So how did you and Jorah meet?”

Missandei and Daenerys weaved their way through the crowded sidewalk on their way to a small café not far from where they intended to do their shopping.

“Jorah told you on Saturday,” she paused, thinking back to that day before nodding, “Yeah, I definitely remember him telling you.”
Missandei shot her friend a glance. “Daenerys, you were blushing while he was talking. I know there is more to that story.”

That was a trait she sometimes wished her friend didn’t have: the ability to read people like a book. It helped her with her job, allowing her to understand subtext and body language while translating. Daenerys hesitated, waiting until they turned from the main street onto a side one that was a lot less crowded. “Well, like he said, I worked for him as his secretary for almost a year before it happened.”

Her friend stopped walking to face her. “IT happened?”

Daenerys heaved a sigh at the gleeful grin on Missandei’s face. Better out with it, she thought. “We slept together before we started dating.”

Even though Daenerys had tried to keep her voice low, she was heard loud and clear. The taller woman’s jaw dropped, her eyes wide like saucers. She blinked at few times, “That has to be, hands down, the most impulsive thing you’ve ever done.” She recovered with a shake of her head, her smile returning, “Okay, I want all the details.”

They resumed their journey, linked arm and arm as they had done years ago walking to classes in secondary school. “It just sort of happened one night. We were working late; there was a big deadline looming. We were the last people there, alone in in his office, and well,…”

Daenerys suddenly felt self-conscious. She wasn’t sure why, she had no regrets about that night and her pal was far from judgmental.

“IT’s not tawdry, Daenerys.” Missandei reassured her, as if reading her mind and sensing the shift in her demeanor, “To be honest, I think it’s hot.”

Daenerys’ look asked for clarification, so she continued, “Yeah, I mean the two of you obviously must have had an intense connection for it to happen like that. And I know it wasn’t merely physical. I can tell from just watching the two of you together. There’s this magnetism between you and Jorah that’s palpable. It reminds me a little bit of Grey and I.”

Daenerys nodded in agreement. “Your boyfriend may quiet, but the way he looks at you Missi, he’s head over heels for you.”

“And that’s the way Jorah looks at you. He adores you, you’re his whole world. And I could see that when I met him that first time, how hurt he was at hurting you.” Missandei made a face, “Let’s not bring that up. Back to happier topics. So where exactly did you do it in his office? How was it?”

She knew those questions were coming. They never really discussed their sex lives in great detail; it was usually more like vague highlights. “On his desk.” Her friend let out a low whistle, then she answered her second question, “The best I’ve ever had.”

“No kidding?” Daenerys’ knowing smile said it all. “Wow, you are one lucky woman: a man who not only loves and cares for you deeply, but is also great in bed.”

“And several other places too.”

They both broke into laughter, their sides aching as they came to the entrance of the restaurant. It was nearly empty inside, save for a couple in the corner booth. They sat near the window at a small, round table, the tablecloth cheerily patterned. She and Jorah had eaten here several times while they were dating, the dining fare not only eclectic but delicious. They had
discovered the place quite by accident; a sudden downpour had forced them under the café’s red scalloped canopy in search of shelter. They had been discussing where to eat at the time, and as Jorah had referred to the happy coincidence as serendipitous, they had chosen to eat there that night. It had turned out to be the perfect choice. Missandei smiled as Daenerys related the story, the expression unchanging through several more tales of their courtship. She found out that while Jorah and Daenerys had slept together twice before dating, he had shown up at her place a week after their last interlude, telling her that she meant more to him than that and he wanted to truly get to know her because, his exact words: he couldn’t shake the feeling that there was more between them than just the physical connection. And he had been true to his word. They went on more dates than Daenerys could count: lunches and dinners, the cinema and stage, museums and art galleries, and picnics when the weather was fair. Some nights they stayed in; ordering take away and talking well after midnight. That was not to say that bodily contact went away completely, it merely changed in its expression. Jorah held her hand as often as he could, their fingers intertwined between them. They hugged and cuddled close on the sofa, and at the end of the night, he always kissed her. Their kisses were almost chaste compared to the ones they had shared that first night in his office, but they were no less sweet or amazing. The dating had gone on that way for over two months before Daenerys cracked under the overwhelming anticipation and suppressed desire she felt for Jorah and practically pounced on him one night as they snuggled under a blanket on her couch, the movie they had been watching continuing to play unnoticed, a flickering backdrop to their intimacy. Missandei couldn’t help but feel happy for Daenerys. After everything she had been through, her horrible brother and disappointing, not to mention, sometimes abusive, relationships, she deserved a man who loved her as much as Jorah did.

“Enough about me,” Daenerys said as their lunch plates were cleared by the waitress, “Tell me about how you and Grey met.”

Her friend smiled, lost in thought for a moment. “Our first meeting was actually very brief. I was translating for a visiting American military General. He was overseeing some joint operation between Middle Eastern and American forces. It was after a training exercise that we locked eyes and the connection was instant. I got this rush of feeling in my chest that I can’t even describe,” Missandei sighed, her hand coming to rest over her breastbone, “Anyway, he seemed really shy, so I went over and struck up a conversation. We didn’t get to say much to one another other than introductions, but as I was walking away, he called after me, asking where I was from. I told him and he said something I’ll never forget, Missandei of Naath, I know we will meet again.”

“Aww, how romantic!”

“I know, right?” The ladies stopped their conversation to let the waitress place their desert, a miniature dark chocolate lava cake, on the table between them. “I couldn’t stop thinking about him after that. My work had me so busy that I didn’t realize four months had gone by. I was beginning to think I wouldn’t see him again. But one afternoon, I was translating for a government official at a newly constructed military hospital and guess who I saw?” The women shared a smile, “But he seemed different. Down. Defeated. When my work was done, I went over to talk to him, and it was so strange, but it was almost like he was ashamed for me to see him. It took some gentle prodding, but he finally told me that he had lost the lower part of his left leg to an IED and that a woman like me deserved to be with a man, not someone like him.”

“He thought just because he was missing a part of his body that he wasn’t a man anymore?”

Missandei nodded, taking a forkful of desert. “Well, I wasn’t going to let that defeatist attitude continue any further. I went back to that hospital every day after work, spending time with him, showing him that I didn’t care about his missing limb, that all I cared about was him.”
“Obviously, it worked.”

“Yeah, once he got the prosthetic fitted and regained more of his mobility, he started to feel better about himself. He told me later that just my presence and smile everyday made him want to keep fighting. When he was discharged, we went on our first real date. And the rest is history.”

Resting her elbows on the table, Daenerys tented her fingers under her chin and waggled her eyebrows suggestively, “Now inquiring minds, well, just mine, wanna know: how is he?”

Her friend’s complexion flushed, “Let’s just say he’s spectacular at many things.”

They both broke into laughter again, and when it finally subsided, Daenerys rested her hand over her friend’s on the table, “I’m so happy for you Missi.”

Missandei had been reluctant to share her past with Daenerys when they were first friends, thinking that somehow she would be judged for having been abandoned by her parents and raised in an orphanage until she was finally adopted as a young teenager. But the two young girls had found a connection in their tumultuous pasts, a kinship in never knowing their parents or truly experiencing what it is like to be in a family. They became like sisters, confiding everything in each other, being the other’s support system when times were especially rough.

“We both have had difficult beginnings, but have come out from it all the better. We are the reason we have succeeded in life, not relying on anyone else to give us our success or happiness.”

She was right after all, but as Daenerys had so often learned, when wasn’t she? They finished what little was left of their desert and settled the check before leaving and heading off to the stores for their shopping. Daenerys had purchases to make for her trip with Jorah, which was just around the corner. The trial had been such a distraction that she had forgotten until recently just how soon their anniversary trip really was.

“Well, I think this trip will be a great…Daenerys?” Missandei turned, noticing her friend was no longer walking right next to her. She had stopped at a store front, her eyes fixed on the display in the window. She came to stand next to her, “That’s beautiful.”

“Let’s go,” Daenerys grabbed her friend’s hand, practically pulling her into the store with her, “I have to try it on.”

Once inside, she found a sales associate and asked to try on what she saw in the window. Apparently, it was a piece created by a fashion designer for her new spring line and the shop was previewing it to garner interest in the other items. Daenerys didn’t really care about what the lady had to say, she was just anxious to try it on. She had a feeling that it would be perfect on her, and when she emerged from the dressing room, her hands smoothing gently over the delicate fabric that draped perfectly at her hips, she knew it was the one without any doubt in her mind.

“Wow,” Missandei said from her seat by the large 180 degree mirror, “It’s like it was made specifically for you.”

“I know,” Daenerys breathed, turning this way and that, surveying her reflection, watching the skirt sweep back and forth. The fabric, soft as the finest silk, clung to her body in all the right places. The dress left one shoulder bare, showing off her ‘perfect bone structure’ as Jorah often noted; her skin nearly luminescent against the icy blue hue of the material. “This is the one, Missi, I can feel it.”

“I totally agree,” she responded with an enthusiastic nod.
“You look exquisite, Miss,” the sales lady gushed as she appeared from around the mirror, “Your husband-to-be is a very lucky man indeed.” She busied herself making a few minor adjustments at the waist and shoulder before adding, “When is the wedding?”

“Uh,” Daenerys broke off. They hadn’t set a date yet, let alone talked at all about the preparations, but she recovered quickly enough, “We’re looking at a summer wedding.”

“This dress is certainly perfect for the season.”

Daenerys nodded. “I’ll take it.”

“Excellent,” the lady exclaimed, “Let’s get you back into your other clothes and we’ll set appointments for any necessary alterations.”

Once the down payment was made and all of the paperwork was finalized, Daenerys and Missi continued with the rest of their shopping before parting ways at her friend’s stop at the Underground. Daenerys continued on the short walk to Jorah’s office, all the while her mind mulling over what had happened at the bridal shop. There was no doubt in her mind that they were going to get married, but she couldn’t help but be concerned about the fact that they hadn’t talked about it at all. But, she reasoned, things had been hectic since Jorah’s proposal, so perhaps it was just that. Once things calmed down, they could get down to planning. She made up her mind to talk about it with him over dinner that night.

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“When do you want to get married?”

His hand paused halfway to setting his wine glass down, a small smile beginning to grace his features. “When do you?”

“Jorah,” she admonished teasingly, “that’s not helping things.”

“Sweetheart,” he leaned across the dining table, his hand coming to rest over hers, “Everyone knows the bride is the focus of a wedding. It should be mostly your decision.”

“So you have no thoughts on the matter whatsoever?”

“No,” he sighed, “I know for a fact I don’t want a winter wedding or to get married indoors. Everything else we can decide together.”

Daenerys realized that Jorah had just revealed some details about his first marriage, and judging by his tone, it didn’t sound like it was a happy affair. “She was a bridezilla, wasn’t she?”

“A what?”

“Bridezilla,” she repeated with a laugh, his unfamiliarity with the term endearing, “code for a bride who’s a big pain in the ass about everything being just so.”

“Oh right,” Jorah rolled his eyes, “You have no idea.”

She leaned across the table, “Well, that’s one thing you don’t have to worry about with me.” Then she pressed a quick kiss to his cheek and sat back, “I’d like a summer wedding. What do you think?”

“That sounds lovely. Is July far enough in advance for us to plan?” Daenerys nodded, then
he asked, “And where would you like the ceremony to be?”

“I was thinking I’d like to pay homage to your family and have it in Scotland. Perhaps on the grounds of an ancient castle.”

“That’s very thoughtful of you, love. Sounds perfect.” Jorah thought for a moment, “You have a placed picked out already, don’t you?”

“Well,” she drew out the word, “sort of.”

At that point, she got up and went to the bedroom where she retrieved a thin white binder from her side of the bed. She motioned for Jorah to join her on the couch, flipping through the pages of invitation ideas, pictures of lavish wedding cakes, table centerpieces, and floral bouquets until she found what she was looking for. “I think this one is beautiful, but this one is too. I can’t decide. What do you think?”

Jorah considered the pictures for a few moments. Both locations were picturesque, large expanses of lush grass surrounding ancient, but mostly still intact, stone structures. But it was the first image that really struck him, reminding him of the place he had played at as a child. With its tall, broad oaks bordering the space and dotted within the grounds, not to mention a meandering stone path, it offered the perfect setting for a ceremony amongst the grand beauty of nature. He could picture them exchanging their vows beneath those large, leafy branches, just a row or two of family, close friends, and guests in attendance. Just as Jorah had always wanted his wedding to be.

“That one,” he finally answered, pointing to the first image, “I can picture us there.”

Daenerys smiled at him. “Me too. I was hoping you’d pick that.”

“I owe you an apology, love,” Jorah said, reaching for her hand to intertwine their fingers. “We should have begun discussing this right after the proposal.”

“Maybe, but with everything that happened; it wasn’t a good time. We were too preoccupied to give it the thought and attention it deserved.”

“But now we can,” he smiled, his thumb softly following the contour of her jaw as he leaned in for a kiss. When they parted, he added, “After our anniversary trip, we can start in earnest.”

“Sounds like a plan.” Daenerys closed the binder and set it aside before turning toward him, “Speaking of our trip, wait till you see what I bought to wear.”

Jorah sat back on the couch, his eyebrow arching at the impish look she was flashing his way, her lip tucked firmly between her teeth. Daenerys had impeccable taste when it came to fashion, a talent she often used for his benefit, choosing not only some of his business attire but also causal wear that often received numerous compliments, and not just from the opposite sex. He had never been one to care much for what he wore, even going so far as to wear the same dress shirt many times in a month. He used to only care that it was clean and didn’t have holes, but now, though he would never admit to it publicly, he rather enjoyed being dressed by her.

“If the fact that you wouldn’t let me look in the bag is any indication of what awaits me, then I’m in for a real treat.”

Daenerys giggled, moving to straddle his lap, “The moment I saw that bikini, I knew you would love it.”

A pleasured groan passed from Jorah’s throat as his imagination began to run wild with possibilities.
He leaned over the arm of the couch to retrieve the remote that controlled the lighting for the loft, pressing a few buttons, leaving them in only the soft glow of a nearby lamp. “I don’t believe I have ever seen you in a bathing suit before.”

“The same goes for me about you,” her fingers slowly unbuttoning his dress shirt, “I would be lying if I told you I haven’t been thinking about that or what else you have planned for me.”

“Then it would appear we both have surprises in store for one another,” he whispered, his hand slipping under her sweater, following the arch of her spine and drawing her down for another kiss, this one lingering and filled with heated promise.

“We do indeed,” she murmured against his lips between kisses, “And I can’t wait to find out.”

Chapter End Notes

By the way, this whole trial business could have kept going on for several more chapters, but I think you all would much rather read about Jorah and Daenerys and their upcoming tropical vacation. Am I right? Cough*Jorah in swim trunks*Cough I thought so :)
Chapter Summary

Daenerys and Jorah take their flight to Martinique, then reminisce about the beginning of their relationship.

Chapter Notes

An anniversary vacation for our lovely couple. Oh the fun things I have planned for them *rubs hands together in glee*

A quick thanks to all my readers. Your reviews/kudos light up my life. *blushes*
You're the best!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Daenerys, our flight leaves in two hours.”

“I’ll be right there,” she called back.

Jorah glanced at his watch again, exhaling through pursed lips while he paced; his luggage ready by the door. While he didn’t usually mind that she took her time, international terminals at the airport could be hell on earth and he didn’t want to end up stuck in a line.

He was just about to call to her again when she appeared from the bedroom, rolling her baggage behind her, her carry-on slung over one shoulder. Dressed in lightweight pants and blouse, she was certainly ready for the warm sunny weather that awaited them. With her sunglasses perched on her head, she smiled at him, “Ok, let’s go.”

He opened the door and gathered his bags, tucking one under his arm so he could lock the door after them. They took a taxi to the airport, unwilling to pay the exorbitant fee for parking there. And, just as he had anticipated, the line to check in was a disaster. The security there was stricter in recent months, and while he was glad for it most of the time, he missed the ease with which flying used to be. Finally, once inside the terminal, they had fifteen minutes to spare. With first class priority boarding that meant they got on before the crowd did, it afforded them time to get settled, stowing their carry-on bags in the overhead compartment before take-off.

Daenerys had the window seat and Jorah the aisle yet his leg still jiggled nervously. She had discovered on their first flight together that flying made him anxious, but he forced himself to do it because of his job. He avoided the seat by the window at all costs and she had regarded him with compassion when he told her looking outside while in flight made him feel like he was going to fall off the side of the plane. Despite her reassurances that it wasn’t possible, he still held that irrational fear. She found it endearing, this otherwise confident paragon of business had a hidden chink in his armour.

“Jorah,” her hand coming to rest over his on the arm rest, “We’ll be in the air soon and
then in Martinique before you know it.”

“Yes,” he sighed, “Fourteen hours from now.”

“Isn’t that almost how long your flight to Hong Kong was?”

“God, whatever you do, don’t talk about that flight,” a visible shiver passing through him.

“Right, sorry,” she said, squeezing his hand reassuringly.

He gave her a tight-lipped smile and started fidgeting again. Daenerys remembered how he had called her from the airport in Hong Kong, the anxiousness in his voice when he described how turbulence had rocked the plane almost violently for the last hour of the flight. He said he would never fly that airline again and whenever he saw that company’s planes, with the red Chinese-style dragon painted on their fuselage, he would cringe.

The captain came over the intercom and gave the final pre-flight instructions. Jorah pulled his seatbelt tight over his lap, closing his eyes, taking a deep breath and leaning his head back against the plush seat as they taxied down the runway. She held his hand, his grip so tight the tips of her fingers tingled when he finally let go. He gave her an apologetic glance and asked her to distract him for a while. Pulling out her Lonely Planet Martinique travel guide, she described all of the fun things she had bookmarked for them to do: snorkeling, a guided island tour, shopping in the outdoor markets, and other countless sights and activities. She would lean close, excitedly pointing at something, ooo’ing and ahh’ing over the beauty in the photographs. Her enthusiasm began to ease his nervousness and he finally relaxed enough to engage with her over the guide. Little did she know, he had made plans of his own for them during their week-long stay. She had begged him to tell her what he had in store for them and had even snuck into his study while he researched them on his computer, trying to peek over his shoulder to see what he was looking at. That particular incident had ended in a tickle fest, her sides aching and her voice hoarse from squealing with laughter.

They had a brief layover in Paris and then back on the plane to Fort-de-France, the capital of Martinique. This was the longest leg of the trip, and happily for Jorah, he slept off and on most of the way. He always looked so boyish and peaceful in his sleep; she wanted to curl up with him. Instead, she rested her head against his shoulder and dozed.

“Daenerys,” he whispered, shaking her shoulder gently, “We’re here.”

He had a smile on his face and in his eyes that he couldn’t help; she looked so adorable when she woke up. She stretched, sighing at the satisfying pop of her back and crack of her neck when she rolled it. Lifting the shade, she gasped, the beauty of the island greeting her through the window. Jorah was his regular old self the moment he deplaned, making his way through the terminal with her to pick up their luggage and go through security yet again. Once checked out, they exited the airport and took a taxi to the resort. It was quite a long ride; the driver a funny, talkative man who told them in broken English about some places on the island that might interest them. Her ears perked up when he mentioned something about a zoo and she turned to Jorah, her eyes dancing.

“Well, one of the surprises has been spoiled,” he said, looking a bit crestfallen.

“You made plans in advance for us to go?”

“Of course, love, you and animals go together like cheese and wine.”

With a peck on his cheek, she pulled out her guide book, flipping through it to find the entry on the zoo. She dog-eared the page and sat back to enjoy the scenery, talking and laughing
with Jorah the rest of the way.

After arriving at the resort, an attendant showed them to their lodgings. Jorah chose this specific cottage for several reasons: its distance from the other buildings, the sweeping 240 degree view of the ocean, and most importantly, the fact that their section of beach was entirely secluded. Daenerys didn’t know that yet, another surprise he planned to spring on her.

The bellboy unlocked their door and Daenerys stopped on its threshold, the expansive, nearly open floorplan of the room made her jaw drop. Leaving Jorah to tip the staff member, she meandered through the sitting room, running her hand over the back of the stark white couch that faced the deck. Pushing aside the sheer white drapes, she noted the pair of oversized chaise lounges placed side by side to face a view that brought a sigh to her lips, the only thing between her and the crystal blue water was a swath of glittering white sand that looked oh-so-inviting.

“It’s gorgeous isn’t it?” All she could do was nod, mouth agape like a guppy, which brought a chuckle from Jorah, who was busy toeing off his tan leather loafers. She noticed his intention and followed suit, pulling off her sandals and taking his hand as he walked down the two wooden steps to the beach. The sand was soft, unlike some beaches Daenerys had been to; the grains here did not irritate her toes. It was warm too, the perfect temperature to allow them to walk slowly to just above the water line. The surf didn’t pound the coastline here; the waves she guessed were probably close to half a meter high, which meant that any seashells she found would be intact, unless of course they had already been visited by the sea birds gliding overhead. The water was so clear for such a long distance out that she knew snorkeling was going to offer spectacular viewing of the underwater world. Between the gentle lull of waves there was a silence she wasn’t prepared for, and after spending so long in the hustle and bustle of London, it was slightly disconcerting at first. But she took a deep breath of the fresh, faintly salty air and closed her eyes, tipping her head back to let the sun warm her face. She let the calm surround her, and after spending so long in the hustle and bustle of London, it was slightly disconcerting at first. But she took a deep breath of the fresh, faintly salty air and closed her eyes, tipping her head back to let the sun warm her face. She let the calm surround her, and after everything that had happened to them in the last month, it was a welcome sensation. It was in the quiet peace that Daenerys realized she didn’t hear any of the sounds normally associated with people: no conversations, no ringing mobile phones, nothing.

“Jorah,” she looked at him, “I don’t hear anyone else. Just the ocean and nature.” Then she turned to look back at their cottage before looking left and then right and finding no other buildings of any kind nestled amongst the lush foliage, the dark green giving way to pops of bright color in the form of hibiscus and orchid flowers. “Are we alone on this beach?”

“Yes,” he smiled, watching her glance around once more before she grinned and launched herself into his arms, throwing her arms around his neck. He stumbled back a bit, but recovered quickly under her sudden burst of enthusiasm. And when she pulled back to meet his eyes, the joy he saw in hers made the long flight so very worth it.

“So we’re really alone? No one will come walking along to disturb us?”

“Not unless we call a member of the staff to our cottage.”

“Wow. This is…I don’t even know how to describe it.” Daenerys gazed at her surroundings once more, “Amazing isn’t good enough, but it’ll have to do.”

“I agree. It’s far more beautiful than the photographs depicted it would be.”

As happy as she was to be there and as beautiful as their surroundings were, she couldn’t suppress the yawn that suddenly made an appearance. “Sorry,” she shook her head, trying to shake off the jetlag, “I guess that long flight is starting to show.”
“I could use a nap myself.” Jorah glanced at his watch, “We have plenty of time yet. Let’s get back inside, get some sleep, then order room service and have a nice dinner in. Our plans can wait until tomorrow.”

“I like the sound of that.”

With one last look at the sparkling ocean, Daenerys took his hand and walked back to their cottage. He led her through the sitting room, “Which bed would you like to sleep in?”

“You mean we have more than one?”

He didn’t answer, instead leading her into the only other room in their bungalow, a relatively large space occupied by the biggest bed she had ever seen, impeccably made with crisp white sheets and lightweight turquoise blanket. “That’s bigger than our bed back home.” Jorah winked and she elbowed him playfully, “And here I thought I was the one with the naughty mind.”

He chuckled, then brought her to another deck, this one located through a set of white plantation shutter doors just off of the bedroom. It was similar to the first one in that it had drapes just sheer enough for light to make it through, but otherwise sufficiently opaque to prevent any prying eyes from catching a glimpse of anything. That was where the similarities ended; the curtains here enclosed them on all sides, currently blocking their view of the ocean. There were also no deck chairs, rather a bed sat in the middle of the space, encircled in fine mosquito netting and made in a similar fashion to the one inside. It didn’t take her long to decide where she wanted them to catch a few winks. The soft breeze and warm sun filtering through the diaphanous fabric, coupled with the comfort of Jorah’s embrace, had her asleep within moments of lying down.

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Later that day, after a dinner of Dorade grilée, a traditional Martinican fish dish, served at a table set up on the sand near their lodging, Jorah led Daenerys to the deck, where he sat down on the large deck chair, parting his legs so she could sit back against him. Wrapping his arm around her middle, they sat in silence for a long while, enjoying the sherbet sunset and the last of their desert wine; a honeyed and richly sweet ice wine that she knew from having imbibed previously was very expensive.

“In exactly four weeks, it will be our first anniversary.”

“It seems like only yesterday it was our first date.”

He hummed happily at the memory of that night, how beautiful she had looked and how he knew even before dinner had been served that he wanted to see her again. “You were nervous that night.”

She tensed a bit in his embrace before setting her wine glass down on the small glass side table next to them and turning in his arms to face him, her eyes sheepishly downcast, “You noticed that?” She glanced up briefly to catch the softness of his smile, “Of course you did. You never miss anything.”

“I know you, love,” he replied with a light chuckle, “I found it endearing. That after everything we had done together, you would be nervous about having dinner with me.”

“It wasn’t really nerves,” she paused, “It was more like…what if it doesn’t work out?”

“You had doubts?”
Hurt flickered in Jorah’s eyes and she hurried to clarify her statement, “No, no, I didn’t mean it that way.” She worried her lip, trying to formulate the thought in her mind so that it came out right, “You were so wonderful and amazing and sweet that I didn’t want to do something to ruin what we had. I was already falling in love with you and I knew it was way too soon to be feeling that way so I guess it was really that I didn’t want to come on too strong and scare you away.” He was trying very hard to stifle his laugh, but it wasn’t working, “How is that funny?”

The mildly indignant set of her features made him laugh all the harder, but he stopped with a sigh, “Oh, love, you couldn’t have scared me away. No matter what you said or did, I wasn’t going anywhere. I was already falling in love with you too.”

“You were,” she asked with quiet surprise, blinking owlishly back at him.

“No,” he corrected, “Of course.” The backs of his fingers coming up to brush over the roundness of her cheek. The soft orange glow from the torches ringing the wooden railing of their deck reflected in the gathering wetness in the corners of her eyes. He leaned forward, set his glass down next to hers, and cupped her face in his hands, “How could I not be?”

Her lips parted to respond, but she found she had no words. The night of their first dinner played like a flickering 35mm film in her mind, specific parts going by in slow motion. The way he watched her answer his questions, intently focused on her eyes. The uncannily easy way their fingers had found one another’s between them as they walked to his car, only parting so they could get in before meeting up again. But it was the end of the night that struck her now. She had played that moment over and over so many times in her mind after she had shut her door, leaning back against it with a broad grin and closed eyes, her heart racing in her chest. He had bid her goodnight, promising to call her the next day. The chemistry had nearly crackled between them, from the catalyst of it when he had parked in front of her building, the anticipation rising with each step up the narrow flight of stairs to her door. Even with her heels, she still had to look up at him. It was that memory she stilled in her mind now, the way he had gazed down at her, standing so close she could feel his warmth, his fresh clean scent, enveloping her. And then there were his eyes, the strength of his gaze held a softness that she had only ever seen him fix on her. It was now she realized that was the beginnings of the love he spoke about and it had been in the gentle way he had cupped her jaw too. It wasn’t physical desire in that moment, for she had seen him look, and touch, her that way too. This was wholly different and his kiss had been too, closed-lipped but achingly tender and sweet, slowly savoring the sensation of a first kiss shared under the auspices of a new beginning. She mentally kicked herself now for missing it the first time.

She came out of her dazed recollection with a smile, “How could I have missed that?”

“I was actually trying not to show it,” he mused out loud, “But I couldn’t help it.”

She closed the distance between them now and kissed him, trying to reenact that night, but ultimately she knew it would be different. They had shared thousands of kisses since then, each of them like snowflakes, unique and special. He ended it with a nuzzle of her nose, the sudden soft breeze blowing a curtain of her hair between them. He brushed it aside, tucking the strands behind her ear, her tittering giggle making him grin.

“You know, Jorah,” she said abruptly, “You’re a different man now.” He tilted his head in question, and she answered, “I just mean you never did that when I first met you.”

She was pointing at his mouth, “I was a bit more serious then, wasn’t I?”

“You were,” she shrugged, “Not like it was a bad thing. You were quieter too.”
“I’ll give you that, I was a man of few words. You had a hand in changing me.”

She shook her head, “I wasn’t trying to change you, Jorah. I liked you as the strong, silent type.”

“And you don’t like me now that I’m a Loquacious Larry?”

She laughed hard at his mock pout, trying in vain to playfully shove him, but ultimately failing when he grabbed her hands and pulled her down onto the cushion, tucking her into his side so he could look down at her. “I loved you then and I love you now, my bear.”

“So do I.” He regarded her for a moment, “You’re different too, love.”

“Really?”

He nodded. “More confident and quick to speak your mind.”

Her eyebrows knit together, her eyes taking on a glaze of sadness, “I think my brother was the reason for my lack of confidence. He never supported anything I wanted to do, anything that was just for me. It was always about him and what I could do to make his life easier. ‘Get another job, Dany. We don’t have enough money.’, she growled softly and let out a huff of frustration, “What he really meant was he didn’t have enough money to fund his gaudy, lavish lifestyle while I was left wearing thrift store clothes and walking around in shoes until the soles had worn through.” She closed her eyes, “I can’t believe I let him run my life for so long. I feel so stupid about it sometimes.”

“Daenerys,” Jorah said, “I don’t want to hear you say that about yourself ever again. You are not stupid.”

The vehemence in his words wasn’t to chastise her, but rather, to stop her from thinking that way about herself. He knew full well what it was like to do things for someone because you think it’s the right thing to do, even when, deep down, you know they are taking advantage of you. Love had always made Jorah somewhat of a fool and Lynn had made him pay dearly for it. He had given her whatever she wanted in the hopes that it would make her happy, but in the end, it wasn’t enough. Daenerys’ situation was different in a way; Jorah reasoned she didn’t do everything she did for her brother out of love. She did it with the idea that Viserys was the only family she had left, and if she didn’t support him, he would be left to his own devices. And with her gentle heart, she couldn’t let that happen. Bottom line, Viserys had used her and the mere thought of it made Jorah sick.

“You were always strong and confident, it was just buried in here,” he continued, his index finger gesturing at her chest.

“Waiting for someone to believe in me.”

“Not entirely. I think it was more that you just needed a nudge in the right direction. The opportunity to let those qualities show themselves.” He smiled, “Don’t ever doubt that I believed in you whole heartedly, but it was because I saw your potential. It was all about giving you the right environment to flourish in.”

“That’s why you kept giving me those extra responsibilities, things I had never done as a secretary before.”

“Exactly, because I knew you could handle it. I dare say you were over qualified to be my administrative assistant in the first place.”
“I never knew you thought that,” she said, tears beginning to form in her eyes.

“We had another opening at the time and I wanted to offer you that position. The only problem was you hadn’t finished your degree yet. If I had given it to you, the board would have had my head. They are such sticklers for the rules.”

They shared a laugh and then a few kisses, the last of which had grown far more heated than the first, her fingers toying with the buttons on his shirt. “Daenerys, if we start this now, we won’t get enough rest for tomorrow.”

She ignored his half-hearted deflection, her lips moving to dust feather-light kisses over his jaw and down onto his throat, “What do you have planned?”

He chuckled with a groan. “Distracting me with the hopes that I’ll reveal my plans for us won’t work, love.”

She slumped back against the cushion with a pout, “Well, it was worth a try.”

He kissed the tip of her nose, then got up and held out his hand to her, helping her to her feet. “Trust me; I think you are going to enjoy yourself.”

Jorah had surprised her many times in the past and every time had been wonderful in its own way. How could she not trust him now? “All right.” He led her through the louvered wooden doors and into their bedroom, “How many do things do you have planned for us?”

“Several,” he winked, “Just wait and see.”

Chapter End Notes

This is just the start. Don’t worry the swim trunks I promised are coming soon :D
Jorah and Daenerys go horseback riding, which leads to the discovery of something quite wonderful that she didn't know about him.

Another day on vacation for our favorite couple and a new activity for them to enjoy.

Let's be honest...hearing Jorah speak Dothraki is uber hot. Since I couldn't have him speaking that in this story, I choose another language. Enjoy!

Google Translate is very helpful, but I apologize if I got it wrong.

Thank you once again to my readers! Hugs and love for sticking around.

Jorah had tried to keep their planned activity for the morning a secret, but the scent of fresh Timothy hay and horse manure gave it away before the stables even came into view. “We’re going horseback riding?”

He answered her enthusiasm with a smile.

“It’s been so long since I’ve done that,” she thought for a moment, “I think it was my seventh birthday. My father’s friend, Illyrio, the man that took us in after the fire had my party at the pony rides.”

“Did you have a good time?”

“Yeah.” Her next words were accompanied by a grimace, “Until I stepped in a pile of horse crap when I wasn’t looking. Ruined my new shoes too.”

Jorah tried to suppress a laugh; he knew full well what that was like. “I’ve done that before. Stepped in a large cow pie once too. That was a singularly disgusting experience and I hope I never repeat it.”
Daenerys didn’t bother holding back on her laughter. “When did you do that?”

“One summer at my Aunt’s. I was probably nine or ten. She tried to tell me to watch where I was walking, but I guess I must not have been listening.”

She could picture him, a look of disgust contorting his boyish features as he lifted his soiled shoe from the soft, round pile of excrement before trying desperately to shake most of it free. It renewed her laughter and all Jorah could do was fix her with a sidelong glance, watching her have a laugh at his expense.

They followed the dirt path that wove between two cinderblock outbuildings before coming to an end at the entrance of a large stable. The owner appeared from within, approaching them with a smile, offering his hand to each in turn before letting them know it would be just a few more minutes before another couple in the group arrived. He directed them to pick out their horses; any of the stalls marked with a green tag were available.

Daenerys instantly fell in love with a large white mare, her coat so pale it was almost silver. She reasoned she was probably 16 or so hands high, her long silvery mane and tail brushed to a gleaming sheen. The equine watched her approach, its ears swiveling to the front to listen intently to the sound of her voice, “She’s beautiful.”

“Yes.” His lips set in an apologetic line, “But unfortunately she’s not available.”

She hadn’t even thought to check the tag on the stall’s half door. With one last look, she continued on, a bit crestfallen at not being able to ride her. Most of the other ten horses seemed huge to her and a few looked downright ornery and Jorah steered her clear of those. He had spent ample time around horses and knew which one to choose, a smaller chestnut mare with a flaxen mane and tail in the last stall appeared to be a calm enough choice considering how long it had been since Daenerys had ridden a horse. The bay stallion in the adjacent space was similarly good-natured and Jorah picked that one for himself. The grooms walked them out into the yard and prepared them for their ride, draping the sheepskin saddle blanket over their back before placing the English saddle on top and tightening the straps that held it in place.

Jorah laced his fingers and squatted a bit next to the stirrup, offering Daenerys the boost up she needed to get on the horse. The groom handed her the reins while Jorah mounted up, expertly twining the leather in his fingers. She watched him, marveling at how relaxed he looked astride his horse, as if no time had passed since the last time he rode.

After giving some basic instructions to the group, their guide led them out onto the riding path at a
walk, the gait the perfect pace to admire the scenery. The trail cut through a thicket of rubber trees, their bare trunks rising up to broad, leafy canopies that mostly sheltered them from the sun’s rays. Within the grove, Daenerys spotted towering stalks of pale green bamboo, their thin flourishing shoots fluttering in the sporadic breeze. But it was the abundance of tropical flora that still took her breath away: the cotton candy pink hibiscus, the small white blotches of the orchid’s petals, the sun surrounded by a cloud that was the frangipani’s bloom, and lastly, the oleander, a whorled shade of purple trapped somewhere between the warmth of fire and the chilliness of ice. The island was a veritable painter’s palate, the country’s nickname Madinina, or island of flowers, couldn’t have been more fitting. No text message or photo she sent back to Missandei could capture what she saw or the scent of the air: sweet, but not cloyingly so. It reminded her of ripe fruit, peaches and apricots, blended with a tangy citrus undertone. Soon a clearing opened up in front of them, the small group spreading out from their two-by-two line.

“Where did you learn to ride a horse like that?”

He glanced over at her and grinned, watching her shift in the saddle.

“The first time I went to my Aunt Maege’s farm, although I was there mostly to help her around the property. Every summer went that way, at least until I went off to university.” He paused, “At first, I didn’t want to go. But my father insisted it would be good for me. At the end of that first summer, I couldn’t wait to return the next year.”

Daenerys’ eyes moved over him; the way he sat tall in the saddle, his body moving with the motion of the horse as if they were one. He was born to ride and she giggled at the thought that crossed her mind.

“What?”

She shook her head, “Nothing, you just really look like a Knight on that horse, that’s all.”

His gaze was affectionate, “Then that makes you my Queen.”

He may have thought so, but she couldn’t help the lingering discomfort she felt in the saddle. Not matter what she did, she couldn’t get comfortable. Perhaps it was just nerves, after all a full grown horse was a far cry from a pony and she hadn’t been riding in a very long time. To make matters worse, her horse seemed to sense it somehow. The mare would toss her head now and again, pulling on the reins and champing on the bit in its mouth. Jorah had chosen what he thought had been the best horse, the smallest by comparison, and therefore he figured it would be the easiest for her to handle. But even he was beginning to wonder about that now. He could see a bit of white
around the horse’s eyes and that was never a good sign. They rode toward the back of the group, his knee occasionally brushing hers as they went along.

Daenerys looked at him, “Do you miss it?”

“Riding horses? Or the farm?”

“Either one.”

He stared into the distance, deep in thought, then answered, “I miss both actually. Horses are beautiful creatures and it is fun to ride them across the countryside. The quiet peace, far away from the hectic city, I dare say I miss that more. I would buy a house in the country, but it wouldn’t be practical for a commute to work every day.”

“You could telecommute.”

“I had considered that, but I’m too much of a hands-on kind of CEO.”

She smirked, “I’m well aware of that.”

Her words made Jorah chuckle.

They rode in a companionable silence for a while, enjoying their surroundings and sharing soft glances. A flock of birds rested nearby, but either the sound of approaching hooves or something else spooked them, their crested heads rising in alerted unison. They took off suddenly; their flapping wings beating together in a sudden loud burst. Daenerys’ horse whinnied in fright before it reared back and took off. Only an instant passed before Jorah sprang into action, spurring his mount with a sharp jab of his heels into its flanks. The horse galloped after the other, and while he encouraged it with a loud “YAH!”, Daenerys’ smaller one was quite quick. He could see her clinging to the animal’s neck with a death grip, her panicked voice calling to him barely audible above the pounding hoof beats. However, he slowly began to gain on it, pulling alongside, nearly neck and neck with the frightened creature, the white around its eyes now a thick bright ring. He held the reins tight in his left hand and reached out to grab the loose ones of her horse with his right. Just as he got close, the horse jerked its head to the side and Jorah had to tighten his thighs against the saddle to keep from sliding to the side. He guided his stallion closer and reached for the reins again, this time his fingers closed around them and he looped the leather round his hand, pulling back on it at the same time he pulled on his own reins. The horses eventually came to a stop, the straps in his tight grip digging into
“Whoa, easy there,” he said in a soothing voice, hoping her mare would respond to his calm tone.

The horse pawed at the ground, but eventually settled. Daenerys, however, didn’t move. Her body was still tight against the horse’s neck and he noticed how she trembled slightly, her face buried in its blonde mane.

Their guide ran up behind him then, asking frantically in broken English and French if everything was all right. Jorah responded to the worried man in French to take his reins as he dismounted and came to the side of her horse. He took hold of the reins again, his hand rubbing over her forearm, “Daenerys, love, it’s all right. You can let go, let me help you down.”

She lifted her head and looked at him, her pupils wide, her breathing labored. She saw the concern in his eyes and slowly let go, leaning over into his outstretched arms. He supported her as she slipped from the horse, the reins he had been holding dropped from his grasp and he drew her to his chest, her legs shaky under her own weight. Her hands clung to his biceps, her body gradually relaxing in his tender embrace.

She met his eyes, “I didn’t know you spoke French.”

He couldn’t help but laugh at her comment, so out of the blue in relation to what had just happened. She stood taller and took a deep breath, “How are we going to get back because I sure as hell am not going to ride back on her.”

“You can ride back on mine, he seems calm enough.”

She seemed wary about getting on a horse again, but nodded in agreement to his offer. He picked her up by the waist and lifted her into the saddle, so she sat facing to the side. He held the reins in his hand as he put his foot in the stirrup and mounted up behind her before drawing her into his lap somewhat.

His arms bracketed her and she leaned into him, his warm, strong chest making her feel safe, her hand gripping the stallion’s black mane for an extra bit of security. Jorah clicked his tongue loudly and the horse responded with a slow walk, then he tugged slightly on the left rein to get him to turn, beginning the journey back. The pommel of the saddle dug into her bottom a bit, but being
this close to him made her forget all about the soreness of it.

“I thought I chose the best horse for you. It would appear I was wrong.”

“It’s ok, you tried, but there weren’t many choices for me.”

“Je suis désolé ma belle petite fleur.”

She turned her face to his, thankful for his way of getting her mind off of what just happened. “Ooo, Jorah, I love when you talk French to me.”

He grinned down at her upturned smiling face, his fingers tucking some loose strands of hair behind her ear. They rode along for a while before she asked, “Where did you learn to speak French?”

“Years of boarding school.”

“Hmm,” she gazed up at him with playfulness dancing in her eyes, “Say something else.”

“Je veux t’embrasser.”

She gulped at the smooth richness of his voice, so much like chocolate: tantalizingly addictive. “See what I mean, for all I know, you could have said ‘I’d like the fish please’. You make it sound so sexy, it doesn’t matter what it is. What did you just say anyway?”

He held the reins in one hand and cupped her cheek with the other, “You’ll see.” He leaned in; his lips warm and pliant moving over hers in a gentle kiss, suckling softly on her bottom lip as he withdrew before pausing to nuzzle her nose, something that made her giggle.

Jorah could only smile, following the other riders back to the stables. While they rode along, Daenerys began to imagine Jorah as her Knight, handsomely dressed in sleek-fitting armour, a bear imprinted in the metal, a sword fastened at his hip. He certainly looked the part even if his faded blue henley and dark wash jeans were not the right attire, his tall, strong stature and striking features cemented the image in her head. And he had just saved her life. Well, she mused, maybe I’m exaggerating that part. It certainly felt like he had anyway, and sitting there, pressed against him, she
The stables appeared over the next rise in the path and she couldn’t help but feel a bit relieved at finally being done with riding for the day, even if it meant that she would have to leave Jorah’s embrace. He eased the horse to a stop and dismounted before helping her down. While they waited to hand over their mount to the stable master, the owner came over and apologized profusely for what had happened with Daenerys’ horse, offering to refund the charges for their excursion. Jorah accepted, the man leaving to go process the reimbursement. One of the stable masters was handing out halves of apples to the couples, showing them how to feed the horses. Jorah had done this many times in the past, sneaking his aunt’s horse a treat now and again. Jorah exchanged a few words with the man before he went on to the next pair.

“Give me your hand,” Jorah urged with a smile. She seemed apprehensive at first, but took a deep breath and held out her hand, palm up. “Make sure it’s as flat as you can make it.” She followed his example, then he set the fruit on the flat surface, “Now just hold it out to him.”

She fixed him with wide eyes, “Couldn’t he bite me?”

“It’s unlikely. He has undoubtedly done this so many times before, he knows what to do. Go ahead; it’s all right, love.”

Slowly, she held out her offering to the stallion, his lips plucking the apple from her palm, the prickly hairs dusting his nose tickling her skin. She giggled, the noise making the horse’s ears turn toward her as he chewed.

Daenerys turned to Jorah with a grin, “That was so cool!”

“I thought you might enjoy it.”

The owner returned with a piece of paper showing no charge for their ride and apologized again. Once they collected their belongings from the small storage locker, they walked the short distance to the outdoor market where they purchased some freshly cut, and extremely ripe, fruit from a street vendor, savoring the cool sweetness while they walked amongst the other stalls. Daenerys would stop and admire some of the wares on sale, marveling at the intricate craftsmanship of some of the more delicate pieces. Carved animals of varying sizes, meticulously painted by artisans with an exceptional eye for detail. Earthen bowls of rich terra cotta, fired in kilns to a bright gleam, their strikingly hued patterns circling the rim. Clothing of all manner of style and design, the dyed fabric reminding her of the stunning shades of flowers blooming amongst the trees and hanging from the vines. While she perused a rack of handmade scarves at one stall, Jorah snuck back to the one they

couldn’t have felt happier.
had previously stopped at, buying her the miniature anole lizard she had fallen in love with, the pale green scales, milk white belly, and pastel pink dewlap captured perfectly in the decorated wood, its ebony eyes set with polished obsidian. He slipped the paper-wrapped purchase into his pocket and snuck back to her side, her raised eyebrow and small smirk letting him know she didn’t miss his brief absence. Jorah simply smiled and continued to feign ignorance, but she knew better. He had bought her something and she was anxious to find out what it was. She continued to pursue the racks at the stall, finding a few items that interested her. She made her purchases and moved to the next, a jewelry one, with displays of handmade earrings and necklaces fashioned with beads of all shapes, colors and sizes. Some even contained seashells of types Daenerys had never seen before. Something adjacent caught Jorah’s eye and he left her side to go and look at it. A young woman approached; the owner Jorah reasoned. She appeared close to Daenerys’ age and just as petite, but that was where the similarities ended. This young woman had thick, long dark hair drawn back from her face into a ponytail, her whiskey colored eyes framed in long lashes made more prominent by an application of mascara.

“May I help you,” she asked in French, a smile bringing deep dimples to her cheeks.

“I’m just browsing, thank you.” Jorah couldn’t help but notice how close she was standing next to him, what she thought was a surreptitious gaze roaming appreciatively over him.

“If I may,” she offered, her fingers walking over the tops of the hangers in search of something particular. She made a soft ‘ah ha’ when she found it, pulling the shirt free from the others and holding it up to him. “This one would make your eyes even more beautiful, monsieur.”

Jorah began to feel uncomfortable, the emphasis she put on the last word was not the way a woman would usually address a strange man. With the corner of her bottom lip tucked between her teeth and her head slightly tilted, she admired Jorah, her eyebrow arching much in the way that Daenerys’ did when she thought he was looking particularly gorgeous.

He knew what was going on. Women had flirted with him many times before, and while a part of him still felt flattered by it, it nevertheless made him feel uneasy. He always politely rebuffed their advances, head over heels in love and far too happy in his relationship to even give them another thought.

He was brought back to the moment with the feel of her hand on his chest, her fingertips plucking a tiny loose thread from the garment, her touch lingering far longer than was necessary. He tried to be polite, “Thank you, but I don’t think the color suits me.”

Daenerys’ ear perked up to the sound of Jorah’s voice coming from her right, breaking through the brief lull in the cacophony of the market. She turned to see a young woman holding a navy blue linen shirt up to him, her fingers almost resting on his chest. She knew women found Jorah
handsome and often tried to chat him up. While it didn’t usually bother her, it did today. Perhaps it was the fact that this young woman had just stepped back and scribbled something onto a small scrap of paper before slipping it into Jorah’s breast pocket with a wink. That’s it, she thought, I’ll take care of this. Politely of course, she mentally added.

“That color is all wrong for you.” Jorah turned to Daenerys’ approaching voice, only this time it was tinged with mild annoyance. Her slightly narrowed eyes darted between the young woman and him, then settled on his shirt pocket. Daenerys stepped to the rack, eyeing the shirts before choosing one and holding it up to him, “I like this on you. It will bring out the light blue flecks in your eyes.”

He remembered now the very first time she had told him about that particular aspect of his irises. It had been a lazy Sunday morning, lying side by side in bed, bodies close, legs intertwined beneath the covers. She had been tracing his features with the tips of her fingers, the corners of her lips softly upturned. Your eyes have lighter flecks in them, she had whispered, her own darting between his as her smile broadened. And then he remembered fondly what had happened after.

“We’ll take this one,” Jorah told the young woman without even looking at her, his fingers reaching into his shirt pocket to retrieve what she had left there, holding it out in her general direction.

“Oui, monsieur,” she answered through a tight lipped smile, taking her note and the money from Daenerys before flouncing off without a backward glance.

Daenerys barely had time to put the purchase in her bag before Jorah took her hand and led her off down the street, weaving through the crowd, his head turning this way and that, scanning for something. He must have found it because he took a sharp left turn after the next stall, a small alleyway appearing in front of them. In the shaded passage, he stopped suddenly, causing her to run into him. He turned and looked at her, his hands coming up to cradle her jaw an instant before his lips met hers. When they broke apart after what seemed like an eternity, they were both nearly out of breath, their foreheads resting against each other’s. They didn’t need to say a word; their kiss had told them everything they needed to know.

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They had spent the rest of the afternoon walking through the village sightseeing before coming back to their cottage for lunch and then a long walk hand in hand along the beach spent seashell hunting. Near sunset, Jorah told her to change into something nice for their next surprise. She had scurried off with an excited smile and twinkling eyes, something that never ceased to make him smile. He went off to change too, but first, he stopped at her purse, searching it for something in particular.

Daenerys emerged from the bathroom a few moments later; her hands still busy fastening her hair
pin. The door to the other small en suite was closed, so she figured she’d wait on the deck until he was finished. Dusk on the island was cooler than the daytime, but nowhere near like London. Here, she didn’t need any sort of shawl or jacket to cover her bare arms. She enjoyed the weather here, although she didn’t mind the cold and rain back home either. She had many warm coats, not to mention, a cuddly bear to keep her warm.

The creak of the deck caught her attention, her head turning to find Jorah standing by the door, his hands in his pockets, simply staring at her. Apparently he approved of her off-the-shoulder maxi dress, the coral hue highlighting the peach undertones of her skin. He couldn’t take his eyes off of her as he closed the short distance between them, his arms embracing her from behind.

“You’re wearing it,” she said after a while, unable to keep the delight out of her voice.

“You say it brings out the lighter specks in my eyes,” he answered with a kiss to the top of her shoulder.

And it did. Spectacularly. The pale sapphire shirt they had purchased earlier was perfect on him and not just what it did for his eyes either. His golden-ginger hair and light skin benefited too and she was beginning to think they might not get to his surprise. He certainly seemed to be thinking along the same lines, what with the way his kisses were slowly approaching her neck. Jorah knew it was a weak spot for her and she figured she should at least try to stop him in case he wanted to keep his plans. “Jorah, mon ours, if you keep that up, we-”

“Your bear,” he interrupted with a soft growl against the back of her neck, gooseflesh breaking out over her skin, “I know you don’t speak French. Where did you learn that, mon petit dragon?”

His question ended with a delicate nip at the shell of her ear. Her answer was breathy, “Those translation apps are very helpful.”

His amusement rumbled against her back, “Always so resourceful, love.” She felt the beginnings of something else pressing against her bottom, her body now at war with her mind. The part of her that wanted to find out his surprise was rapidly being overwhelmed by the rising desire within her. Their intimacy was effortless, it seemed as though her physical need for him was never far below the surface. “You know, our plans don’t actually start for another hour.” His hands came to rest on her hips and he gently turned her to face him, their bodies nearly flush against one another, “And I can think of one way to pass the time.”

“And what would that be, mon ours,” she teased, loving the way his nickname sounded in
another language.

“*Cet ours veut lécher le miel de tes cheveux.*”

She only understood one word from what he had just murmured against her lips. The rest, well, she was about to find out.

Chapter End Notes

I apologize if there was any weird formatting in this chapter. I'll have to look into that...
Jorah sipped his coffee, watching a sea gull fly off with its morning catch, a small fish, snared in its beak. He had been watching the birds from their deck while he ate; this last one was the most determined of the flock, sticking around even after the others had long flown off. *Persistence has its rewards,* he thought, taking another sip before setting his cup down. Daenerys’ plate sat across from his untouched and he smiled. Ever the early riser, Jorah had found her detestation for mornings endearing. With her hair tousled by sleep, she would sit on the edge of their bed and yawn, rubbing at her bleary eyes; her toes tapping against the plush carpet like a person might test the water’s temperature before diving in. Through the course of their relationship, however, Jorah had managed to get her to somewhat like getting up. He discovered that merely waking up in his arms or pressed against him eased her from slumber into wakefulness slowly. It was all she really needed, the time to adjust to the light and to being cognizant for the day ahead. Now, he wondered if she was still asleep, she had been when he slipped from the bed and a little later when he left the shower. He had stood near the bed, debating whether he should wake her or not while he toweled the rest of the water from his hair. He decided on the latter and left her to rest so he could order their breakfast. He knew she wasn’t much for eating in the morning, always opting for light fare, usually two slices of whole grain toast with raspberry jam, sliced fruit, and a cup of coffee loaded with cream. He took his black, something that always made her scrunch up her nose in disgust. That look made him chuckle every time, and he did it now to himself, his thoughts of her making Jorah want her there, sitting across from him. Just as he was about to go and wake her, he heard noises coming from inside their cottage.

“Jorah,” she called, her voice rapidly getting louder, “did you see that shower!?”

She stood on the threshold of the deck, her hair wrapped up in a towel atop her head, her short red robe tied loose at the waist.

“I did.”
Daenerys took her seat opposite him, “Mmm, my favorite.” He watched her spread a thick layer of preserves on her toast, then take a large bite, chewing slowly before washing it down with a gulp of coffee. She sat back with a sigh, “You always get it just right.”

“After watching you make it enough, I should,” he answered with a wink.

She smiled, drawing her leg up onto the seat, “Back to that shower. I love those rainfall showerheads.” Jorah flashed her a skeptical look, to which she waved her hand dismissively, “I know, I know, I hate getting caught in the rain with no umbrella, but there’s something so soothing about standing under the spray, all the little drops feel like tiny, individual massages.”

An idea for a future gift came to him and he tucked it away for later, “It was very soothing. The walls and floor of the shower were interesting too, made entirely of native stones. At first, I thought it was faux paneling, but I ran my hand over it and it was most assuredly real.”

“I noticed that too and got very disappointed,” she pouted, “No shower time fun for us.”

He laughed. “I knew somehow that you were going to say that.”

“Am I that predictable?”

“Not really, love,” he leaned across the table and took her hand, “I just know how your wonderful mind works.”

“You weren’t thinking about us in the shower together? Not even a little?”

“I didn’t say that.”

Daenerys noted the brief flash of heat in Jorah’s eyes. He had thought about it and had just pictured it now too. She smiled, “Good. I love how your mind works too.”

He gave her hand a gentle squeeze, “Speaking of minds and thoughts, I have no plans for us today.”

“Jorah with no plans, gods preserve us,” she exclaimed softly, her hand resting against her chest in pretend shock. They both broke into laughter, then she said, “Well, I have an idea.” He arched an eyebrow at her. Her ideas often involved something pleasurable and he waited to hear what she had in mind. She looked out to the ocean, “We could spend the day on the beach.” Then her eyes were on him, “Besides, you haven’t seen my bikini yet.”

“You’re right, I haven’t. And I would very much like to.”

Her lips upturned in a grin, “Let’s finish breakfast and get changed.”

“Sounds like a splendid idea.”

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Daenerys leaned against the railing on the veranda of their bungalow, her hands bracing her weight on the smooth wood, the view in front of her like something one would find on a postcard: glittering turquoise water and soft white sand as far as the eye could see. She was still a bit shocked at the idea that this was all theirs for a whole week. And it was all a product of Jorah’s meticulous advance planning and deep desire to make her happy, to celebrate their first year together in the most wondrous way possible. With a happy sigh, she walked down the short flight of stairs and across the beach to their towel. She had gone back to get a bottle of water, seeing as they had spent quite a few
hours laying out in the sun. Earlier, Jorah had insisted that she let him put sunscreen on her, despite the fact that she already had a slight tan. But, then again, she was more than happy to let him do it, his large warm hands doing a spectacular job of spreading the cool lotion over her heated skin, careful not to miss any part of her petite form. He had handed her the bottle after, joking that he didn’t want to end up like a burnt sugar cookie. She had enjoyed applying the lotion a bit too much, claiming that she had missed a spot when they both knew full well she hadn’t. Despite his near constant application of sunblock over the last few days, he had still managed to get a slight sunburn but it had almost completely shifted to a light tan now.

She took a long drink of the cold beverage before setting the bottle down and walking into the surf to mid-calf. The water was just warm enough and the intermittent breeze was gentle, ruffling the wisps of hair that had managed to escape her hastily fashioned chignon. The only sounds were the calls of sea birds and the gentle ebb and flow of the ocean. Daenerys sighed again at the view, her eyes tracking the water for signs of Jorah. She knew he had said he was going for a swim, but she didn’t see him anywhere. She turned to look further down the beach to her left and then her right, but still nothing. She wasn’t worried; she somehow knew Jorah would be a strong swimmer, his lean body perfect for the activity. Just then, she heard a splash as he breeched the surface of the water nearby, his back to her. She watched him turn and smile at her before diving below the surface again only to reappear closer to where she stood. Daenerys pulled her sunglasses down the bridge of her nose just enough to give her an unadulterated view of Jorah striding through the gentle surf toward her. He paused in the waist deep water, his hand coming up to wipe the salty liquid from his face, his eyes closed, but only briefly. If she could wolf whistle, she would have. Why did I wait so long to get him in the ocean, she mused? Of course she had seen him wet in the shower and his hair slightly damp from a passing rainfall, but nothing could have prepared her for this. She knew he wasn’t moving in slow motion, but it sure felt that way, the universe giving her all the time she wanted to enjoy the sight before her. And enjoy she did, her eyes stopping on those marvelously tight baby blue swim trunks he had worn for the day. They left nothing to the imagination, and heaven help her, but she had nearly pounced on him before they had even taken one step onto the beach. He had been equally turned on with her, his eyes moving over her body like a slow caress when she had eased her cover-up over her shoulders to pool on the sand at her feet, revealing her similarly hued triangle top and side tie bottoms, the bikini embellished at the cups and hips with glitzy ebony and ivory colored beads. He had closed his eyes and taken a deep centering breath, muttering something about needing to calm down.

It struck her now how much Jorah reminded her of a modern day Poseidon, rising from the surf in all his glory. But it was in the sense that the ancient god might want to be more inconspicuous nowadays, less muscle bound, instead taking on a lean, but no less strong or fit, physique. And the closer Jorah got; the more minute details she was able to make out: the rivulets of water traveling over his sun kissed skin like a liquid caress, her fingers itching to follow the shimmering trails left in their wake. The odd way his chest hair appeared darker in its current state, matted to his broad chest, the darkened line of it disappearing enticingly under his waistband. But then he did that thing that made her bite her lip and set her heart beating like a jazz drum solo. She was officially a goner. What was it about Jorah running his fingers through his hair that made all manner of naughty thoughts take up residence in her brain and rob her of all ability to speak or think coherently? Could it be that watching him made her want to do it too, or possibly, it was that she put her hands in his hair at certain other pleasurable times and therefore it was a strange sort of memory trigger? Whatever it was, she was desperate to do it now, but Jorah’s smirk halted that train of thought. What’s he up to?

He had stopped; the water halfway up his shins before he grinned at her with one eyebrow arched, mischief evident in his blue eyes an instant before he leaned down and splashed her. She turned to the side and held her hands in front of her to block the water as best she could, her excited squeal
filling the air while he splashed her again and again. She did the same to him, his laughter rising from deep in his chest. He ran at her, lifting her in his wet embrace and spinning her a full turn, their happiness combining in an exuberant chorus. They were still smiling when he came to a stop, their eyes full of delight gazing at one another. Her fingers grazed his cheek softly just before she leaned in and kissed him, one he returned with equal emotion, his hold around her body tightening slightly. She eased back and rested her forehead against his, their warm breath mingling as they relished in the feel of the other.

He set her down, his fingers tucking her hair behind her ears, her eyewear somewhere forgotten on the sand. She saw a drop of water from his hair land on his neck, watching it travel along the muscle and down into the hollow of his throat. She rose and delicately kissed him there, the combined taste salty on her lips. She felt the pleasured rumble in his throat as much as she heard it. She kissed along his neck as far she could reach before she leaned back and he pressed his lips to hers. There was no rush in the way he kissed her, as if he had all the time in the world. She memorized the feel of his lips, soft and firm, the warm but gentle rasp of his tongue against hers, the taste of his mouth, indescribably **him**, the delicate nibble of his teeth against her full lip, his kiss as tender as the hand softly stroking down her back. There had been times like this between them, when he seemed as if he would never be able to kiss her again, and the urgency she felt in his affection made her somewhat light-headed. He leaned back to look at her, his fingers coming up to trace over her cheek and jaw. She watched him, his eyes moving over the features of her face before meeting hers again, a smile tugging at the corners of his mouth.

“I saw the way you were looking at me. What were you thinking about?”

She looked away shyly, “You’re gonna laugh when I tell you.”

“I promise I won’t.”

Daenerys sighed, she knew he was stubborn about things like this and wouldn’t stop asking her until she told him. “The way you walked out of the water, it made me think that was how Poseidon might have looked if he lived nowadays.” She paused, “Okay, go ahead and laugh.”

Jorah blinked a few times, “My girlfriend thinks I look like a god and you think I would laugh at that?”

“Well-“

He cut her off with a kiss, his hand coming to rest on her hip this time, his thumb running softly over the bone there. Their lips parted, his nose rubbing against hers in an eskimo kiss. “Do you know the story of Poseidon and his wife?” She shook her head no. “Her name was Amphitrite and she was a sea nymph. At first she did not want to wed the sea god and so she fled from his advances. However, he sent one of his servants, a dolphin, to persuade her and, after a time, he was finally able to convince her to marry Poseidon.”

“Well then, come and get me, sea god.”

She took off running. He shook his head chuckling and took off after her. Occasionally she would glance over her shoulder to see just how fast he was gaining on her. Daenerys circled back around to their beach towel in a sweeping arc, hoping he wouldn’t be able to change direction that quickly, but she was wrong and didn’t get far before he wrapped his arms around her and drew her down onto the soft fabric, her laughter combining with his. He grew serious when their eyes met, “You are no water nymph, love. If you say I am a god, then that makes you my goddess.”

She leaned up and kissed him before she pushed him onto his back. His hands gathered
her hair from her face; she hadn’t realized it had completely come undone at some point in his pursuit of her. He kissed her with single-minded determination. From the moment his lips first pressed against hers on that blissful night over a year ago, she knew she was going to be in so much trouble. No man had ever kissed her the way Jorah did, it was as if the world had melted away and she was the only thing that mattered to him. She felt the little pin pricks of sand trapped between them, their bodies so tight against one another they could have made pearls. His fingers slipped from her hair and trailed down her spine to the tie of her bikini top. She froze. “Jorah, what are you doing?”

“What does it feel like I’m doing?”

He murmured his question against her lips, his fingers continuing their task. She felt the front of her top loosen from her breasts, though it was still secured around her neck. His fingers were there next before she even realized it and they nearly had that undone too.

“We can’t do this here.”

Her protest sounded half-hearted even to her own ears and he simply chuckled, “This coming from the woman who had me make love to her in front of the window in our hotel room.”

The memory of that night flashed in her mind and she exhaled audibly into his mouth, warmth flaring into a fire low in her belly, “We were forty floors up at the time.”

He laid there, his fingers tucking her hair behind her ear. “This beach really is completely private, love, no one will see us. I choose it for this exact purpose. Well, one of many reasons actually.”

She smacked his bicep playfully, “Oh, you just assumed that I’d want to do this with you on the beach?” He flashed her a cocky grin before it dawned on her what he had just inadvertently revealed, “Wait a minute; you were fantasizing about us, weren’t you?”

His look faltered slightly before he regained his confidence, “You are not the only one with fantasies, Sweetheart.”

“Tell me.”

His hand slid down her side and pulled at one of the ties securing her bikini bottoms before rolling her onto her back, then the other tie was pulled free, his heated whisper at her ear drawing shivers down her spine, “I would rather show you.”

He pulled the now loose garments from her body and tossed them somewhere nearby. She watched his eyes roam over her nakedness, starting at her feet and stopping only when he reached her face, his groan of appreciation at her body heating her more than the sun ever could.

He trailed his fingertips down the center of her body, beginning at the hollow of her throat, over her chest, between her breasts and down her stomach, stopping at the top of her soft curls. “I had imagined you laid out in the sun for me, the light catching on the soft golden hairs that dust your skin,” he let out a deep shuddering breath, “But reality is infinitely better than anything my fevered imagination could have ever come up with.”

He dipped his head and nuzzled at her neck, his lips and tongue moving over the skin, drawing soft sighs from her lips. He trailed his mouth downward, his kisses purposefully avoiding her hardened nipples. Her yelp when his teeth grazed the turgid peak gave way to a soft keening when his mouth enclosed it, his tongue laving over her. He stayed there for some time, his hand busy with her other breast. Soon, his mouth was replacing his touch and he paid tribute to that one as well.
He watched her while he slid his hand over the inside of her thigh from her knee to just outside her entrance, the gentle pressure of his motion opening her more fully to him. He toyed with her curls, his words flowing over her like warm syrup, “There are so many things I want to do for you…to you.”

“Just touch me.”

He loved how much she craved his touch, not just on the intimate places of her body, but elsewhere too. His fingers slipped between her folds to find her slick for him and her breath caught, then left her in a soft moan. He teased her, slowly spreading the wetness over her nether lips, purposefully avoiding the center of her pleasure. She tried in vain to get him to touch her where she desperately needed him to, every move of her hips failing to get her the contact she wanted. Her eyes flashed, a tiny growl of frustration rising in her throat. That maddeningly attractive smile broke across his face, “You have the sweetest little growl, love. Perhaps there’s a bit of bear in you after all.”

“There better be a lot of bear in me soon or I’ll take matters into my own hands,” she fired back, her own lips quirking at the growl she received in answer.

His little dragon knew just how to flip the switch in him, to make him eager to fulfill her needs. They were his too after all, seeing the pleasure bloom in her eyes made him enjoy their intimacy all the more. Her eyelids slipped shut as his finger glided wetly over just the tip of her clit, his touch nowhere near hard enough. His voice was an urgent murmur, “No, love, look at me. Let me see your beautiful eyes.” They fluttered open and met his heated gaze, “I want to see the moment your release floods your body with heat.”

Her hand dropped between her legs, but it wasn’t to guide his touch. He was doing just fine on his own, rather, she wanted to feel the movement of the muscles and tendons under his skin while his fingers wound the coil in her belly tighter with each delicious swirl. It was nearly the same way hers did and yet wholly different all at once. Where her digits were soft and delicate, his were calloused and so wonderfully thick. From the first time he had touched her like this, she knew her own would always pale in comparison and never be enough.

Her heels dug into the blanket, the sand crunching softly underneath in response, her body squirming and desperate. His eyes held hers; the usually cool blue depths alight with fire for her. He circled her clitoris once more before his index finger slipped inside her body, a whimper leaving her when he drew the slippery digit back to her for another slow pass. He did this until she was panting, her body arching from the blanket. The next time he slid inside her, she mewled at the wider intrusion of two of his fingers. He twisted them inside her, coating them in her essence, before drawing her clitoris between them, their tiny rocking motions along the sides of her nub made it feel like the way he gently rolled it between his lips.

“What are you…oh god,” Daenerys moaned, her hands gripping the blanket.

Her eyes widened and he gave her a wicked grin, “Feels good, doesn’t it, love?”

Good didn’t even come close to describing how it felt, but she nodded “yes” anyway, unable to find a better word at that moment. She felt the familiar molten heat rising in her belly and she grabbed his hand tight, stilling his fingers, gasping, “I want you inside me when I come.”

He rose and knelt on the blanket. His intention was to settle between her legs, but Daenerys had her own ideas. She sat up and pressed him back so he sat on his heels, his bent legs spreading a bit as she reached inside his swim trunks and grasped his cock, releasing him from the confines before she straddled his lap and sunk down on him.
His hands cradled her face, “I swear, Daenerys,” his eyes moving over her features, his gaze nearly desperate, “Every time I slip into you, it feels like the first all over again.”

Her eyes stung at the sweet intimacy of his words and she knew exactly what he meant. As much as he was a part of her heart in their day-to-day life, it was when he made love to her that she felt absolutely one with him. She didn’t want to move, her body clenching along his entire length buried deep inside her, the fit perfect, and she savored it for a moment before her thighs tensed and she started to ride him slow.

He trailed the tips of his fingers down her shoulder blades and over her sides, cupping her breasts in his large hands. He worshipped them with his mouth and tongue, at first only the soft skin surrounding her pebbled flesh, but then that too, his teeth just hard enough to make her gasp and her hands tense on his shoulders. Jorah reasoned, watching her graceful motion, it is as if she is dancing over him: swaying, undulating and rolling her body in a rumba of their love. Soft sighs soon became urgent pleas, her hips searching for what her body needed. Her pace quickened yet her brow furrowed as if she couldn’t find exactly what it would take to bring her to her peak. With an almost preternatural knowledge of her desire, his hand came to rest on her upper back, the other bracing their combined weight as he laid her down on the blanket. Still kneeling between her spread legs, he held her hips suspended in his firm grasp, guiding her easily on his cock.

“Gods, yes,” she nearly growled, “Just like that.”

He knew there were times when she desired the wildness in him, and here on this beach, under the warmth of the sun’s rays and surrounded by the sound of the crashing surf, he was all too willing to give in. The gentleness was gone from his eyes, replaced by searing lust. In the back of her mind, the thought of how he was able to take her like this made her dizzy. His muscles tight and flexed, shifting and bunching with each quick draw of her body against his hips, his strong form silhouetted by the sun low in the sky, made her see exactly how right she was about his assertion of his god-like appearance. He was just out of reach, so she resorted to throwing her arms above her head, her hands tightly clutching the soft blanket like an anchor in the tempest of their passion. She braced the balls of her feet on either side of him and used that leverage to grind down into each of his powerful thrusts, the perfect pressure of it made her walls pulse involuntarily around him. He groaned, his eyes slipping shut at the sweet flutter.

“Your eyes, baby, I want to see them.” Her words were labored and breathless by the force of their coupling. They snapped open to find hers heavy-lidded and nearly black with lust. That word, baby, only appeared when she was beyond need, her being consumed by hunger for him. He knew her impending climax would be fierce and his fingers tensed against her. He felt the all too familiar shudder course through her, his eyes drifting up from where they were joined over the delicate arc of her belly to the sway of her breasts in rhythm with her body before he met hers again and whispered, “That’s it, sweet one, shatter for me.”

As much as she wanted to look into his baby blues as she came, she couldn’t. His words were too much for her right now, her head tipping back. Canting her hips just so, she trembled again as the ridge of his cock now rubbed deliciously over that special place inside her. Her hand went between her legs, trusting in his strength to support her as she thumbed her slick clit until she was moaning his name, the fast relentless thrusting of his cock extending the pleasure being wrung from her quivering body, whimpering through the never-ending waves of bliss.

Jorah was not far behind, one final hard thrust and deep grunt was all he managed, her twitching sex milking his own release from him. Curling over her, his head fell to her breastbone, his forehead slick against her skin, his hands shifting up to gather her tight to him. He wondered if he would ever breathe normally again, desperately trying to draw deep lungful’s of air. He lowered them down on
the blanket, his body still within her. Half over her, his arm shook with exertion in an attempt to keep most of his weight off of her. Finding himself unable to any longer, he collapsed at her side, his hand coming to rest between her breasts. His muscles burned, but it was the sweetest agony. Her chest rose and fell at a decreasing pace under his hand, her heart rate returning to normal.

“Wow,” She turned to look at him, “Everyone says sex on the beach is no fun, but that was fantastic.”

“With the wrong person and no beach towel, it can be quite underwhelming, not to mention uncomfortable,” he said knowingly.

“I sense a story there.”

Jorah shook his head slowly, “That’s the last thing I want to talk about right now.” Then he smiled, “I would much rather bask in our afterglow for a bit before carrying you off to our cottage for a short nap.”

She snuggled into his side, nuzzling her face on his pectoral, his arm drawing her tighter to his body. This was one of so many things that she loved about Jorah: his affinity for cuddling. And it didn’t even have to be after sex, he did it no matter the occasion. He mentioned once that he simply wanted her near, the feel of her against him made him feel complete. She understood exactly what he meant; he made her feel safe, loved, cherished in his arms, things no other man had ever made her feel. The soothing, steady drum of his heart and the heat his body exuded always managed to make her feel drowsy, even if she wasn’t tired or exhausted by some shared intimacy. Her eyelids began to droop and Jorah felt her begin to go slack against him.

“Come on, love,” he roused her gently, drawing her into a sitting position,” let’s do this somewhere a bit more comfortable.”

She didn’t need to be told twice, her muscles so relaxed he had to carry her bridal style back to their cottage. He laid her down on the bed, then went to collect their belongings from the beach. By the time he arrived back and had drawn the curtains enclosing the deck shut, Daenerys was already dozing, her mouth slightly open. He watched her with a smile for a bit then joined her, moving gingerly in an attempt not to disturb her. Even in her sleep, she reached for him, drawn to his body like a magnet. Jorah drew her to him with a smile, kissing the top of her head softly before he too drifted off to sleep.

Chapter End Notes

In case anyone is wondering where I got the idea for Jorah's swim trunks, here's the link: http://www.jamesbondlifestyle.com/product/la-perla-grigioperla-blue-swimming-trunks

Because, let's be honest, Jorah would look *gorgeous* in them!
Daenerys and Jorah take a trip to the zoo and have an encounter of the avian kind. Later, a blissful diversion leads to new experiences as well as pleasures.

I know I keep saying that I’ll post chapters faster, but once again, I break my promise. UGH...life. Anyway, here is a nice (and long) chapter brimming with sweet fluff and steamy smut to make up for the wait. Because, really, these two deserve all of the happiness (and pleasure) they can handle. And I’m only too willing to write it for them ;)

A quick thank you to my readers. You keep the creativity flowing. Lots of love (and hugs) to you all!

Daenerys was extremely excited; they were going to the zoo. Jorah hadn’t told her as such, but she remembered reading about its location, and by the looks of where they were headed, that was the only logical answer. The car park was only half full, but she figured since it was a weekday, they probably usually weren’t very busy. At the ticket window, Jorah said something in French to the man waiting on them. He glanced at a clipboard on the counter then grinned, gesturing to the gate at their left.

“That’s not the main entrance,” she said, hearing a buzz that meant the gate could be pushed open, “What are you up to, Jorah?”

“You’ll see.”

He was being cryptic again and sometimes, especially now, it could be quite frustrating. The man, who Daenerys had heard Jorah call ‘Pierre’, was waiting for them on the other side, leading them along a shaded path to another gate, this one with a sign in French that most likely read “Employees Only”.

Once through it, a large courtyard lay in front of them. Round picnic tables with colored fabric umbrellas ringed a metal sculpture of a bird about to take flight, a lizard beneath it looking rather stately resting on a rock. Off in the distance, Daenerys could see more of these steel works of art, but
she couldn’t make out exactly what animals they were supposed to be. Yet it was the structure in front of her that really caught her attention. The dome, composed entirely of hexagonal pieces of glass in a black metallic latticework, captured and reflected the sunlight in almost blinding fashion. Pierre led them to a side door, using his key card to grant them access.

The interior of the building was massive; the glass paneling so clear it appeared as though nothing was between them and the sky. She had thought the atmosphere inside would be hot and humid like a greenhouse given all of the glass, but it was surprisingly pleasant and she figured it was probably climate controlled. The leafy branches of rubber trees were speckled with bright colors, from vivid red to deep azure and every shade in between. Birds, large and small, rested amongst the dark green, calling to each other with short, low whistles and long, shrill squawks. Daenerys stood there, slowly turning in a circle, taking in the majesty of the indoor jungle. Off to the right, at the center of the space, she noted a flight of stairs leading to a metal gantry that disappeared into the canopy. The stone pathway wound out in front of them, disappearing behind the trunk of a nearby tree. Pierre handed them each a small paper sack. Inside were seeds of all shapes and sizes as well as pieces of semi-dried fruit. Jorah thanked him, Daenerys at least knew that word in French, and she told him the same. He nodded and smiled, leaving back the way they came.

Once she was sure they were alone, she turned to Jorah, “Did you arrange for this exhibit to be closed just for us?”

“No,” he looked a bit sheepish, “It hasn’t actually opened to the public yet.”

She blinked at him few times, “So, we have free reign of a new exhibit before anyone else?” He nodded and her eyes narrowed, “How did you manage that?”

“I made a donation in your name to their reptile rehabilitation center.” He said it so matter-of-factly that it took her mind a moment to process the information before she was flinging her arms around his neck, seeds spilling from her open bag with the force of her joy. He chuckled and wrapped an arm around her waist, dipping his head to kiss her neck. “It was part of my anniversary present to you; I just didn’t get a chance to tell you.”

She leaned back to look at him, but she found herself at a loss for words. Jorah knew her better than anyone and always managed to choose the perfect things to give her. He knew of her deep affection for reptiles, especially lizards, but also of her gentle heart and had realized that the donation would combine the two perfectly.

He seemed to understand, smiling as he inclined his head to give her a brief kiss. Then he interlaced their fingers, “Let’s explore, shall we?”
She didn’t need to be told twice. They followed the path together, weaving their way through native trees and shrubs. Placards marked certain places of interest, giving them information about a specific plant or animal that could be found nearby. Daenerys noticed the lounging iguanas high up in the trees, sleeping the day away on the sun drenched limbs. Of course she had spotted them; she had an eagle eye for that sort of thing. He wouldn’t admit it out loud, but he hadn’t seen a thing until she had excitedly pointed them out. He assumed that was probably just as well, their camouflage was made for blending in after all. She stopped to take numerous photos, not just of her favourite creatures, but also of particularly beautiful flora interspersed amongst the rest of the greenery.

They came upon an archway, the wooden structure barely visible below the thick violet bougainvillea, so abundant it hung down like a curtain and almost brushed the top of Jorah’s head. She suggested they take a selfie there, something that made him roll his eyes despite the fact that he was smiling. She jabbed him playfully with her elbow and pulled him close to her, their heads touching. Holding out her mobile at arm’s length, she thumbed the button on the side, snapping the photo. She looked at it and shook her head, opting to take another. Jorah smirked, he had an idea. Just as she moved her finger to take the picture, he turned his head toward her. Caught off guard, she pressed it anyway.

“Jorah,” she huffed in exasperation, even though her eyes said otherwise. “We’ll hav-” The words died on her lips when she saw what the camera had captured: his lips pressed to her cheek, her features scrunched up in mid-laugh. A snapshot of the way he made her feel nearly all the time: gloriously happy. “Perfect,” she breathed, quickly swiping away the moisture at the corner of her eye. She knew by the way he smiled at her that he thought it was perfect too.

Moving further along, they came to the stairs at the center of the enclosure. Taking them to the top, they walked out onto the suspended metal walkway. It was wide enough for them to stand side-by-side with a little room to spare. Their appearance caused a frenzy of noise and activity, birds of several species arriving with a swoosh of flapping wings. The birds knew what that meant: food. Their excited calls quieted a bit as she held out her hand, open palm up nearly overflowing with seeds. The smaller birds, ones she recognized immediately, flocked to her, settling on her fingers. The grasp of their tiny talons stung a bit, but she didn’t care: she was mesmerized by the sight of them. Like multi-colored jewels, their feathers gleamed in the light, their breasts a melding of yellow and orange plumage so vivid she had never seen anything like it. Their inky black eyes, rimmed in a thin red ring, watched her intently, a keen intelligence there she hadn’t expected. She knew most birds were quite clever, however, for this particular species, she didn’t know its intelligence level relative to others.

“What are those,” Jorah asked, his hands coming to rest on the hand rails at his sides.

“Rainbow lorikeets,” she answered in a near whisper, dimples dotting her cheeks. “Aren’t they absolutely gorgeous?”
He smiled at the happy wonder on her face, they were indeed very beautiful. He was so engrossed in watching her he didn’t realize that he had an avian visitor too. One had landed behind him on the railing, near his hand, its head turning this way and that, checking its surroundings as if it were making up its mind about what it wanted to do. He noticed Daenerys was staring past him and he made to turn.

“Jorah, don’t move.”

He froze, only slightly turning his head to see what she was looking at. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw only a flash of color before he felt something alight onto his upper right arm, its little claws catching on the fabric of his blue t-shirt. The bird paused to look around again before hopping up to his shoulder, its beady ebony eyes studying him carefully.

Daenerys was trying so hard not to laugh in delight, lest she scare away the creature. But it seemed quite content perched there, a mere centimeter or two from Jorah’s head. If birds could look mischievous, this one most certainly would have considering what it did next. With a dart of its head, its brilliant orange beak nipped Jorah’s earlobe, causing him to jerk his head suddenly. Startled, the bird took off, but didn’t fly away far. It returned almost as soon as it left, landing in the same place it had just been.

“Gods, I hope it doesn’t do that again,” Jorah frowned, but appeared to be bracing for another bite.

He spoke too soon and Daenerys couldn’t hold back on her laughter this time, though she tried to keep it as quiet as she could. Only one bird remained on her hand, the others had gone off to join the mischievous one; landing on Jorah’s nearly outstretched arms. She reached into her pocket with her free hand and took out her phone, her digital camera too cumbersome to be operated with one hand. She snapped a photo, giggling, “Jorah, you are certainly the most handsome bird perch I have ever seen.”

He didn’t seem all that amused at first, but he couldn’t stay annoyed for long, not with the affectionate way Daenerys was looking at him. “I feel like the Beast.”

Equal parts surprise and realization shown on her face, “You’ve seen that movie?”

“Beauty and The Beast?” He looked a bit embarrassed, “It was on one afternoon. I was bored and the other channels had nothing of interest. It was very well done and was nominated for an Academy Award you know.”
She loved how he added that last bit, like he thought he had to justify his viewing choice with her. “Oh Jorah, I didn’t know you liked that. I do too.”

He felt a bit better knowing that his secret was out; although why he had kept it a mystery was beyond him. Daenerys had never judged him for what he liked. How could she when it came to this?

“Tell me what you know about these birds,” he said, changing the subject.

“They’re native to Australia and are part of the parrot family. They travel in pairs, but like to congregate in flocks.” The one on Jorah’s shoulder nipped him again and he flinched, but the birds didn’t seem bothered by his reaction. Daenerys had paused, then added, “Oh, they’re also not sexually dimorphic.”

“Sexually what?”

She smiled. “Dimorphic, meaning you can tell the males from the females.”

Jorah thought for a moment, “I see. They are not like…ouch…for example, peacocks and peahens.”

“Exactly.” Daenerys stifled a laugh as the bird bit Jorah once more, “It appears she really likes you though.”

“Wait a minute,” he looked at her with narrowed eyes, “I thought you…ow…said you couldn’t tell the difference between the sexes.”

“Well, that’s not entirely true. But you really have to look to see the variations.”

“So…good gods, stop it…how can you tell it’s a female?”

Daenerys stepped closer, the bird in her hand having finally flown off. “She’s slightly smaller and the bleeding of yellow into orange on her chest is more pronounced than a male’s coloring.” She bit her lip trying not laugh at Jorah’s expense, her eyes moving over the other birds perched on him, “In fact, they are all female.”
“Lovely,” he deadpanned, “How can I get her to stop nipping me?”

“Not that I blame her, mind you,” Daenerys waggled her eyebrows, “But she probably wants you to feed her.”

She closed the gap between them and took one of his hands from the railing, turning it over and pouring the leftover seeds from her packet onto his palm. No sooner had she finished then the birds left Jorah’s arm and made for his hand, greedily pecking up their snack.

“It would appear females of every species are attracted to you. It must be your animal magnetism,” she finished with a wink and a smile.

“That’s all well and good, but her brand of affection is decidedly more painful than I enjoy.”

Just then, she remembered something else, “I almost forgot to mention: they remain paired for a long time, sometimes for life.”

Jorah met her eyes; her fond gaze had him returning it and lifting his free hand to cup her cheek, “Clever birds.”

All too soon, the lorikeets apparently had their fill of food and took off, leaving Jorah and Daenerys to stand, fingers intertwined, watching them disappear into the canopy. He turned his head to look at her, her gaze focused ahead, giving him a moment to catch her unawares. He remembered the joy he had witnessed on her face, her happy laughter (even if some of it was at his expense) and felt contentment flood his chest. The donation turned out to be the best gift he could have given her.

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“No touching,” she scolded softly, taking his hands and setting them at his sides.

“I don’t think I like this game after all.”
She giggled, but she knew his eyes would tell a different story. Only she couldn’t see them right now. They were hidden behind a scarf, one she had purchased at a stall in the outdoor market. Reaching over to retrieve a small piece of fruit from the plate, she chewed it slowly before responding, “I promise you will, my bear.”

Jorah shifted a bit on the comfy chaise, the woman he loved sitting naked between his parted legs. While he didn’t like that he couldn’t touch, let alone see her, he had been intrigued when she had suggested this little activity. He had never been blindfolded before and he figured by the way she had looked at him just before tying it around his head, a bewitching glance full of desire and mischief, that he might indeed enjoy it despite her rule.

He gasped suddenly, the feel of her short nails pressing into the inside of his knees then softly grazing over his inner thighs made their intended destination tingling with anticipation of her touch. Then she stopped, lifting her hands away. He felt her move, his head tilting to pick up any noise that might give away what she was going to do next. But she was silent, only the soft brush of her breath suddenly at his chest gave away her new location. Then it was a shower of butterfly kisses across his pectorals followed by a deft flick of her tongue at his pebbled left nipple. She grazed it with her teeth and he inhaled sharply, blood starting to flow in earnest to his burgeoning hardness. Her tongue followed the strength of his collarbones to his neck, there she nipped and kissed her way slowly to his ear, where she purred, “Someone appears to be enjoying this after all.”

“Perhaps you’ve changed his mind, love,” he whispered, turning his head quickly in the hopes that he could capture her lips before she moved away. He did, sort of, the corner of her mouth anyway. But she indulged him, turning her face more toward his and sealing their lips in a searing kiss. He smiled inwardly; she had fallen prey to his trap. The feel of her body’s radiating warmth meant she was poised over him and he used this closeness to his advantage. He arched from the cushion and their chests met, the soft pressure of her breasts, with their tight, hard nipples, and the silkiness of her skin brought a groan from him. She responded in kind, though hers sounded higher in her throat, reminding him of the pleading whine she usually made when he ran his tongue teasingly over her slick flesh.

“Naughty bear,” she said with a delicate bite of his bottom lip, “What did I say?”

“Tell me you didn’t enjoy that and I’ll apologize for breaking your rule.”

She sat back with a huff and he chuckled. “You’ll pay for that, Jorah.”

Her threat was an empty one, he knew her too well. He remembered the night she had pinned his arms above his head. That evening, she had told him not to touch too. But her craving for pleasure, and his touch, had been too great and she had crumbled under her need. He reasoned it would be the same way this time.
He yelped in surprise, his hips trying to pull away from the icy trail she was leaving where his leg joined with his body.

The sound of her giggling did little to warm the chilliness left behind by the ice. But then she was doing it again to the other side, the smooth, cold glide of the cube bringing a blanket of gooseflesh to his skin and causing him to hiss sharply. However, the sensation was soon replaced by the hot rasp of her tongue to both places. His hands clenched at his sides, the feel of her kisses rekindling the flame of his passion once more. He had never considered how the juxtaposition of sensations, cold then hot, might feel or how it would be so strangely arousing. It made his nerves confused, and coupled with the fact that he couldn’t see where she was going to go next, it was all the more stimulating.

She continued this alternating torture on the rest of his body, along his ticklish ribs, over his rock hard nipples, down the strong column of his throat, leaving the rapidly melting piece to liquefy completely in the hollow at the base. The cool water was then sucked from his skin, her tongue warming the spot back to normal. Daenerys did the same to his belly button, something that had both of them chuckling.

“Now for the second part of our little activity.” He picked up the sound of movement, liquid pouring into a glass, then her voice, “I’m going to feed you things and you tell me what they are. I promise I won’t—”

“Love, I trust you.”

Of course he did, she had never given him any reason not to and she wasn’t going to now. She brought the first piece to his mouth and he opened it to accept the morsel. He barely needed to chew it before he stated with certainty, “Strawberry.”

She brushed her fingers over his straining erection, his breath leaving him in a hurry at the sudden touch. She smiled, “That’s for being right.”

“Well, I can safely say I’ve never wanted to be right more in my entire life.”

She smiled and reached over for the next offering, feeding it to him and waiting for his response. He hesitated with this one, his lips pursing in thought, “Papaya…I think.”
“Very good. How did you know?”

“I remember what you said in the market the other day. Papayas have a creamier texture and a milder flavour than mangoes.”

She was impressed at his memory over something so trivial, but then again, anything involving her always had his rapt attention. Instead of merely brushing her fingers over him this time, she took him in a gentle grasp and stroked his length once, sweeping her thumb over the head on the finish, spreading the glistening bead that had leaked from the slit. The cadence of his breathing became faster, his teeth raking over his bottom lip. That sight alone had her own arousal surging; there was something so sexy about Jorah doing that.

She looked down at the flute of champagne in her hand and decided that this game needed to go one step further. Dipping her finger into the chilled, bubbly liquid, she brushed it from the base of his cock to the head, his breathy groan turning into a low moan when her tongue followed the wet trail. She swirled it up over the swollen glans, tasting the sharpness beneath the more potent, salty flavour of Jorah’s arousal seeping from him.

“Daenerys,” he panted, swallowing roughly, “Please, love…”

Hearing Jorah beg did things to her, her own desire spiking. Lying there, naked, blindfolded, utterly at her mercy, she had so many wicked ideas for things she wanted to do to him. Things that would most assuredly bring them both pleasure, but she relented and gave him what he appeared to want in that instant, if the subtle arch of his hips toward her mouth was any indication. Secretly, she enjoyed doing this, something the feminist part of her mind would certainly balk at. But, ever the giving person and knowing that Jorah never explicitly asked her to do this, even going so far as to saying that he didn’t need her to do it, she still felt a sense of power and feminine strength at having the ability to make him fall apart solely with her mouth and tongue.

She took him in slow, her lips slipping down the length as far as she could take him. Which wasn’t very far, all things considered, but she wrapped her hand around the rest of him and started a leisurely rhythm. Her tongue whorled over the parts she knew by heart, the places that made his breathing deepen. The resonance deep in his chest on nearly every breath. It was that sound that made her, for lack of a more genteel phrase, so wet for him. Some would call it a groan, but it was so much more than that. It affected her on a primal, subconscious level. Perhaps that’s why her body seemed to respond to it as it did.

On her next downward pass, she decided to try something she had only read about, but had never done before. Something she had never felt comfortable or safe enough doing with any of her previous boyfriends. Taking a deep, slow breath, she relaxed her muscles as much as possible, easing him in farther than she ever had before.
“Fuck,” he uttered roughly when the tip of his cock brushed the back of her throat, his head lifting from the cushion, realizing too late that he couldn’t see anything.

She felt a brief flicker of triumph, but it was squashed when his hips jerked, pushing him in hard and fast. Too far, her body protested. She sat back suddenly, coughing and sputtering, her hands coming up to cover her mouth, her eyes watering.

“Daenerys, I’m so sorry,” he said, sitting up quickly, pulling off the blindfold in the process. He blinked to let his eyes adjust to the sudden influx of soft light, but then they were fixed on her, brimming with regret.

“I’m…cough…ok,” she gasped, sniffling, trying to smile to reassure him that she was in fact all right.

He didn’t seem convinced, his thumbs brushing away the tears that had slipped from the corners of her eyes. Realizing that they only had champagne nearby, he stood and rushed to get her water, returning with a bottle and a glass, pouring her some before handing it to her. He watched her drink it slowly, his fingers gently tucking her hair behind her ear. He soothed his hand over her arm, then her thigh, looking very ashamed for what had happened.

“I really am ok, Jorah,” she said finally with a short sniffle, taking his hand and giving it a squeeze, “I probably shouldn’t have tried that while you were blindfolded.”

“Don’t take the blame for this, love,” he chided softly, “It was entirely my fault and I’m so very sorry.”

“I know you are. But there was no harm done, so we can keep going.”

“No, Daenerys,” he shook his head, “you don’t need to.”

“But, Jorah-”

“No ‘buts’, love.” His hand came up to cup her cheek, his eyes intent on hers, “I don’t need you to do that for me to enjoy our time together.”
She knew she wasn’t going to persuade him otherwise, he could be quite the stubborn bear. “Ok, but can we finish the rest of the game?”

He smiled softly. “As long as you don’t do that, I would very much like to finish this.”

She nodded and he pulled the blindfold back on, lying back and getting comfortable. She noted his cock was now only half-hard, but she knew of a surefire way to get it back. Picking up almost where she had left off, she retrieved the champagne flute and dipped her finger in again, this time painting her nipple and the darkened skin around it, the cold making her flesh pucker further and her breath catch. Jorah angled his head at the familiar sound, a smile beginning to appear. She set the glass down and leaned over him, bringing herself to his lips. He wasted no time sealing his mouth around her softness, laving it, making her pant and mewl at the sweet pull of his lips. She couldn’t stop him, her body relaxing into his attentions, moaning softly at the way he lavished her with gentle licks and delicate suckling. Reluctantly, she finally pulled back, his tongue getting in one final tease before she was gone. “I’ve never loved the taste of champagne more.”

She sat down, trying to catch her breath as she watched him lick his lips. Drunk on desire, a wicked thought came to her, one that would surely make both of them very happy. This time when she brought her fingers to his lips, she held nothing, but the flare of Jorah’s nostrils alerted her that he had picked up the faint scent just before his mouth enclosed her fingertips. His tongue left no part of them unexplored; his appreciative moan humming through her hand as he practically sucked them clean. The way he savored her brought back memories of how his mouth had worshiped other parts of her body and she swallowed hard to try to keep her urges in check, but failing miserably.

“I know what that is and it’s not what we ordered from room service.” He pressed an open-mouth kiss to her palm, “I would love a bit more of that.”

“But Jorah, you won’t—”

“This little game was about giving me what I want, wasn’t it?”

“Yes,” the word a whisper of a breath.

“Do you know what I want?”

“No.”
“No,” he smirked, “Oh, I think you do.”

She did, but there was something she needed first. “Tell me, Jorah. I need to hear you say it.”

“I need your sweet honey on my tongue, love,” he urged in a voice like sin, “Give your bear what he needs.”

Heavens this man! A secret part of her loved when he said suggestive things in that gravelly voice of his, things that made her sex clench and her body pulse with tingling fire. “How,” she squeaked.

He let out a sound that was part pleased rumble, part chuckle, “Kneel over my mouth.”

She pressed her thighs together hard, but it offered little relief from the ache he had created between them with those four simple words. They had never done it that way before, but she had always been curious and would have been crazy not to give in. Careful not to knee him in the head or any other important part of his body, she positioned herself over him.

“Can I touch you now?”

“Gods yes,” she pleaded.

He reached around her thigh and pulled the blindfold off, squinting for a moment at the light. Then he was looking up at her, “That’s better, I want to watch you fall apart for me.”

He took in her form straddling his face, smiling at her endearing naiveté. She had clearly never had a man pleasure her this way before and it made him feel sorry for her. It wasn’t pity, no, it was more that such an amazing, beautiful woman like her deserved to be given every pleasure possible and her past partners had obviously neglected her on that front. She gazed down at him with wide-eyed anticipation, her tongue darting out to wet her lips. Taking gentle hold of her hips, he drew her down, the force of his guidance causing her knees to slide outward, opening her more, bringing her closer. She gulped, the pale downy curls above her sex brushing the tip of his nose. She would have found that funny if not for the look in his eyes, hungry, wanting and the puff of his hot breath against her wetness. He nuzzled her, taking a deep draw of her scent through his nose, his eyes closing in bliss. Musky. Feminine. And, in his mind, perfection.
Her body jerked and pitched forward with a surprised squeak at the abrupt, hard swipe of his tongue over her. He moaned at the burst of her delectable flavour on his tongue. Luckily, she caught herself on the edge of the chaise, her body trembling over his face and unable to support her weight on just her knees. He suckled her between his lips and rolled the tip of his tongue over her clit slowly up and down, building her pleasure gradually. Daenerys’ hand flew to his hair, her skin prickling hot, her mind going utterly blank. She could only focus on the sensation between her legs, and there was no way on Earth that it was possible, but it sure as hell felt as if his tongue was in constant undulating contact with her entire clit all at once.

“Jorah,” she moaned, her head falling back, “don’t you dare fucking stop.”

She had never cursed during sex before and he knew he must have been doing something out of this world to bring that word from her lips. He loved when she gave herself completely over to her desire, not caring about a thing while she revelled in every feeling he bestowed on her. His hands roamed greedily over the soft skin of her lower back and bottom, his fingers grasping the swells of each cheek and drawing her even closer to his mouth.

He felt the subtle twitches in the muscles of her thighs against his jaw, the rhythmic tensing of her fingers in his hair, and then as if she was worried she might hurt him, the hesitant rocking of her hips. He encouraged her with a growl, meeting her eyes to reassure her he was all right with whatever she needed to bring herself to her climax. Her movements grew firmer, her center grinding down just enough into each solid flick of his tongue. She shuddered in his hold, her sweet voice whimpering incoherent words between hastily drawn breaths. Her body had already told him she was at the edge, her fragrant honey slicking the beard on his chin, saturating the skin underneath in its copious warmth. To say that he delighted in her body’s response to his attentions was an understatement. He loved pleasuring her, and if he had his way, he would worship her like this without any thought of reciprocation as often as she desired.

“Jor--,” she gasped, her voice breaking off into a sound that was half whine, half moan. She was a sight to behold in the soft light filtering in through the sheer drapes: drawn taut into a curve above him, the skin between her heaving breasts beaded with tiny droplets of sweat, her hips jerking staccato in the throes of her ecstasy.

Slumping forward, she tried to catch her breath, aftershocks of residual pleasure rippling up her spine. He eased her down from her high with soft, slow kisses to her inner thighs, his hands caressing every inch of her he could reach in the way he knew she loved.

“I believe I got you to curse for me.” She leaned back, blushing at the realization that he was right, his triumphant smile fading into a look of disbelief, “After all we have done together, that makes you blush.”
“Well,” she trailed off breathlessly, not really knowing what else to say.

“I think you enjoyed it.”

“Enjoyed? That’s not even close to describing how good it was.”

He chuckled, but it suddenly ended with a gasp. She gazed down at him with devilish eyes, “It would appear someone else enjoyed it too.”

“You know,” his words broke off on a pant, her fingers teasing his hardness, “how much I love putting my mouth on you, making you come for me.”

“I love when you talk like that,” she purred, shifting her body until she was poised over him. Her hand drifted between her legs, gathering the slickness with her fingertips and bringing it up to her swollen clit, circling it a few times. He growled at the sight, something about watching her touch herself made him crazy with desire. His eyes drifted over her body, the way she knelt over him reminded him a conquering goddess and he her prize for victory.

She sunk down on him slow, her eyelids drifting shut as he filled her completely. She rose and fell over him at an agonizing pace, his gaze riveted between her legs, watching himself disappear inside her only to reappear drenched and glistening in the soft light. She noticed where he was looking, and right then, she had never felt more wanton or erotic. Letting her fingers drift down her neck, she tilted her head back and cupped her breasts, kneading the fullness and teasing her nipples. Her enticing display must have worked because it sounded like he cursed then proclaimed her gorgeous, but she could have been wrong, the noise was trapped in his throat.

Daenerys was his goddess, a gift from the gods he had never fathomed he deserved. Posed over him like his own private centerfold, hands holding her tresses atop her head, her kiss-swollen lips curved in a naughty smile, the way her lifted arms slightly changed her curves, everything about her tempting him. She was so unassuming about her beauty, but in this moment, he was sure she knew just how gorgeous she was. And he told her so, although the words came out strangled.

He sat up, no longer able to stand the distance between them. He cradled her face in his hands, bringing her lips to his in ravenous kiss, her rhythm faltering from the headiness of the emotions behind it. But she recovered, returning to her previous deliberate tempo, teasing his orgasm
to the surface. Their kiss broke apart and he gasped into her mouth, his hand dropping to where they were joined to ensure that she came along with him. She tightened around him at the first brush of his fingers to her slick, sensitized flesh, her being greedy for another peak.

“Jorah,” she murmured against his parted lips, her voice commanding him to look at her even though she didn’t say it.

Their eyes met and held, their panted breaths mingling in what little space remained between them. He had been on the edge of completion since he had put his mouth on her and he didn’t bother holding back or trying to make the sensations last. She slid up and down him effortlessly, her quiet gasp of pleasure and soft, pulsing flutter stole his control and he pulled her down hard, holding himself deep within her, moaning through a blinding release that made his toes curl and his fingers tense in her hair. He fell back with her on the chaise, spent and sated, his arms loose around her.

Once their bodies had reached some semblance of normalcy, she lifted her head and rested her chin on his breastbone, her eyes dancing with joy, “So, did my bear approve of our little game, even though it didn’t go entirely as I had planned?”

“Oh yes,” he answered, brushing his thumb over the dimple on her cheek, “very much.”

Humming with contentment, she rested her head on his chest once more. The tender, lazy way he stroked her hair, combined with the warmth of his body and beat of his heart was making her drowsy.

“You do know what this means, don’t you, love?” She tilted her head to see his smirking face, his eyes looking down at her, “I get to blindfold you sometime.”

Her dimples returned, only deeper. “I look forward to it.”

Chapter End Notes

There's that weird formatting problem again :grumbles: I'll have to look into that again.
Daenerys sat down heavily on the bed, the sun low on the horizon through the open doors of the bedroom. Jorah noticed the sadness in her eyes and came to crouch at her feet, “I don’t want to leave either, Sweetheart.”

“The time went by so fast,” she sighed, unable to meet his sympathetic gaze.

“I know.” Jorah wished he had more to say, but he found that there really wasn’t anything he could tell her to make their departure any easier. He sat next to her and took her hand in his, “We haven’t left yet. And I have something planned for our last night.”

His words had the corner of her mouth quirking in an interested smile. “One last surprise?”

He smiled back. “Yes, and I think it will be very special.”

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Once the sun had set, Jorah asked her to change into something comfortable and wait for him on the deck. She had arched an eyebrow in question, but all he would reveal was that he had to check a few last minute details for their surprise. She did as he asked, enjoying the view of the quarter moon and its reflection on the calm water. The soft breeze carried the scent of flowers on its clean crispness; the sleeveless dress she had chosen was perfect for the mild weather.

When everything was set, Jorah left the beach and used the other deck to get to where she was waiting. And she was a vision standing at the railing overlooking the beach, her lilac gown flowing around her bare feet. Her hair fell down her back in silver waves, only a small portion of it done in a singular thin braid. A warmth settled deep in his bones and he sighed at his good fortune.

Daenerys turned at the noise and beamed at the sight that greeted her. Jorah looked gorgeous tonight. But when doesn’t he, she mused. There was a lightness to him that twinkled in his
eyes and his pale blue linen sport shirt accented them perfectly. His khaki slacks looked nearly out of place with his bare feet, but when you’re on a tropical island, things like that didn’t matter. He walked toward her and held out his hand, “Shall we?”

They strolled along the beach for a short distance before Jorah stopped and turned to her, “Close your eyes, Daenerys.” She eyed him cautiously, but did it anyway. His surprises were always worth it. He took a hold of both of her hands and guided her around the small mound of boulders that had provided just enough cover for what he had in store for her. Having arrived, he came to stand behind her, his hands resting on her upper arms, his lips a hair’s-breadth from her ear so he could whisper, “All right, you can open them.”

She did and gasped, a smile slowly breaking across her face. What Jorah had done was equal parts beautiful and romantic. A few large pillows were piled at the top, or bottom Daenerys wasn’t sure, of a huge, thick circular blanket, small glass jars with tea lights strategically placed around the perimeter offering just enough soft light to give the setting a dreamy glow. Off to the side, a plate containing an assortment of sliced fruit sat next to two glasses and a silver wine bucket, a bottle of what appeared to be white wine chilling inside. “It’s perfect, Jorah.”

He had been a bit worried about whether or not she would like it. But it was chased away by her words and bright smile, her eyes faintly shimmering in the candle light. “I’d hoped you would like it.”

He took her hand and walked with her to the rounded edge, offering support while she sat down, then he joined her. Pulling up her legs, she wrapped her arms around them and watched him pour them each a glass of wine. He turned to hand it to her, but noticed the way she was sitting, “Are you cold?”

“Not really,” she shrugged, but Jorah knew better and he had come prepared. Behind one of the pillows, he had stowed a thin blanket and he unfolded it before wrapping it around her shoulders. She tugged it tighter with a smile and scooted closer to him, basking in the warmth he exuded. She took the glass from him and sipped the cool beverage, marveling at how he always managed to chill wine to the perfect temperature. They sat in a companionable silence, watching the waves, enjoying the wine, and feeding each other fruit, something that had them both laughing.

“What I said to you the night I asked you to marry me is true. Women always remember how their husbands propose and I thought that on the beach, under the stars would be the perfect setting. I discovered that sharing a dance with you was far more romantic.”

“I loved the way you asked me.” She laughed, “Just so you know, you couldn’t have gone wrong with this setting either.”

“I’ll keep that in mind for when we’ve been married for twenty years and I ask you to renew our vows.”

The fact that he was thinking about them together so far in the future made her eyes sting and she blinked at the welling tears. “You know, Jorah, I never thought I would meet someone like you. Sweet. Romantic. Considerate. A true gentleman. A man that treated me with respect, saw me
as more than just…”

She couldn’t finish what she wanted to say, the emotions trapping the words in her throat. Out of the corner of her wavering vision, she could see Jorah watching her with concern. He had witnessed firsthand just how controlling and disrespectful Damien could be and it sickened him to think there had been others just like him.

“It wasn’t just Damien,” he said sagely.

She shook her head, “It started the first time I was enrolled in University. I met a foreign exchange student then. I don’t know why I even started dating him, he hardly spoke any English and we had very different views on things.” She grew quiet, “He was my first and I regret it.” Jorah laced his fingers with hers, his thumb rubbing soothing circles over the back of her hand. He didn’t say anything, knowing there was more she needed to say. She shook her head again, this time as if to clear the bad memories, “Anyway, the relationship didn’t last long, but I left it with this idea in my head that he, and men like him, were what I deserved.”

“But it truly started with Viserys.”

She finally met his eyes, “You’re right, it took me a while to realize it though.” She let out a long breath, “When he died, it was a wake-up call. I quit the dating scene and moved to London, focused on myself, which is what I should have done in the first place.”

“How long had it been before we met?”

“Almost a year.” She gave him a small smile, “Did I ever tell you the story of how I found your job listing?”

“No.” His voice held a mild surprise, his interest clearly piqued.

“I had been laid off from my job, ‘downsizing’ they said.” She rolled her eyes and he chuckled, “It couldn’t have happened at a worse time: on my birthday. A coworker had given me a birthday card just before I left that had a small gift inside, a gift card to my favourite coffee shop. A few months later, I was feeling discouraged because I hadn’t found anything yet. So I decided to treat myself. I knew I needed to start looking harder for a new job, but I was procrastinating. I ordered and took my usual seat near the entrance, it had the best view. A man next to me was just leaving and he had left his newspaper behind. I tried to get his attention, but the opening door allowed a gust of air to come in. The paper nearly ended up on the floor, but I managed to stop it. Do you know what section it had opened to?”

“Mmm,” he tapped his finger against his lips in exaggerated contemplation, “Sports?”

She nudged him playfully with her shoulder, “Silly bear, the Classifieds of course.”

She knew that he knew, but it broke the lingering tension from earlier and she knew that was what he had intended to do.

A breeze caught her hair and carried it over her lips. She moved to brush it away, but Jorah’s hand was quicker, his fingers gathering the silken strands and tucking them behind her ear, the roughened pads grazing the shell of it, making her eyelids heavy at the sweet, yet tantalizing gentleness of the gesture. The soft affection in Jorah’s smiling eyes had her returning the expression, nearly sidetracking her thoughts. But she recovered with a laugh, “As I was saying, when I looked down, right next to my thumb was your job listing. And, for the first time in my life, I listened to the small voice whispering inside me. I took my drink and the paper, went home and submitted my
résumé.”

“And a week later, you were sitting in my office, impressing me with your poise and intelligence.” His shoulders shook gently with mirth, “You know, there were eight other applicants after you, but I didn’t bother interviewing them. It was only you from the start.”

“It’s funny you should say that because I was attracted to you the moment you stood and held out your hand in greeting. All I could think was great, my boss is drop-dead gorgeous.” She ended her laughter with a sigh, “It was you from the start too, Jorah.” She sat looking into his eyes for a moment, then asked, “Do you believe in fate?”

“The idea that events in our life are beyond our control or the three goddesses of Greek mythology?”

“The first one, but now you’ve got me interested in the other. I don’t know that story. Tell me,” she urged him, setting down her wine glass and turning so she faced him more.

“The Greeks believed that three goddesses presided over the birth and life of humans. Each person’s destiny was thought of as a spun thread, measured and cut by the Fates: Clotho, Atropos, and the last one’s name escapes me.”

“I think I like that story better.”

He grew serious, his gaze flicking to the horizon, “If someone had asked me that question years ago, I would have said no. I was a cynical man before I met you. Betrayal can harden your heart; make you want to throw in the towel, so to speak, and give up on the idea of ever finding real love.” She found him looking at her once more, “But you,” his hand came up to cup her cheek, his thumb softly brushing the roundness, “You made me believe again. Sometimes I look at you and I can’t believe you’re real.”

Jorah’s earnest gaze grew blurry, but she moved to him, the closing of her eyes setting her emotions free to run down her cheeks. He tasted the saltiness on her lips, but the kiss was sweet, lingering. Daenerys thought her heart might burst at his words, the love she felt for him in that instant so intense it eclipsed anything she had ever felt for him. Her fingers curled in his shirt and she drew him down to the blanket with her, and ever the gentleman, he propped himself up by his elbow at her side to keep most of his weight off of her, his free hand drifting down her curves to draw her closer to him. They broke apart for air, though their lips still faintly touched, their panted breaths a shared warmth. He shifted, sealing their mouths once more, his body now half over hers, surrounding her in his comforting warmth.

They lay together, kissing and sharing soft caresses. Nothing they did was intended to arouse the other, they simply wanted to touch, to feel each other and bask in the intense affection they felt in that moment. For them, time seemed to stretch and linger, but in reality, it marched on as always, oblivious to their desire to make it stop entirely. Though they felt that nothing could stop them, apparently, nature thought otherwise and she was a cruel woman. Unbeknownst to them, the tide had been steadily approaching the whole time they had been distracted. And it made itself known in spectacular, not to mention slightly cold, fashion. A low wave broke over them, nearly engulfing their bodies. They both yelped in surprise, scrambling to their hands and knees to escape the salty wetness. Their clothing drenched, they looked at one another for only an instant before breaking into laughter. Jorah, however, had the presence of mind to notice the plate and wine glasses were about to make a journey into the ocean and he ran to save them as well as pull the blanket and pillows farther up on the beach to safety.

By the time he was done, Daenerys’ peals of laughter had subsided. She sat in the sand, amusement
still dancing in her eyes. “I think we just had our *From Here to Eternity* moment.”

“Our own version, in any case,” he answered, dropping down onto the sand beside her.

“Let’s change out of these wet clothes and come back.”

He smiled and they rose together to walk back to their cottage. After changing into something dry, Jorah grabbed a large beach towel from the deck and walked only a few steps out onto the sand, far from the tideline, and rolled the towel out for them. They lay down again, Daenerys snuggling up against him. The cold water had sufficiently ruined the mood, but that didn’t mean they couldn’t enjoy their evening in other ways.

It was a long while before she spoke again, her head turning to look skyward, “I’ve never seen so many stars before.” Daenerys knew very little about outer space. Of the sciences she had studied in school, she had excelled in biology more than the others. So she decided to ask him, “Jorah, do you know anything about astronomy?”

“A bit. What would you like to know?”

She rose onto her elbow, “Wait, when we played Trivial Pursuit, Jeor said science was your worst category.”

Jorah chuckled. “It was. The knowledge I gained about the stars and planets came from my time backpacking across Scotland the summer before University.”

“I didn’t know you did that. What was it like?”

Jorah smiled at the inquisitive sparkle in her eyes. “It was an amazing adventure. Imagine being on your own, hiking across the moors, just you and nature. Then, once the sun set, lying beneath a twinkling sky, the stars so numerous I could never have counted them all. So I decided to read about what I was looking at, to learn just what was up there.”

She turned onto her back, surveying the night sky. She lifted her hand, “Tell me about that one there.”

He followed the point of her finger and thought a moment, his eyes flickering to the other luminous objects above to gather some perspective. At last, he answered, “That’s Vega, part of the constellation Lyra.”

To show her, Jorah raised his hand and held hers, tracing the outline of the skewed rectangle, then its tail ending at the bright star.

“I think I know what that one is,” she said, guiding their hands to point at a shape Jorah recognized immediately. “That’s Ursa Minor. I think they call it the Little Dipper in North America.”

“That’s right.” He smiled to himself, moving their hands to the left, “Do you know this one, love?”

It looked sort of like the other one, just larger and containing more stars. “The Bigger Dipper?”

He laughed. “So close. The Big Dipper, or scientifically, Ursa Major.”

Something about that word *Ursa* tickled at the back of her brain. She hadn’t really paid all that much attention during astronomy lectures, but for some reason, she knew what it meant. She thought hard, then, like a bolt of lightning, it hit her. “Ursa means ‘bear’.”
“It does.”

“You’re up there,” she said with a grin.

He turned his head to find her looking at him, “And so are you.”

“What,” she questioned skeptically. Lifting their hands once more, he guiding them back to Ursa Major as a point of reference, then to the right before tracing a serpentine line in the sky, connecting the faint stars. “I don’t understand. That looks like a snake, Jorah.”

“Well, it does, but it’s actually the constellation Draco.”

He let the words sink in and he knew when she had made the connection because she pulled her hand free from his and rose on her elbow to look down at him, her eyes shimmering with moisture, “There’s a dragon up there.” She looked skyward, then back at him, “We’re up there.”

He smiled at her faintly awed expression, his fingers brushing over her cheek, “We are, Daenerys. The Dragon and the Great Bear, written in the stars together. Until the end of time.”

Happy tears spilled down her cheeks and she crashed her lips to his in an urgent, almost forceful kiss. He responded eagerly to her overwhelming emotion, drawing her onto him, yet surrendering to her desire.

“My sweet, great bear,” she whispered, violet lovingly gazing back at baby blue, “take me to the stars.”

“With pleasure, my beautiful little dragon.”

Chapter End Notes

I love writing some fluffy goodness for these two :heart eyes:
Paging Dr. Mormont

Chapter Summary

Daenerys finds herself sick after arriving home from their vacation. How will Jorah handle things?

Chapter Notes

I had always wanted to write Jorah taking care of Daenerys when she's sick. I have it in my head that he would be a sweet, attentive caregiver. Because that's how he rolls when it comes to the woman he loves.

Thank you once again to my readers. You all are the best! Bear hugs all around :)

The first thing Daenerys noticed upon waking was she was alone in bed, the side where Jorah slept had the covers turned back, but was still faintly warm. However, it was what she realized next that made her groan. It was really more like what she felt, her entire body ached. Her eyes were scratchy and dry, what little morning light that filtered through the drawn shades made her squint before she simply turned away and pulled the covers over her head. She swallowed, but she instantly wished she hadn’t, her throat felt like it was on fire and she whimpered at the intense pain.

“Daenerys?”

It seemed that Jorah had heard the pitiful sound she had made because she could hear him walking toward the bed, her side dipping a bit under his weight when he sat down next to her. She lifted the covers and gazed at his concerned face through narrowed eyes.

“Are you all right,” he asked, his brow crinkling even more when he noticed how pale she looked.

“I’m sick,” she pouted, flopping onto her back.

He rested his hand gently against her forehead, “I think you have a fever.”
Jorah stood, walking back to the bathroom to get something from the medicine cabinet. He came back, thermometer in hand, and she dutifully opened her mouth so he could put it under her tongue. He glanced at his watch, then looked back at her, waiting to see what it read. A few moments later, he took it out and his eyebrows rose, the reading somewhere between 37 and 38 degrees Celsius. She didn’t need to ask what it said; the look on his face told her it wasn’t good. “Sweetheart, how else do you feel?”

“Everything hurts, my nose’s stuffed and my throat feels like its burning.” Just then, she started coughing, a dry hacking sound that made her sides ache from the force of it. When it was finally over, she sighed, “There’s that too, apparently.”

“Well, the flu is going around.” He rubbed his hand soothingly over her upper arm, “Get some rest. I am going to call Lucy and tell her we won’t be coming in today.”

“Jorah,” she croaked, “You can’t stay home just for me.”

“Of course I can. Your health is far more important right now. Besides, they can survive a day without me.”

And he swept from the room before she could even say another word in protest. Deep down, however, she was glad he would be there. The few times she had gotten sick when her brother was alive, he had never bothered to do anything for her. Instead, he would get angry, ranting about how her weak immune system was keeping her from going to work. And every time, no matter how bad she felt, she would drag herself from bed and go just so she wouldn’t have to listen to him berate her. But now, it seemed like she would finally see what it was like to be sick around someone that actually cared about your wellbeing. And she wanted to smile, but couldn’t, even her face hurt.

Jorah returned a short while later with a mug of something and an extra blanket tucked under his arm. He set the steaming cup on the nightstand, then unfolded the blanket with a flourish, letting it fall over her. He tucked it up close to her chin and she looked at him with grateful eyes, doing her best to snuggle down into the added warmth. He gave her a soft smile and leaned down to kiss her forehead, but she pulled back when she realized what he was going to do. “Jorah, don’t. You’ll catch what I have.”

“Bears can’t get sick, love,” his breath brushing her skin just before his lips did. “If you need me, I’ll be in the sitting room or my office. But I’ll check in on you in a while.”

She gave him a nod and a feeble twitch of her lips that could be construed as a half-smile
as she watched him walk from the room. She tossed and turned for a while, simply unable to get comfortable. Finally, her body exhausted, she fell into a fitful sleep.

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Something woke her up and she glanced at the clock, however, she was shocked to find that only an hour had passed. She rolled onto her other side, closing her eyes to try to get back to sleep. It wasn’t working and she started to grow restless. Accepting defeat, she sat up, pulled back the covers and swung her feet over the side, preparing to stand. After gathering enough strength, she shuffled over to the chest of drawers and opened the middle one, searching for one of Jorah’s comfy sweatshirts, some sweatpants, and a pair of his socks. Finding her favorites, she put them on and grabbed the blanket from the bed, wrapping it over her head and around her before making her way slowly into the sitting room. Jorah wasn’t there, but she heard his voice coming from his office, so she curled up on the sofa to wait for him.

Reaching over to the coffee table for the remote, she turned on the TV, flipping through the channel guide in search of something to distract her. Finding an animal show that looked promising, she tuned to it and pulled the blanket tighter around her. At the next commercial break, he came in, surprised to find her up and about.

“I couldn’t get comfortable.”

He flashed her a sympathetic smile and came over, setting his laptop down on the coffee table and lifting her feet so he could rest them in his lap when he sat down. He knew he shouldn’t be thinking it, given the condition she was in, but he couldn’t help it. Daenerys looked absolutely adorable, bundled up like an Eskimo, her face, hands and feet the only parts poking out from the blanket’s warmth. He thought he spied the navy blue of his favorite sweatshirt when she shifted onto her back to look at him. His hands absentmindedly rubbed at her feet and she sighed at how good it felt, but it succeeded in making her cough again. She swallowed, bringing a grimace to her lips.

“Let me get you some tea,” Jorah said, moving her feet so he could go to the kitchen to get it for her.

Just like before, he brought her a steaming mug. She sat up and took it from him, attempting to breathe in the steam to ease the pounding pressure in her sinuses. It seemed to help a bit and her nose started to run, making her sniffle. He was lucky he was still standing that way he was able to grab the tissue box from the kitchen table. That was when Daenerys saw the array of medicine bottles and extra boxes of tissues sitting there.
“You’re really going all out, aren’t you?”

“Of course,” he answered, taking his seat again. “What kind of fiancé would I be if I didn’t?” She blew on her tea, cooling it some to take a small drink. It soothed her throat perfectly, her eyelids fluttering at the blessed relief. He chuckled, “It helped, didn’t it?”

She nodded and took another sip, “It’s delicious too. What did you put in here?”

“Lemon and honey,” he smiled, “The way my aunt used to take her tea.”

She sipped from the mug once more, then set it down so she could blow her nose. Jorah seemed to notice her indecision about where to put it when she was done, “Just toss it on the coffee table, love. I’ll clean it up later.”

She hesitated, but did as he suggested before lying back down. She tucked her feet under Jorah’s thigh, wiggling her toes to bury them as far as she could under the comforting weight. Turning her face toward the TV, she succeeded in distracting herself for a while before she had to blow her nose again. It went on like this for at least an hour until Jorah glanced over and found her asleep. He hated to see her feeling sick and he wished he could do something more than what he was doing now. In all honesty, he wanted to take the illness unto himself and suffer through it for her. When he thought about it, he never remembered a time when he had been sick. He didn’t count the one time he had food poisoning, that wasn’t the same as the common cold or the flu that seemed to make the rounds every year like clockwork. But this was the first time Daenerys had ever been sick in all the time he had known her. She was usually such a healthy person, but he figured having jet lag and breathing in recycled air on a plane for fourteen hours probably hadn’t helped her immune system.

She passed in and out of sleep over the next few hours, waking briefly to shift to another position, to blow her nose, or to take another sip of the now cold tea. While she dozed, he got a bit of work done sitting on the sofa, answering emails and looking over revenue projections. He let all of his calls go to voicemail though, not wanting to wake her by answering them. They can bloody well wait, he thought. Just after noon, his stomach started to growl and he did finally have to get up from his place at her feet, fixing himself a sandwich and having some of the tea he had made for her. Daenerys was right, it was delicious. Not to mention, the vitamin C from the lemon would help keep him healthy. Not like he really needed it, seeing as it was highly unlikely that he would catch what she had. He had done a bit of research online and had managed to find a recipe for homemade chicken soup that didn’t involve a lot of preparation. After he had finished eating, he searched the cupboards and refrigerator for the required ingredients. But he wasn’t surprised to find that they didn’t have most of what he needed. So he made a list and went to change his clothes to go shopping. By the time he returned from the room, Daenerys was awake and drinking some tea.
“I’m going shopping,” he said, pulling on his coat, “Is there anything you’d like me to get you?”

She thought for a moment, “Strawberry ice cream.”

“All right,” he smiled, kissing the top of her head, “I shouldn’t be long, love. Get some rest.”

She happily took Jorah’s advice, pulling the afghan from the back of the sofa around herself to add an extra layer of coziness. Looking out the sitting room window, Daenerys noticed the sky had shifted from sunny and cloudless to gray and dreary, the threat of rain heavy in those dark clouds hugging the horizon. She shivered involuntarily and snuggled deeper into the blankets, content to be indoors instead of out there. She felt bad for Jorah though, having to brave the chilly temperatures to go shopping for her. But it didn’t seem to faze him, as he had said, her health was more important. She figured that also included her comfort too, seeing to whatever she needed to feel better. Jorah had a keen business mind and a flair for the romantic, but she shouldn’t have been surprised to discover that he also made an excellent caregiver too. It was all part of his deep love for her and she thanked the gods she had found a man like him.

With her animal show now over, she went through the channels again, hoping to find something interesting. She came across a program about life in the A&E and the daily battle nurses and doctors went through with their injured and sick patients. At first, it wasn’t all that exciting and she dozed off, but the sound of the front door opening woke her. Carrying two packed canvas shopping bags and the mail under his arm, Jorah stopped short, “Good gods, what happened to him?”

At first, she was confused as to what he was referencing. Then she remembered what she had been watching and she turned to see a man, lying on a gurney, covered in blood, his arm nearly severed at the elbow. “Oh, it’s a reality show about the A&E. I think he was in a bad car accident.”

“I’ll say.” Then he was looking at her as he took off his coat, “Are you sure this is what you should be watching? Wouldn’t you rather want to watch something more cheerful?”

Now that she thought about it, watching people in pain probably wasn’t going to make her feel any better, so she went back to channel surfing, but there wasn’t much on. It was the middle of the day after all, not the best time for good TV. Instead, she became engrossed with watching Jorah unpack the groceries. The simple domesticity of it brought a flare of warmth to her chest and she smiled to herself, even though it made her cheeks ache more than they already did. She saw amongst other things leafy stalks of celery, bright orange carrots, and the brown outer skin of an onion. Those vegetables in combination with his other purchases only meant one thing: chicken noodle soup. And since the ingredients were still in their raw state that meant Jorah was going to
make it from scratch. *My sweet bear*, she thought.

Before he started preparing the recipe, Jorah picked up the mail and joined her on the sofa. The new issue of *National Geographic* had arrived and this month’s cover story featured the endangered lemurs of Madagascar. He saw her eyeing the magazine with interest and handed it to her with a knowing smile; anything about animals went to her first. She sat up to take it from him and that’s when she saw the flat brown package at the bottom of the stack.

She started to talk and her voice came out a hoarse whisper, so she cleared her throat and started again, “What’s that?”

He moved the letters from the top so he could see the return address. “It’s our wedding invitations.”

Her excited gasp led to coughing fit that took a while to go away, but when it did, she was holding out her hand for the package. Jorah was excited too, although he was far more reserved about his enthusiasm. They had spent hours poring over invitation samples from several companies before they decided on one that looked beautiful but was still understated. He didn’t want something gaudy, Jorah had done that once and wasn’t at all keen to do it again. It wasn’t his style, and as he was thrilled to discover, neither was it Daenerys’.

Emptying the contents onto the coffee table, Daenerys brushed her fingers over the heavy off-white paper that composed the envelopes, the deckled edge of the flap giving it a handmade feel. The invitations themselves were square, the same style and color as the envelopes, the print on one side done in a script font that imparted a simple classy elegance. She read over the wording, double checking that everything was ok. When she got to Jorah’s name, she did a double take before reading it again. Her fever wasn’t making her see things; the error was right there in black and white. She burst out laughing, which in turn made her cough as she fell back on the sofa. Jorah eyed her curiously, “What’s so funny?”

She couldn’t get one word out, so she gestured to the small stack of invitations. He picked one up, scanning the text, then, “You’ve got to be kidding me.”

Jorah was trying very hard not to laugh, but her enjoyment of the mistake meant he couldn’t hold out for long. Her joy was infectious and he soon found himself joining in, the improbability of it all could only be met with laughter.

“I guess I’m marrying Jorah Mormount on July 20th,” she wheezed, a fresh fit of giggles renewing her coughing.
He shook his head, still chuckling. “We can’t send these out.”

“I think our guests would get a kick out of it.” She sobered when she noticed the look on his face, “I’m only kidding, Jorah. I’ll send these back for the necessary correction.”

He knew she wouldn’t actually mail them to their guests, but she was probably right. They would have found it funny too. The laughter now over, Daenerys set it back on the pile with others and lay down again. That saying about laughter being the best medicine was actually true, she did feel a bit better. At least the body aches weren’t as bad as they had been that morning. When Jorah was done looking at the mail, he went to the kitchen to start preparing the soup. He gathered all of the necessary ingredients and rolled up the sleeves of his Henley before tying his apron around his waist. Then he moved to the sink to wash his hands so he could begin chopping the vegetables. He never would have attempted to do something like this before he met Daenerys. It wasn’t to say that he couldn’t follow a recipe or cut up food, it was just that he never felt the desire to cook for someone like he did for her. To watch her enthusiastic reaction to something he had created. Not to mention, the cooking classes she had suggested they take together. She exposed a hidden talent and he never would have discovered the ability if it hadn’t been for her.

A wet crunch, then a rhythmic thunk of knife against wooden cutting board. Daenerys knew watching Jorah cook would be far more entertaining than anything on TV right now or pretty much ever. It was like her own private cooking channel show, complete with a handsome host. Needing a refill of her tea anyway, she made her way slowly over to the kitchen, mug in hand, and went to the stove to heat up the kettle. Jorah noticed her arrival out of the corner of his eye, “Sweetheart, what are you doing up?”

“I’m just getting more tea.”

He would have gladly done it for her so she wouldn’t have to exert herself, but he sighed and let her pour herself another cup. He figured she would go back to the sofa to lie down, but then she was facing him, seated on one of the bar chairs at the counter. “You should be resting, Daenerys.”

“I am,” she countered, “There’s nothing on TV and I would rather watch you.”

While he didn’t approve, he couldn’t help the smile that came to his lips just then. At least she was still bundled up in the blanket and staying hydrated. He went back to work, showing off once or twice with his knife skills, something that brought her trademark sparkle back to her eyes if only for a brief moment. She appeared to be feeling a bit better or at least better than she had that morning. He was glad for that; he didn’t like seeing her the least bit unwell.
Once everything was sliced and ready, he filled the stock pot with containers of vegetable and chicken broth and turned on the burner. The onion and celery went into a cast iron pan with a pat of butter to cook until tender. When it was ready, he transferred it to the pot before adding the carrots from the cutting board, then the precooked diced chicken breast and a bag of egg noodles. He stirred it a few times, and while he waited for it to come to a boil, he cleaned up. Soon it was bubbling cheerily and he reduced the heat and covered it with the lid to simmer.

“Definitely more entertaining than TV.” She broke into a coughing fit, then finished with, “And I get to eat what you just made.”

“Well, chicken soup is some of the best medicine there is,” he said, coming around the counter to sit next to her.

“To make it easier on yourself, you could have just bought it in the can and warmed it up.”

Jorah pulled a face, “That over-salted, preservative-laden slop?” He shook his head, “Certainly not. Only the best for my love.”

She nudged him with her shoulder; the look she gave him was soft with affection.

“Shite,” Jorah jumped up, suddenly aware that he had forgotten something, “The spices.”

He rushed into the kitchen, pulling bottles of seasonings from the cupboard and measuring out the necessary amounts for each and dumping them into the pot. He gave the soup a few quick stirs to mix everything, then replaced the lid. He sighed, “I hope that doesn’t ruin it.”

“I’m sure it’ll be fine.”

Soon it was ready and Jorah ladled healthy portions into two large bowls that he set on the coffee table. Knowing bread was always the perfect complement to soup, he cut a crusty French loaf and plated the slices, grabbing utensils and the butter on his way out of the kitchen. Daenerys had moved to the sofa, eagerly awaiting her meal. She had to admit she was hungry, even though she hadn’t done much to work up an appetite. Taking the proffered spoon, she took a spoonful and blew on it gently to cool it down enough to eat. And it was just as sublime as it looked, the vegetables, meat and noodles cooked to perfection.
“Jorah, this is…wow. Just wow.”

He had been watching her anxiously, concerned that adding the seasonings late may have affected the taste. But he was wrong as he found out when he ate some himself and he grinned at her obvious appreciation of his culinary skills. She tucked into her bowl with gusto and was finished before he was even halfway done with his. Meeting his amused face with slightly sheepish eyes, she made to stand up and get more, but he took the bowl from her hands with a shake of his head and got it for her himself. She took her time with this bowl, taking a slice of bread and buttering it so she could dip it into the savory broth. By the time every last drop was gone, Jorah was nearly finished with his second helping. The meal had helped immensely, her sinuses didn’t hurt nearly as much and her throat only felt scratchy now. He cleared their plates and returned with fresh mugs of tea for them both. All of this liquid finally caught up with her and she left to go to the bathroom. When she returned, Jorah had the TV on, one of her favourite movies playing on the screen. She snuggled up against him, his arm coming around her shoulders to hug her close. She only moved to blow her nose; the pile of tissues on the coffee table had grown to be quite tall. Halfway through the film, he asked her if she wanted anything because he was getting up for a refill. She smiled and asked for ice cream, something he realized he wanted too. Two scoops in a bowl with a sprinkle of chopped almonds for himself and the same for her, minus the topping. He figured it would irritate her throat further and he didn’t want that to happen. She made a soft, pleasured sound as the sweet, silky coldness put out the last of the fire in her throat. They watched the rest of the movie, then changed the channel to another one they both enjoyed. It had been the first film they had seen together as a couple. Daenerys remembered that evening fondly, it had been their third date. She had made an incorrect assumption about Jorah’s taste in film, assuming he enjoyed art house dramas and small, independent productions. But she had been proven wrong; he suggested they see a gothic horror romance. Yet halfway through it, sitting in the crowded, dark cinema on opening night, she realized that his recommendation was just his ingenious way of getting her to cling tightly to him and hide her face in his shoulder whenever something particularly scary happened on screen. Clever bear, she had thought. It wasn’t like he needed an excuse get her close to him though, she wanted that all on her own. And even though they had seen the film a few times since that night, she still grabbed his arm at certain moments, something that even now made him smile.

By the time the credits came up, the rain had begun to fall in heavy sheets. The combination of the weather and the lateness of the hour as well as the warmth from Jorah’s body started to make her feel drowsy. She tried to hide her yawn, but he noticed.

“Come on, love, let’s get you to bed.”

Grabbing the tissue box and her mug on the way to their room, he guided her along, supporting her as she leaned into his strength. Once he had her tucked in, he went to the bathroom and stripped down to his boxer briefs before brushing his teeth. He could hear her blowing her nose as he rinsed his mouth. It didn’t sound nearly as bad as it had earlier and he smiled, perhaps she was finally on the road to health. With a flip of the light switch, he made his way to bed, pulled back the sheets and slid in next to her. He reached out to turn off the bedside lamp and he barely had time to get resettled before she was on him, cuddling herself contentedly against his side. He kissed the top
of her head and stroked her hair, but he didn’t do it for long before she was snoring softly. He
couldn’t help but chuckle; he had never heard her do that before. As he closed his eyes, he made up
his mind that he’d share this newfound information with her tomorrow. Or maybe not, he mused
with a sleepy smirk.
Daenerys left before Jorah that morning, a business meeting in Salisbury at 9am meant she had a long drive ahead of her. Most of the time they took the Underground to work or sometimes Jorah’s car, but this time she took her own. She hadn’t driven it in quite some time and had nearly forgotten about its frustrating quirks. Meeting with prospective clients was always a unique opportunity and she relished in it, loving the challenge. And this one would be no different. This was a father-son company too, but the son wanted to have nothing to do with running the business alone and that meant it would become another acquisition in Jorah’s vast ownership, one day to be sold off to the highest bidder. There was the one aspect of her job that she hated, and as she had discovered not long after she started working for Jorah, he despised it too: watching a company fall apart before their very eyes, seeing the grasping, underhanded dealings of those at the top with no regard for those they employed. And it was made even more painful on occasions like this when it involved a family, a son choosing a different path than the one his father wanted for him. But, as she always did, she would square her shoulders; grit her teeth and smile.

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Around 2pm, Jorah checked his mobile and noticed a text from Daenerys:

*Everything went smoothly; they’ll be calling you with final details Monday. Gonna grab lunch and head back. Love you, D*

He smiled at the dragon face emoji she had begun adding to the end of her texts. He rarely texted, but she had suggested that when he did he should sign his with a bear face, saying it would be ‘sweet’, but he had just arched an eyebrow at her in silence. That was not his style, but he kept the idea in the back of his mind just in case. Robert noticed the happiness on Jorah’s face before he
could school his features. “A message from Daenerys?”

The older man was smiling too, the knowing one of a man who had experienced a love like theirs. “Yes, the meeting went well.”

“Excellent,” he clapped Jorah on the back, “With the deal we made this morning, it’s been a banner day.”

Jorah nodded in agreement, then directed his gaze back to the numbers above the lift’s door. His friend was right, this day had gone so smoothly he had briefly considered pinching himself to make sure it was real. The doors slid open and the men exited, Robert heading off to his office with a parting ‘goodbye’. Jorah responded in kind, then sent a quick message back to Daenerys, even though hers was over an hour old:

_Fantastic news. Drive safe. See you later. Love, J_

On a whim, he added the bear emoji, picturing her reaction in his mind, one that made him smile all over again.

“Mr. Mormont, you have a message.”

His secretary’s panicked tone immediately had his attention, and when his eyes met hers, his smile disappeared. “What is it?”

“Southampton General Hospital called. They have—”

His heart dropped. “Daenerys?”

“No,” Lucy answered, “It’s your father.”

***

Daenerys had just finished her lunch when her mobile pinged, alerting her to an incoming
message. Deep dimples appeared on her cheeks when she got to the end of it, the bear emoji making her giggle. The man at the table next her gave her a strange look, but she couldn’t be bothered. Texting with pictures wasn’t Jorah’s thing, but it touched her that he did it exclusively for her. The waitress came by then with the check and Daenerys paid before leaving, exiting the small café and making the short walk to her car. The air had become considerable cooler than when she first arrived at the restaurant and she pulled her coat tighter around herself.

Just as she was pulling out onto the road, her mobile started to ring. Recognizing the number instantly, she answered, “Hello, Jorah.”

“Hello, Ms. Targaryen.”

The voice on the other end was most definitely not Jorah’s and that struck her as odd. “Hi, Lucy. What’s up?”

“Jorah’s at hospital.”

Daenerys was glad she was waiting at a traffic light because it felt as though her heart had stopped for a moment before kicking back into rhythm. “What? Are you sure?”

“Yes, he’s at Southampton General.”

A man behind her honked his horn and she jumped at the sudden, jarring noise. She started to drive, “All right, thank you.”

She disconnected the call and pulled to the side of the road, opening her navigation app and typing in the name of the hospital with shaky hands. Just as the map appeared, her mobile buzzed, then died.

“Shit,” she exclaimed, tossing it onto the seat beside her. Glancing over her shoulder, she eased back into traffic, looking frantically for the nearest petrol station to ask for directions. Not only was she extremely worried, she was also confused. What in the world was Jorah doing in Southampton? He had mentioned a meeting this morning before she left, but for the life of her, she couldn’t remember if today was the out-of-town one or not. She suddenly became acutely aware of her heart, loud and fast in her ears, her palms growing clammy against the steering wheel, her mind going to dark places. All sorts of terrible thoughts raced through it: violent car crashes, horrific freak accidents and mysterious medical illnesses. At the next traffic light, she closed her eyes and took
several deep, slow breaths, vowing to herself that she would never watch another one of those real-
life medical emergency shows on TV ever again. It was just too much inspiration for her fertile
imagination.

At the next corner, she spied a station and pulled in, barely getting her car in park before
she jumped out and ran in to ask the man behind the counter for directions. Once she had them, she
was back out on the road, headed for the motorway. Many kilometers lay ahead of her and she drove
as fast as the laws allowed. But it may as well have been a crawl, the signs showing the distance
remaining never seemed to change. Her stomach twisted and churned, her entire body chilled to the
bone, held captive in the icy grasp of dread. The small glimmer of hope she clung to was that she
would make it to him in time, that whatever reason had caused him to end up there in the first place
was not serious.

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Daenerys rushed through the automatic double doors, passing from the cold, drizzly
outside into the sterile, not much warmer air of the hospital’s foyer. The rapid click of her boot heels
echoed in the high arc of the glass atrium, the reception area just to the left.

An elderly woman behind the counter peered over her glasses, “Can I help you Miss?”

“Yes,” Daenerys answered, nearly out of breath, “Can you tell me what room Jorah
Mormont is in?”

After a moment of typing on her computer, she appeared confused, “I have no one
admitted here under that name. Are you sure-”

“I don’t understand, I was told he was here.” Daenerys could feel her anxiousness growing
by the second, her voice taking on a frantic, higher pitch, “Please check again. J-O-R-“

“Daenerys?”

She whipped around at the sound of her name to find him standing at the entrance of the
A&E waiting room, the Windsor knot of his tie pulled loose, the top button of his dress shirt undone.
He appeared nearly as exhausted as she felt, the beginnings of dark circles forming under his tired
eyes. Forgetting all about the woman she had just been speaking to, Daenerys rushed to him,
throwing her arms tight around him. Jorah didn’t have a chance to hug her in return before she pulled
back, her hands moving over his shoulders and chest, as if searching for injuries.

“‘You’re ok,’” she stated almost to herself. Her forehead came to rest against his chest, her long sigh of relief easing some of her tension.

“Of course I am, love,” he said with a confused chuckle, his hands cupping her jaw to bring her eyes up to meet his, “Why wouldn’t I be?”

“I’ll explain, but can we sit down before I fall over?” Jorah put an arm around her and led them to a row of plastic chairs by the window. They took the two at the end, one of which had his suit jacket draped over the back. There was only one other occupant in the room, but he appeared to be asleep. “Lucy called just as I was leaving to come back to London. She told me you were at hospital. I could have sworn I heard her wrong, but when I asked if she was sure, she said yes and told me where. I left right after I hung up with her.”

“She relayed the message to me in person just after a meeting. After I left, I tried to call you, but my mobile died.”

“Mine did too,” she said with a short, rueful laugh, patting her handbag. She sat back with heavy sigh, her eyes closed, “This has been one hell of a day so far.” Jorah made a noise in affirmative and she turned to look at him, “Since it’s not you that’s in hospital, it must be your father then.” He nodded, “What happened?”

“What they told me when I arrived was that he was conscious and able to answer their questions. Then a few minutes before you arrived, the doctor came and told me they were taking him for further tests.”

Daenrys could see the anxiety in the tightness around Jorah’s eyes, but she knew that there was little she could do to ease his worry. So she took his hand and leaned against his shoulder, her small way of offering support in this troubling time. He lifted their hands and kissed the back of hers, letting her know that he was grateful to have her there, her mere presence making things a bit easier.

The hours ticked by, people came and went, but still no word from the doctor about Jeor. And with each minute that passed, Jorah’s unease grew. He had taken to pacing the hall, jiggling his leg, any sort of movement to burn off the tension. Every time the double doors that led into the treatment area opened, his eyes would snap up, hoping it would be someone with news. Finally, at around hour four, a man emerged from behind those double doors and walked toward the waiting area. Jorah stood; Daenrys reasoned this must be the doctor he had spoken to earlier. She got up
too, eager for some information at long last.

“Mr. Mormont,” the doctor addressed him, holding out his hand in greeting. She watched them shake hands before he shook hers in turn.

“How is he?”

“Your father is stable and doing fine. The results of the tests are in, and after gathering some further information from him, we have diagnosed him with atrial fibrillation or AFib for short.”

The look on the doctor’s face didn’t appear to show any need for them to be greatly concerned any more, Daenerys noting out of the corner of her eye that Jorah’s shoulders had relaxed. “What is that exactly?”

“It’s where the heart’s upper chambers, the atriums, beat out of rhythm with the lower ones, the ventricles. The condition can have no symptoms, but when it does, they often manifest as palpitations, shortness of breath and fatigue. Your father actually presented with the first two in addition to some chest pain and dizziness.” The doctor noticed the quick arch of Jorah’s eyebrows, “Mr. Mormont, this condition is quite common amongst those in your father’s age group and it is very treatable.” He gave Jorah a small smile, “I must say; your father’s test results are encouraging as well. His cardiac enzymes were normal, his cholesterol level was excellent, and his blood pressure well within the normal range. Your father is a very healthy man and I see no reason why, with medication and biannual visits to a cardiologist, he can’t continue to live his life just as he has been.”

“Can we see him?”

“Of course, follow me.”

The doctor led them through the double doors and down a long hallway, taking a left at the end before coming to a stop outside one of the treatment rooms. “Just so you know, as a precaution, we are going to keep your father overnight for observation. I’ll meet with him tomorrow morning and run another echocardiogram and EKG to check how his heart is doing. If it all looks good, and I have a feeling it will, I’ll discharge him in the afternoon.”

Jorah thanked him, shaking his hand. Daenerys did the same before following Jorah into the room. A nurse was checking Jeor’s vitals on the heart monitor, making notes on his chart. Then she checked the leads attached to his chest one last time before leaving with a small smile.
“I wish these bloody nurses would stop fussing over me,” Jeor grumbled, rearranging the blanket over his lap merely to give his hands something to do before finishing with, “I feel fine.”

“The doctor would say otherwise,” Jorah answered, rubbing at the back of his neck, “How long have you been having symptoms?”

“Symptoms of what?”

“Father, you know full well what I’m talking about.”

The elder Mormont had not yet met his son’s eyes, instead, staring at the powder blue wall across from the bed with a withering intensity. Daenerys sensed this probably was a good time to slip out of the room and allow these two stubborn bears to discuss this in private. She waited just outside the door, though, curiosity getting the better of her.

“Just after your first visit,” Jeor begrudgingly admitted.

He sighed. “Why didn’t you say anything?”

“It’s nothing.”

Jorah didn’t have the energy or patience to go round and round with his father right now. He loved him, but his obstinacy could be downright infuriating at times. He decided to change the subject. “What were you doing in Southampton?”

“Barton and I came to visit an old friend of mine.”

He knew his father had friends seemingly all over England and Scotland, acquaintances he had made from his time at University and while in the business world. But, with that question out of the way, Jorah found he had nothing left to say, at least not at the moment. Jeor wasn’t going to answer any of his questions with a straight answer; after all, he espoused the ‘stiff upper lip’ attitude of his generation.
“Well, I suppose Daenerys and I will see you at the house tomorrow.” All Jorah received was a nod in response, so he shoved his hands in his pockets and said, “Good night father.”

Outside the room, Daenerys fell into step next to him. “Your father doesn’t want to admit anything is wrong with him, does he?”

“Of course not, that would be too easy.”

“Jeor is from a different generation. They deal with things like this in a way that mine or your generation doesn’t.” She linked her arm with his, “Maybe it has something to do with your mother.”

Jorah stopped suddenly, jerking her to a halt. Realization dawned in his eyes, “Gods, I hadn’t even considered that.”

“Your father probably hates doctors and hospitals and anything to do with those things.”

Guilt took up residence in his chest. He replayed his conversation with his father, remembering his stiff posture, how he had utterly refused to even acknowledge there was something medically wrong with him. All made perfect sense now and he almost wanted to turn back and apologize. On the other hand, this wasn’t the right place for that sort of conversation. He would have it with Jeor tomorrow.

Jorah suddenly felt exhausted, all he wanted to do was go back to his father’s estate and rest. But Daenerys’ voice interrupted his thoughts, “So we’re going back to your father’s then?” He nodded, “Would you mind if we got something to eat first. I haven’t had anything since lunch.”

“Daenerys,” he chided softly, “Why didn’t you say something? You must be starved.”

“Well, I didn’t think it was right to be eating when we didn’t know what was happening with him.”

He shook his head, “While that is very sweet of you, love, that’s not an excuse for you to go hungry.” He took her hand, “Let’s get you fed.”

They exited the way they came, stepping out into the chilly night air. It was late, although she wasn’t sure of the hour. Then she tugged on his hand, almost forgetting about the impending
transportation conundrum, “I came here in my own car.”

“That’s right.” He thought for moment, “Here’s what we’ll do. Follow me in your car so we can get you something to eat and then I’ll lead the way to his estate.”

“Oh, but Jorah, aren’t you hungry?”

“Not at the moment, maybe later.”

She could tell he was deflecting, but didn’t question him further as they walked side by side to the car park.

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The drive to Cornwall went by quickly, seemingly much shorter than their previous two trips. It was near midnight by the time they arrived, and not wanting to wake Barton just so he could open the door for them, Jorah showed her the way he used to sneak into the house as a teenager, through a sitting room window that had a broken lock. She made a mental note to ask him about that later, too relieved to be inside, out of the cold and rain, and soon to be under the warm covers. He sat down heavily on the couch, leaning his head against the back of it, his eyes closed.

“Jorah, I’m gonna grab some water. Do you want anything?”

“Water would be great, love, thanks.”

She left him there to rest and made her way to the kitchen, pouring them a large glass to share. But by the time she got back, Jorah was asleep. He didn’t look terribly comfortable, but he had such a rough day that she felt bad at the thought of waking him, so she covered him with an afghan and kissed his forehead. Closing the door to the sitting room over, she turned off the lights and took the stairs to his old bedroom. It seemed smaller somehow without him there, and for a second, she contemplated going back down stairs and snuggling with him on the sofa. She thought better of it and started looking for something to change into for bed. The chest of drawers offered a few choices and she finally decided on an old cable knit jumper and a pair of pajama bottoms. There were no socks in any of the drawers, so had to forgo those. Her feet were a bit cold, but she climbed into bed and nestled down under the heavy blankets. It felt strange lying in bed alone again; she had gotten quite used to falling asleep next to Jorah. Or rather on him, she thought, missing his warmth and comforting embrace. But her mind and body were exhausted and she soon found herself drifting off.
Daenerys sat bolt upright, her eyes rapidly blinking away the fog of sleep. In the resulting disorientation, she struggled to remember why the room was different, the bed smaller and why the clothes she wore smelled vaguely musty. It came back to her in jumbled pieces, and with each connection her mind made, her thoughts started to race in all sorts of directions. She was alone and the panic of the previous hours returned like a sledgehammer to her psyche. *He wasn’t there. Why? Was he really gone?* She closed her eyes and took a slow breath, listening to the pit-pat of the rain on the windowpane. Normally the sound would have soothed her, but now it grated on her frayed nerves. With no clock on the nightstand and her phone not there either, she had only the darkened soot gray sky to tell her it was nighttime. Then she remembered something, and needing to see it with her own eyes, she threw back the covers and hurried to the door, yanking it open. The hallway was long and dark, the plush rug muting the sound of her running footfalls. Using the railing for occasional support, she went as fast as she could down the stairs, a wedge of soft light cutting through the darkness, a beacon of comfort and safety. Pushing open the sitting room door, blessed relief flooded through her, her heart beginning to calm at the sight of Jorah’s sleeping form. She knew it had been her mind after all, playing tricks on her; little sleep coupled with immense stress and very little to eat had finally caught up with her.

Even though his head rested on a cushion, the rest of his body looked awkward. With legs too long for the sofa and his arm hanging over the side, he would be sore tomorrow if she let him continue sleeping there. And she couldn’t, not with the residual adrenaline still coursing through her system. She needed Jorah to hold her, to be connected to something warm and tangible, for him to make her feel safe, and finally, if her body would allow, to fall asleep nestled against him.

She knelt at his side and took his arm in her hands, bringing it to rest on his chest.

“Daenerys,” he said sleepily, his eyes blinking her into focus. He must have noticed the tightness around her eyes, how her teeth worried at her bottom lip, “What’s wrong?”

“Come to bed, Jorah. Please?”

He rose without answering, allowing her to take his hand and the lead. She held it tight all the way back to the bedroom, and once inside, reluctantly let him go so he could undress down to his boxer briefs and build a fire in the hearth. Her eyes, intent on him, never strayed. But, he realized, it was not the intensive gaze of desire. It was something distressing lurking in those violet depths. Her posture wasn’t relaxed either, her fidgeting hands winding and unwinding a loose thread from the cuff of an old jumper of his around her index finger. It had looked more like a short dress on her, and while he would normally find that adorable, his mind was preoccupied with other things.
He barely had the covers over him before she was glued to his side, burying her face into his chest, drawing his scent deeply through her nose. Tucking his fingers under her chin, he lifted her face to meet his worried gaze, “Tell me what’s wrong, love.”

She sighed heavily. “I woke up and you weren’t here. I panicked, wondering why, then I started thinking about all the stuff I had earlier.”

“When you were driving to hospital?”

She nodded, her eyes closing briefly. When they opened again, he could see tears glimmering in the corners. “All sorts of horrible things. Car crashes, freak accidents, I—”

“I’m not letting you watch those reality medical shows anymore.” She gave him a watery half-smile and his features softened.

He had meant to say more, but she finally voiced what he had seen in her eyes earlier, “Jorah, if anything ever happened to you, I—”

Daenerys’ voice broke and her shoulders jerked, tears slipping from her eyes.

“Shh, love, I’m here.” Gathering her sobbing form against him, he held her. He understood full well what she meant. If he ever lost her, it would be an event he was sure he would never recover from. He would be completely devastated, moving automatically through the rest of his dreary life, his chest merely a vessel containing all the shattered fragments of his heart. For a split second yesterday, he had thought she was in the hospital. And in that aching heartbeat, he had glimpsed a life without her. Now, he put himself in her place, imagining her thinking it was him and how the time had likely felt endless.

After a while, she lifted her head from his chest. She met his gentle gaze, snuffling back another round of tears. He reached over to the nightstand and pulled a few tissues free of the box, handing them to her so she could wipe her nose. Brushing her hair back from her face, he cradled it in his hands, his thumbs brushing away the remnants of her tears. In the flickering glow of the firelight, he took in her red-rimmed eyes and blotchy cheeks, his heart aching. Never in his marriage or any previous relationship had a woman loved him as deeply as Daenerys did. The power of her love was fierce, and now, seeing and hearing her outpouring of emotion at the mere thought of losing him, he was staggered once more by the intensity of it. There were so many things he could say, how nothing could or would happen to him, how he wasn’t going anywhere, how he’d always be by her
side. But as he had just learned, anything could happen to anyone at any time. And then those promises would become mere platitudes, empty words spoken to give a false sense of reassurance. He chose to repeat something he had already said, *I'm here*, the simple phrase summing up that right now, in the present, he was there for her. It seemed to be enough, her forehead coming to rest against his, his hand stroking her hair and down her back in long, soothing motions. They shared the same breath, the same warmth, treasuring the silence. After a long while, she laid her head on his chest and curled into him. He lay awake for some time after she had finally gone to sleep, listening to her breathing and considering what she had said. *If anything ever happened to you, I-*. He didn’t know what he would do without her either.
Hold On to A Memory

Chapter Summary

Jorah shows Daenerys a place of great significance and Jeor has an important conversation with his son.

Chapter Notes

Another month long hiatus and another apology...this appears to be a theme. Between the holidays, no computer, and some difficult family issues, I haven't had a chance to write hardly at all. A sentence or paragraph every few days (written on a mobile phone no less!!) But here is a new chapter, and wouldn't you know, it's full of angst. I promise the next chapter will be much happier.

For those that have stuck around, bless you. Your comments and kudos mean the world to me.

The dull gray light of morning filtered through the window and Daenerys turned against it, wishing for more darkness, more time to spend wrapped up in Jorah’s embrace. The awkwardness of the position, with her nose pressed against his chest and her arms curled up between their bodies, forced her to coil a leg over his hip. It helped enough and she snuggled further into his warmth.

“That’s much better,” she thought. “I wouldn’t mind that one bit.”

Knowing Jorah as well as she did, a small smile likely graced his lips, but she couldn’t be bothered with lifting her head to confirm it. His scent surrounded her, a smell that spoke of comfort and safety. Of love. This more comfortable arrangement freed up one of her arms and she rested her hand on his chest, half open eyes watching the lazy way her fingers toyed with the fur that sprinkled over his skin. He really was a bear.

Her bear, she corrected, a big (well, certainly bigger than her), protective, cuddly one. A familiar sting prickled her already scratchy eyes, sore from the tears she had shed only a few hours ago. She blinked hard to try and keep them at bay, but it was no use. One managed to slip free, sliding swiftly over the bridge of her nose to drop onto his chest.

“I’m here, Daenerys,” he said, the words soft to her ear, but no less sure or strong. The phrase had become almost like an oath now, Jorah’s unwavering pledge. She knew that no one could live forever, but the more she considered things, she realized that his lineage was full of men who lived long, healthy lives. Jeor, despite his new diagnosis, wasn’t likely to be going anywhere any time soon. The doctor had seemed quite certain of that fact yesterday, assuring them that with medication and visits with a cardiologist he would continue to live on just as he had. That had been welcome news; she knew his passing would be particularly hard for Jorah. Not to mention on her too, but in a different way. She had come to see Jeor as the father she never had, accepting her and loving her in his own gruff, quiet way. But the loss would leave Jorah all alone, the last Mormont,
just as she was the last Targaryen. The only ones of their ancestry left in the world. She was well versed with that concept, even when her brother had been alive; she had still felt all alone. But then she had met Jorah and the world didn’t feel so lonely anymore.

“I never want to get up,” she whispered, her arm tightening over his torso.

“I know, love.” His fingers came and brushed her hair from her forehead and temple, the sweet gesture flooding her chest with fond warmth, his lips pressing against the crown of her head.

Reluctantly, she lifted her head and met his eyes, the gentle affection gazing back at her made her heart clench, her vision blurring yet again. “I really need to stop crying.”

“There’s nothing wrong with tears as long as they are shed for the right reasons.”

For such a titan of the business world, Jorah was surprisingly well versed in matters of the heart. She cried because the love she felt for him was so great that her petite form couldn’t contain it all and it had to overflow somewhere.

However, the call of nature was a stubborn pain in the neck and he wasn’t going to go away unless she took care of business. With a sigh, she reluctantly slipped from the bed, instantly shivering at the chill of the room. The fire had nearly burned out over the course of the night, a few flickering orange embers were all that was left. She rushed off to the en suite and finished up, closing the door over behind her as she left. Jorah crouched by the hearth, coaxing the fire back to life amid a couple of new logs and some tinder, all while still only clothed in his boxer briefs. She stood watching, her hands buried in the crooks of her crossed arms, shifting from foot to foot in a vain attempt to warm herself up. The strong curve of his back, the muscles flexing with each stab of the poker, his skin still faintly tanned from their vacation. His profile was intent, focused, and she knew how it felt to be the focal point of that intensity. Her mind wandered and suddenly she was no longer cold, a different kind of warmth flooding her body. Last night, wrapped up in his arms, he had fulfilled her need for closeness. But it was a physical connection she desired now, a reaffirmation of the carnal intimacy they shared.

She closed the distance between them and knelt at his side, her hand coming to rest over his on his knee. He glanced at her with a smile, then did a double take, recognizing at once the shift in her eyes. He set the poker aside and turned to her, his hand cupping her face, his lips a hair’s breadth from her own.

“Keep me warm, my bear,” she whispered, setting her wish free into the air between them.

And, as always, he granted it willingly.

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Breakfast was waiting for them in the kitchen when they finally emerged from Jorah’s old bedroom. Beside it, a note in Barton’s impeccable penmanship letting them know he had left to get Jeor from hospital and would be back later. The food was lukewarm, but neither of them minded, their previous activities made it feel like five-star dining.

They had several hours yet before Jeor would be home, so they spent some of the time exploring what little was left of the house that she hadn’t yet seen, hand in hand. They came to a long hallway she had walked down before, only this time, it was different. The walls had once been bare, now large paintings hung from them. Their gilded frames gleamed as if they were new and she had to stand almost against the facing wall with her head tilted back slightly to take in their entirety.
The first held familiar faces; the woman’s a soft, kind smile, the man’s happiness visible in his bright blue eyes.

“Are these new?”

“Not really, my father mentioned something about having some paintings restored. It would appear he meant these,” he answered, looking down the line, counting at least six.

Next to it was a blank space, beneath it a bare brass plaque awaiting an inscription.

“What’s going to go here?”

“A singular find,” he said mysteriously, “The only work in existence known to capture a dragon and her bear.”

Her eyes snapped to his, there was laughter there. “What-- wait a minute; your father is going to have a painting made of us?”

“Yes,” his lips curling into a smile, “Just after the wedding.” Then he added quickly, “And the honeymoon of course.”

A grin broke across her face at the thought that she and Jorah would be sitting for a painting, forever immortalized in oils. She didn’t know what to call what she felt in the moment, that glow of acceptance, the warmth of being part of a family for the first time in her entire life. Whatever it was, she cherished it and prayed it would never fade. She couldn’t help but notice that there was no portrait of Jorah and his ex-wife, a fact that gave her a guilty sense of pride. Brushing it aside, she focused on the painting of his parents again, studying the details, recognizing the ring that now encircled her finger.

“Your mother looks a bit younger here than in the one in the foyer.”

“This was commissioned just after they were wed.”

“How long were they married?”

Jorah thought for a moment, piecing together what little information he knew about the subject. “Seven years, I think.”

She didn’t doubt though that they would have still been happily married now if his mother hadn’t passed away. Daenerys knew it was a painful question, but she wanted to know. “How did your mother die?”

He didn’t meet her upturned gaze, his eyes fixed on the painting before they dropped to the floor, “I’m not sure.” After a beat, he added, “You know, I can’t remember the last time I visited her grave.”

“Where’s she buried?”

“The family crypt.”

“Where’s that?”

“The edge of the property, a fair distance from the house.”

Daenerys had seen quite a bit of the Mormont estate and the land surrounding it, but she never remembered seeing any building that could have been a burial site.
“Take me there.”

He met her eyes at her sudden, unexpected request. “You want to see it?”

“Yes.” Her voice was quiet, but certain. “I think you should too. It’s been too long.”

He let out a long breath. “All right. Grab your coat and meet me by the back door. I’ll get the key and a torch.”

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Jorah hadn’t been joking when he said the edge of the property. It felt as though they had been walking for an age, following the gentle rise and fall of the grassy slopes, the misting rain clinging to their hair and clothing in fine droplets, but not enough to soak through. The atmosphere was oddly fitting for the solemn feeling she sensed surrounding him. His face betrayed nothing of his emotions, although this was the quietest and most stoic she had seen him in a very long time. Her hand in his felt inexplicably cold, all of the warmth that usually resided there had disappeared, chased away by the specter of his past and its impeding collusion with the here and now.

Just when she was going to ask if they were there yet, over the next rise, it appeared. And it wasn’t at all what she was expecting. Crypts implied dark; foreboding places deep underground with twists and turns intended to make a person lose their way. This was austerely beautiful; its granite edifice nestled between two large oaks, the entrance bordered by two pillars in a style that appeared to be ancient Greek, although she didn’t know which order. And above it, the Mormont name, etched in large, plain letters, a pronouncement of the generations contained within. Jorah’s pace slowed as he approached the building, his hand leaving hers to fish in his pocket for the key to the black gate’s padlock. She had anticipated the screech of metal grinding against metal, but heard nothing. She reasoned this place might not be as forgotten as she had assumed. There was another Mormont she was sure frequented here, to be near the woman who still held his heart.

A cold whoosh of slightly musty air greeted her when Jorah pushed open the heavy door, the interior before her dimly lit by the small windows located every few meters above the white marble encased tombs. She stepped inside, the sudden shaft of bright light from Jorah’s torch showing her the way. The fresh, damp scent of rain followed them inside and joined with the lingering fragrance of roses, the white petals just beginning to turn brown and curl. The small brass vase mounted on the wall by the head stone held their fading blooms, her eyes taking them in before moving down the line of graves until she couldn’t make out anything in the increasing blackness deeper within.

“Who’s buried here?”

“The Mormont men and women, their spouses and children dating back to my great grandparents when this property was acquired.”

All of those years and the history they left behind. It staggered her to be surrounded by something so much larger than anything she’d ever experienced, and now, to be a part of this family, one that cherished their dead, built a great structure to house their bodies for those left living, and held their memory in a far greater place. She noticed there were blank expanses of marble near the front of the mausoleum, enough room for maybe three or four more interments.

She glanced at him in the low light, his gaze fixed on his mother’s grave. In the corners, wetness was starting to gather and she took his hand, intertwining their fingers, grounding him to her and to the present. Daenerys followed the etched lines of his mother’s name, her birth and death dates, her mind doing a quick calculation. “She was only 35.”
“Much too young.”

The inscription at the bottom read ‘Beloved Wife and Mother’. All at once, everything hit her hard, a sudden burst of tears stinging her eyes. Her sniffle echoed in the chamber and Jorah looked at her, his hand coming up to brush away a tear that had managed to escape.

“How must it feel to lose someone you love so much so soon? How can you go on after that?” Everything was coming out in a tearful rush, “I have no idea how that feels. My parents were gone when I was so little and my brother, we-”

“Daenerys,” he quieted her gently, his hands holding her face, his body stooped so he could look into her eyes, “I don’t know either. But the memory of someone you love can be a very powerful motivation to live.”

She supposed he was right. If she lost Jorah, he wouldn’t want her to wallow in her sorrow or fade into a deep depression of which it would be nearly impossible to escape. He would want her to live, to keep growing and experiencing life and the world, and sometime in the future, possibly find love again. She doubted very much if she ever could, her heart contained only him and always would.

Throwing her arms around him, needing to feel that connection with him, she buried her face in his sweater and inhaled his scent, letting it fill her, calming her mind. They stayed that way for a while, listening to the faint drip-drop of rain on the leaves. She pulled back with a sniffle, swiping her hand under her nose and offering him a weak smile. Her eyes swung to the headstone again, noticing only now that a small part of the marble near the first name was slightly worn. It dawned on her that only frequent contact would cause a wear pattern like that. She could picture Jeor standing there, his fingers brushing over the stone with each visit and she was sure there had been many over the years.

“I should give you a minute to be alone with her,” she offered, starting to step away from him.

His arm wound around her waist, “No, stay.”

So she did, giving him time to say in his mind what he wanted to. Then he reached inside his coat and pulled out a white rose, taking the dying flowers out of the vase and replacing it with the new one. Now she understood why they had stopped in the garden on the way there. He lingered a bit longer, the tips of his fingers brushing over the stone. *Like father, like son.* Only when he walked toward the door did she know he was ready, stepping aside to let her exit first to close the heavy door behind him followed by the wrought iron gate. His hand darted up to wipe quickly at his eye, but she mentioned nothing about his show of emotion. He had every right to cry, to mourn the mother he never knew. The walk back to the house was quiet too, but there was a different feeling in the air, a weight had been lifted, the mood far less somber.

Back at the house, they made tea and sat by the fire, cuddled close on the sofa. She loved afternoons like this with him, his occasional displays of affection, a soft kiss at her temple or his fingers skimming over the back of her hand, only made it more special.

The sound of the heavy front door closing woke her, footsteps echoing in the foyer getting louder as they got closer. Apparently she had dozed off, the warmth of the blanket and Jorah’s arms too much for her body to resist given the weather outside. The door to the sitting room opened and Jeor stopped in the entryway, his expression softening a bit at the tender scene before him.

“Jorah,” he finally said, “A moment please.”

He stood and pressed a kiss to Daenerys’ forehead, their fingers slipping apart. Jeor offered her a small smile, one she returned, and then Jorah was gone. She had a pretty good idea what they were
going to talk about and her presence during the conversation really wasn’t necessary. She understood; this was a father-son talk. Yet she knew Jorah would share with her what was said later.

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Jorah followed his father to the bar, a room just off of the smaller dining room. Jeor only used it when guests stopped by, preferring to enjoy his Scotch by the fire. The older Mormont had said nothing on the way there, nor had he offered any sort of physical clue as to what he intended to talk about. He looked the picture of health, as he always had, his stay in the hospital didn’t make him appear any worse for wear. It was only after he had walked behind the bar and pulled a rather expensive bottle from the shelf, followed by two tumblers, that he finally broke the silence, “Your mother detested hospitals.”

Jorah was just about to take a seat in the high bar chair, but he stopped, his eyes fixed on Jeor. This was not what he had expected. His father didn’t meet his gaze, instead focusing on pouring two servings of the amber liquid. He resealed the bottle and set it back on the shelf, took the glasses and rounded the counter to sit. Jorah followed suit, still a bit stunned by his father’s sudden revelation. The elder man took a sip, swallowed, then finally looked at Jorah, “She spent so much time in them near the end.”

“Father, you-“

“No,” Jeor interrupted, “It is time you heard this.”

Here it was; the story he had both always wanted to know and yet didn’t want to hear. If there was ever a time for Jorah to stay silent and let his father talk, this was it. To say this was a monumental step would be an understatement. Jeor was not an overly emotional man; he was practical, quiet and logical. And perhaps that was why his parents had been so well matched; his mother had been the romantic, very expressive and passionate about a great many things. Or at least that was what he had gleaned from snippets of conversation here and there. But Jorah knew it wasn’t entirely true, Maege had let slip that her brother was quite the romantic. According to her, his mother had no problem talking about how sweet Jeor could be in private. And just like his father, it appeared that all he needed was to be with the right woman to bring out his softer side.

“The doctors weren’t sure what was wrong with her at first. The little day to day lapses in her memory, the awful migraines, the near constant fatigue. I knew something was wrong and so did she. They ran so many tests, but nothing was ever conclusive. Then one afternoon, I found her unconscious in the garden.” Jeor’s hand clenched at the memory, his eyes displaying all of the emotion he refused to show on his face. He drew a deep breath and continued, “It had grown so fast, the doctors had never seen anything progress so quickly. From nothing in one MRI to six months later and…“

His eyes shut, his voice wavering in a way Jorah had never heard before. It was a long while before he collected himself, “They gave her three months, four with surgery. I researched the procedure and I could not let her go through with it. Those that did, their families were left with a person that wasn’t the one they knew. It changed them forever. And the twisted irony of it was that the tumor always grew back, so the treatment was useless. However, that didn’t stop me. I took a sabbatical, met with specialist after specialist, hoping for a miracle. One suggested radiation and chemotherapy. It wouldn’t cure it, but it would slow its growth. I should have never let her go through with it. It made her so sick, so weak; she could barely hold you anymore. And I could tell that hurt her more than anything else.”

He paused to take another drink, a softness coming over his features, “One day she came to me and said ‘no more’, she had enough of the treatment. She said she wanted to live out the rest of
her days in peace with me and you. The doctors gave her medication to manage the pain and she had
some good days amongst the bad. When she slipped off her wedding ring and handed it to me,
making me promise to give it to you when you were ready to marry, I knew our time was short. I
spent every moment I could by her side, talking to her, holding her hand. Then one morning, she was
gone. For all of my wealth, for all of the connections I had, I was powerless to stop it. I had never felt
so helpless in my entire life. Watching her waste away, watching her suffer, it…” Jeor finally broke,
his hand covering his mouth, his eyes glistening with barely contained moisture.

Jorah had never seen this level of emotion from his father, but he didn’t fault him for it in
the slightest. In fact, it humanized him. He had always seen Jeor as a strong, capable man of
business, someone he had looked up to when he was growing up, an example of the man he had
hoped he would become. He had wanted to make his father proud, and while Jorah knew that he
was now, there had been a time when Jorah wasn’t sure how his father felt about him at all. Then
they weren’t on speaking terms, his actions making Jeor ashamed of him. But that was behind them
now and what had just happened here, in the most unlikely place, made him feel more connected to
his father than he ever had in the past. There was another side to him after all, a gentler side that he
was witnessing first hand. Hug him, a soft voice whispered in his head. It sounded decidedly female
and it could have been his mother just as much as it could have been Daenerys. They were quite
alike. So he listened to it and wrapped his arm around his father. Jeor froze and Jorah cursed
inwardly at his rash impulsivity, but then he was being hugged back. Two men, who had never been
very good with their emotions, but had been changed by love, sharing an embrace.

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Jeor insisted they stay for dinner, so they did. Daenerys noticed a difference between father
and son, an ease in their interaction that hadn’t been there before the conversation. While no one
could consider their relationship strained in the least, it now had a certain effortlessness that had Jeor
smiling softly more than she had ever seen him do. Jorah told her his father had shared something
important with him and he would tell her all about it later. But more than anything, she was glad he
was out of the hospital and didn’t seem unduly affected by his condition. There was something she
had been thinking about lately, something she hadn’t shared with Jorah yet and it involved Jeor. She
had a question for him and the time came to ask it just before they were set to leave.

Pulling on their coats, Daenerys waited until Jorah and his father said their ‘goodbyes’
before the elder Mormont turned to her. She smiled, “I’m so glad to see you’re all right. I-we were
very worried about you.”

His eyes darted between her and his son, “You needn’t worry, my dear. We bears are
made from strong stock.”

They all shared a laugh before she cleared her throat, “I was wondering…seeing as the
wedding is in July, which isn’t all that far away, if you…would you be willing to walk me down the
aisle? Usually it’s the bride’s father, but since I…well, you’ve become-”

“I would be honored, Daenerys,” he interjected, his hands taking hold of one of hers.

“Great,” she said with a grin.

Jeor let her hand slip from his to turn away at that moment to speak to Barton, so it gave
Jorah an opportunity to talk to her. “How long have you been thinking about that?”

“Just the last few weeks,” she answered, “I know it’s not ‘traditional’, but-”

“I think it’s grand, not to mention, very sweet of you to ask him to do that.”
“Jeor has been so kind to me, I thought it was the right thing to do.” Then she changed the subject, “So what did your father tell you earlier?”

“Something about my mother,” her eyebrows shot up, “And that he’s made an appointment with a prominent cardiologist in London for next week.” Jorah looked at his father, “He said, and I quote, ‘I have too much to live for’.”

Daenerys smiled and took Jorah’s hand, “Yes he does.”
Decisions, Decisions

Chapter Summary

Jorah and Daenerys make two final decisions before their big day.

Chapter Notes

Readers, Many apologies for the huge time gap in updating. Things have been quite hectic for me, but I wanted to get this out there for everyone. Also...I'm delaying the chapter releases for another reason. After this update, there will only be one more chapter :ugly crying: I'm going to miss this story. It's been so much fun, but as the saying goes, all good things must come to an end.

Rest assured, I have another modern AU on the way for Daenerys and Jorah. It's in the editing phase now and I plan (fingers crossed) to have the first chapter up before the premiere of Season 8 of GoT.

Now that's out of the way...enjoy this chapter! A tiny bit of angst to start, but a whole lot of sweet fluffiness afterward.

Oh, one last note...thanks a bunch to those still reading and reviewing. Bear hugs all around!

“Peonies or buttercups?”

“What?”

“Peonies or buttercups,” she asked again, “I want to know which one you like better.”

Jorah knew she was talking about flowers, but he had no clue what either looked like. So he choose an answer he thought would be safest, “Whichever you like best.”

“That’s not helping, Jorah.” She sighed loudly, “Besides you weren’t even looking at the pictures.”

He had hoped she wouldn’t notice that. Between the mountain of meetings and several upcoming negotiations that he had to plan and research for, not to mention all of the wedding preparation, Jorah was burning the candle at both ends. There always seemed to be an endless array of tiny details he had to offer an opinion about, and to make matters worse, he hadn’t been sleeping well. All in all, it had been a difficult week and right now wasn’t the first time he had wished they’d hired a wedding planner. But Daenerys had assured him at the beginning of the whole process that they could handle it, so he yielded to her apparent expertise. He was realizing now that this whole thing was getting to her too. She was a perfectionist when it came to some things and she was clearly overwhelmed with trying to make things the way she wanted them. But lately, she had become snappy with him at times, throwing up her hands and storming off if they couldn’t agree. Just the
other day, they’d had a row about what font should be on the place cards for the reception. They had eventually figured that one out, but Jorah could almost feel another fight waiting in the wings. Being tired and feeling pulled in so many directions was a recipe for disaster. And yet, despite all of this, Daenerys wasn’t turning into a bridezilla. He already knew what that looked like and he cringed inwardly at the memory.

“You promised me we would talk about this later.” She crossed her arms, “Well, it’s later.”

Resting the file folder he had been reading on his lap, he looked at her, “Let me see the pictures.” Jorah studied the two images, and he wasn’t about to admit it to her, but they looked almost exactly the same. He could feel her staring, waiting for his answer, “The pink one.”

“Really,” she questioned, her face scrunched up in disgust, “Pink doesn’t go with our color palette.”

He closed his eyes slowly, trying to keep his voice calm, “Daenerys, you asked me which one I liked and I told you. If you didn’t—”

“If I didn’t what?” Her tone had taken on a harder edge and she turned fully toward him, “If you don’t want to help me, just say so and I’ll do it myself.”

“Daenerys, that’s not what I meant.”

She shook her head, muttering unintelligible things under her breath. Slamming the wedding binder shut, she threw back the covers and got out of bed. “Maybe I’ll just pick lilies for all the bouquets and arrangements,” she snapped, pulling on her robe.

“If that’s what you want,” he said, frustration starting to bleed into his voice.

Clearly that hadn’t been the right thing to say at all. Her eyes flashed, “Lilies are funeral flowers, Jorah!”

And with that, she stomped from the room, her high growl of exasperation not the only thing left in her angry wake. Jorah sighed, his head falling back against the headboard. He considered going after her, but decided against it. Right now, they both needed to cool off. Once the irritation ebbed away, only guilt remained, heavy in his chest. Things had gone from bad to worse in a heartbeat. He had indeed promised her they would talk later, but he had done a spectacular job of breaking that promise. Would it really have taken so much of his time to stop and listen, to look at the pictures and make a decision with her? But it wasn’t just this broken promise that bothered him, it was the larger one that truly gnawed at him. He had promised himself, as well as her, that work would never take precedence over their relationship, that he would balance his life better.

Opening his eyes, he noticed her binder still sitting there and he reached over to grab it. Inside, he found multiple tabbed sections, each one dedicated to a different aspect of the wedding. He smiled to himself, the neat organization so indicative of the way she usually approached important events. Flipping to the one labeled ‘floral arrangements’, he first noted the lined pages of paper she had stolen from his legal pad one afternoon, the memory of her impish look making him grin. Written in her familiar looping penmanship were a list of flower names, some crossed out, others with question marks next to them. He recognized very few of the names, so he decided to move on to the pictures. Torn from magazines or printed from the internet, they had notes written on the sides like “in season?”, “too big!”, and “expensive!!”.

He knew their color palette was cool tones, blues and soft purples. So, for the next several minutes, he went through all of the images, taking out ones he liked based on how they looked or if the colors were right. Then he remembered the app Daenerys had downloaded, one he had seen her playing
around with on several occasions for centerpiece configurations. *Maybe they have something for bouquets,* he thought, retrieving his tablet from the nightstand and tapping the interlocking gold bands icon. While he waited for it to load, he noticed a comment she had written next to a large blue flower. *Jorah’s eyes.* His heart ached, she had thought of him when she’d seen that, tearing it out specifically for that reason. Gods he felt like a right shit.

Going back to the tablet, he was pleased to find a tab called ‘build your bouquet’. Navigating there, it was a rather simple process of typing in the name if you knew it or choosing it from the drop-down menu, filterable by size and color. Jorah messed around with many configurations, substituting one flower for another and changing the quantity of the other until he came up with two bouquet designs he liked. But it had really been narrowed down to three flowers: alstroemeria, hydrangeas, and roses.

“Those blue ones are my favourite.”

Jorah turned to see Daenerys standing just inside the room, eyes red and puffy, her teeth worrying her bottom lip. He felt even worse than he already did, he absolutely hated making her cry.

Setting the tablet aside, he pulled back the covers and held out his arms to her. She wasted no time crawling into his lap and curling into his embrace, her fingers grasping the soft fabric of his shirt. He said nothing for a long while, simply holding her and listening to her occasional sniffle. She drew back first, wiping the back of her hand under her nose. Jorah looked at her, his thumb brushing away the wet trails left behind by her tears.

“Daenerys, I’m sorry, love,” he said tenderly, “I told you we would talk later and I didn’t follow through. And I should have. This isn’t a matter of your flowers, it’s our flowers because it’s our wedding. You are more important than any bloody negotiation will ever be.”

“I’m sorry too,” she replied with another sniffle, “I shouldn’t have snapped at you like that.”

His forehead came to rest against hers, then their lips met in a soft kiss.

“I see you’ve been very busy,” she said once they had parted, noticing the papers strewn across the duvet.

“That app you downloaded was very helpful.” He retrieved his tablet to show her what he had been working on.

“You changed your lock screen wallpaper.”

“It’s not Christmas anymore. Besides,” he smiled, “I love that picture of us from our holiday.”

Daenerys did too. In fact, it was her mobile’s lock screen image as well. Jorah’s impromptu kiss on her cheek in the zoo’s aviary was such a good, happy memory.

“Ooo, this bouquet’s beautiful,” she exclaimed softly once the app loaded his design. “What made you pick these flowers?”

“Well, roses are a classic and white goes with everything, so I thought that would be a good place to start. The blue ones, I think they’re called hydrangeas, I picked those because they’re part of our color palette and they paired nicely with the others. I liked the note you put next to them too,” he added with a wink.

“But what about these?” She pointed to the alstroemeria. “I only wrote them down as an afterthought.”
“The app showed me they come in a wide variety of colors.” He was looking at her now, his fingers tucking her hair behind her ear only to linger on her cheek, “I chose the violet ones because they remind me of your eyes.”

*My sweet bear,* she thought. “I love it,” she told him just before she kissed him. “You know what this means, don’t you?” she asked between kisses, to which Jorah made a noise that sounded like ‘no’. “The last major decision we have to make is the wedding cake and we have the appointment this Saturday.”

Jorah laid her back on the bed, the papers crackling under their weight. “Then the only thing left is to marry you and I can’t wait.”

The gravity of his words hit her hard and her smile slowly got bigger. Her eyes flitted over his features, this caring, sweet and handsome man was soon going to be her husband. “I can’t wait either,” she whispered before pulling him down for another kiss.

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“These cakes are amazing,” Daenerys marveled, flipping through the bake shop’s design book.

Jorah hummed in agreement, although he thought a few were a bit over the top, far too ornate for their simple reception.

Her gasp caught his attention, her eyes fixed on an image: a cake composed of just two round tiers and adorned with minimalistic fondant roses cascading down the side like a waterfall. It was elegant in its simplicity, a perfect fit for their understated theme. She was reading the description at the bottom under her breath, but when she turned to look at him, he knew instantly she thought it was the one. He smiled too, an expression that let her know he felt the same way.

Just then, the proprietor appeared, carrying a silver tray filled with small plates, and on each one, was an equally small piece of cake. From chocolate to vanilla and a few others in between, he hadn’t realized there could be that many flavors for wedding cakes. The man set the tray down on the table before reaching out to shake each of their hands. “Good afternoon, thank you for choosing our bakery for your wedding.” He held out his hands in gesture to the samples. “This is the first tray of the many offerings we have available.” Then he seemed to remember something, “Ah, I forgot the forks. You can’t taste our creations without them.”

While he hurried back to get the utensils, Daenerys and Jorah turned to each other at the same time, whispering in unison, “First tray???”

“I’ll try to eat only a small bite of each one,” he promised, “We both can’t end up in a diabetic coma.”

When the owner came back, they were both trying to hide their snickering, but he didn’t seem to notice as he set a small plastic fork on each plate. Then he sat down and removed a piece of paper and a pair of reading glasses from his jacket’s inner pocket. “Our first sample,” he said, setting a plate in front of each of them, “is a classic and one of our clients’ favourites: vanilla bean cake with vanilla buttercream.”

They tasted it, and while it was delicious and the icing silky smooth and not overly sweet, it wasn’t anything out of this world. They both agreed that it was pretty good and that they would keep it aside as a possibility.
The next piece had Jorah looking for a napkin, hoping he could spit it out without the owner noticing. But no such luck, he stared at them earnestly, his broad smile letting them know this particular creation was his pride and joy. Jorah plastered a polite smile on his face and swallowed. “What was that?”

“Matcha green tea cake with lemon verbena icing.”

“It was certainly…interesting,” he replied, glancing at Daenerys to see she had the same polite expression on her face. While the man cleared the plates, Jorah saw her make the thumbs down gesture under the table, to which he tapped the side of his nose.


They were down to their last sample and Daenerys was starting to worry that they wouldn’t find a flavor that really grabbed them, one that made them go ‘wow’. “Finally, we have a spiced Mexican chocolate cake with a milk chocolate icing and raspberry mousse.”

The contrasting colors certainly caught her eye, the velvety red layered between the dark, nearly black fluffy cake. The first bite was a burst of summer sweetness, but then the berries gave way to the smooth, decadent chocolate, its slightly spicy finish not overpowering. She went back for seconds, something none of the other samples had inspired her to do. Jorah appeared to like it too as he was already onto a third forkful. The baker had a knowing smile on his face, years of experience was never wrong. “I’ll give you both a moment to talk it over.”

Once they were alone, Daenerys turned to him, “I love this one.”

“Me too,” he concurred, savoring the last bits of cake from the tines of his fork, “A perfect balance: a little sweet with a hint of spice.” He smirked, arching an eyebrow, “It reminds me of a certain someone.”

“Jorah,” she exclaimed softly, playfully smacking his bicep, even as a blush crept across her cheeks. “All kidding aside, I’m wondering if all of our guests will like this.”

She had a point, some people might not like the taste of chili with their chocolate. He thought for a moment, then smiled. “How about this: the bottom tier can be the vanilla bean we tried first and the top tier can be the spiced chocolate. That way if the majority of our guests want something a bit milder, we will have plenty to go around.”

It was an excellent compromise. “Well then, it looks like we can have our cake and eat it too.”

Jorah laughed at her turn of phrase. “It certainly does, love.”

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